

# 1 Corinthians 16

Sunday 11/20/2011

Today, we are going to finish chapter 16, and next week we are going to get into our long-awaited study of the book of 2 Corinthians. I think that doing 1 Corinthians the way we did, and then taking a break from what we were doing overall, and coming back to look at 2 Corinthians, is really going to be of great value to us. We have learned so much from the book of 1 Corinthians, and basically what we have learned, if we are paying attention, is how not to build a church and how not to try to do ministry.

I think all of Paul's books do one great thing, and I really enjoy reading beyond just what you may have there on the paper. I really enjoy going beyond that and getting some of the great insights that you get about Paul, who was, without a doubt, the greatest Christian that ever lived. Not only just about his life, but how he thought about the ministry and how he thought about the people that he dealt with. I think that the real key to any ministry is not just watching what a guy does, but understanding why a person does what they do.

I think that goes back to what I talked about last week: one of the real major problems with young men and young ladies is the fact that they never really glean anything from anybody who knows anything. It is a tragedy because I know in my own life, as I was a young man, God had put probably two or three of the key individuals in my life that really showed me my thinking and shaped everything that I did. I see that, and I look at Paul, and I see how he has the same effect on the people that are around him. I think it is absolutely invaluable, not just to see what a guy does, but to understand the why behind it and the biblical principles that go along with it.

I say this often, and it is true: if you are saved here this morning—and I suspect probably most of you, if not all of you, are—but if you are saved here this morning, there is no question about the fact that God saved you for really one purpose. That purpose is that you could fulfill for Him what He started. In other words, God saved you to minister for Him. There is no way around it. You can try to sidestep it all you want. You can make all the excuses that you want. You can find all of the reasons on the planet not to, but at the end of the day, honestly and openly, from a Bible standpoint, that is really the reason God saved you. Not fulfilling that will obviously lead to a lot of problems in your life.

I think that the Bible talks about it like when you get saved, it is like God put a 5,000-pound Bengal tiger inside of you who really wants to get out. If you ever saw it, I think—and I know we have them, and I am not against zoos or anything, Lord knows I pastor one, so I understand how it all works—but the thing that I hate about going to a zoo from one standpoint is you see these animals that God created to roam the wild, like the lions and tigers and all of those majestic animals. They put them in a cage so that you and I can go see them, and I understand the whole thing, and I am not saying they do not take good care of them, but they were not created to be in captivity. You see them when they are in cages, and all they do is just pace up and down. They are pacing up and down, and they get very threatened by anything or anybody that comes around them. All they do is just pace up and down because that is not how they were designed to be. They were designed to bust out of that cage and to roam the world. As we hear it all the time, the lion is the king of beasts.

Think of that in the same way today: you got saved. The Holy Spirit of God, God put the Holy Spirit of God in you so you can minister. When you do not minister, when you do not do what God's Spirit that He gave you, the Holy Spirit of God, is like that lion, it just roams up inside you unsettled. It just roams back and forth, paces back and forth because it wants to bust out. It wants to go after and do everything that God put Him in you to do. Just like it is a terrible waste of God's created animals to be in a cage when God designed them to be out and free and doing what they do and what God designed them to do, it is a tragedy that God's people have the Holy Spirit of God just pacing up inside them. It is no wonder it leads to the problems that we have in life. The Bible talks about grieving the Holy Spirit of God, and a good way of understanding the grieving is to realize that God saved you for a purpose. When you do not fulfill that purpose, just like that caged lion wanting to get out and attack the world, the Holy Spirit of God wants to break out of you and attack the world, but it does not happen in most cases.

## I. The Anatomy of a Bible-Believing Church

We see in this great book not only what is wrong with this church—and there is plenty—but also the great insight into what Paul is doing and who is helping him with the mission that he has got from God. The anatomy of a Bible-believing church is not very complicated. Understanding the anatomy and how a church works is very basic and very clear in the Bible. God puts in a man's heart to start a work. God takes a man and puts into his heart to do a work for Him and start a church. That man obviously begins to, through faith, go through the doors that God opens for him biblically. In time, God brings people to him that He gives him, that will line up with him and get his heart for ministry, get his passion for people and the things that, and that is how God does it. You have seen that with Paul.

We saw in our last lesson, and as we have been talking about all the way through this book, how there are three people groups that really made Paul's ministry work.

1. The first one was young men. We talked about young ladies too: Paul and Timothy, and how Paul took Timothy, just like I take so many of you young men and young ladies, and fine-tune you, work through the issues, and help you get everything. We saw that there is great value with young men and young ladies. We also saw that there are some liabilities: they may have the energy, but they do not always have the experience.
2. Then we saw, we talked about Apollos last week. Here is a guy who has been around, at least probably in his 50s, maybe even his 60s, but he went all the way through from John the Baptist up through Christ's crucifixion, up to Paul beginning and starting the church. Here he is now part of Paul's work and invaluable with him in trying to do everything that Paul is trying to do.
3. Then we saw a couple, Aquila and Priscilla, how important and vital they were.

I believe this with all of my heart. I have been in this business for a little while now, and after a while, you begin to see some things and understand some things. In the last probably 10 or 15 years of my life, my whole idea of a church has kind of changed a little bit. It has taken a lot of pressure off of me because I think a lot of pastors put themselves under a lot of pressure because they fall into the idea that if they have a successful church, you have got to have a big church.

That is the peer pressure. We talk about your teenage kids going to school and feeling peer pressure to do what all the other kids do. There is a tendency of that in everything we do, and it is certainly within the ministry. You will find that pastors fall into that same kind of trap: the peer pressure from other pastors to have a big church and to get to the point where you are absolutely enormous, and that is really what success is. That drives so many churches, it drives so many pastors, it drives so many sermons even today across this city and across the country.

I have learned over the last probably 10 or 15 years that that is really not the process that any pastor ought to be interested in. I believe that God established a church and brings people to a church—a Bible-believing, Bible-teaching church, anyhow. I believe that He brings people to churches for one basic reason after they get saved, and that is to give you the opportunity to go to the next level or not. Some people do it, some people do not. But at the judgment seat of Christ, I think it is very clear that we will all look back and we will see the opportunities that God gave us, put right in front of us, to get to the next level, to get what God had for us.

God creates the circumstances. We saw it last week how Aquila and Priscilla, they are living in Rome, and Claudius kicks them out of Rome, and they finally hook up with Paul. They are both tent repair guys, and bang, next thing you know, that is how God does it. God will bring you to this church. I cannot speak for any other church, I really cannot, but I think that the underlying reason why you are here this morning is two things:

4. If you have already decided that you are going to make ministry your life, then you are here to learn.
5. If you are not, then you are here to decide if you want to go to the next level or not.

I think that is just as simple as that, and I think that is just the way that it works.

God puts people together. He brings people together through a common bond, and that common bond is the call of doing the Lord's work. I cannot emphasize enough the example that we talked about last week about the Timothys in this church, the young men and the young ladies who are the driving force to get everything done that needs to be done and what you bring into the work here. Then the Apolloses of our church, the men and the women who have been around for a while, they understand how it all works, they understand a lot of things that the younger people do not. Then, of course, the Aquilas and Priscillas of our church, the couples that God gives us who actually are part of it all working together. Those three groups all have an equal value, and when you put them together in the common bond of ministry, that is when things begin to work.

Then we saw the key that brings it all together in the house of Stephanas. I talked to you about how this was my favorite aspect of the Bible. It says in verse 15 last week, it says the house of Stephanas, who have addicted themselves to the ministry. We talked about addiction. It is a great verse, for now you have a verse to throw right in the face of the milquetoast baby Christians that think that giving your all to the Lord Jesus Christ is unreasonable. I think we ought to get bumper stickers that do not say, "Don't be a fanatic when it comes to Christ." Don't be a fanatic, be an addict. That is a great bumper sticker. God does not want you to be a fanatic; He wants you to be an addict. He wants you to get so addicted to the ministry that you cannot go 15 minutes without talking about the Lord Jesus Christ.

## II. Five Commands for the Church

Today, we are going to close this book out with what we did not get to last week, and this will be the five commands or five charges that he gives to this church. Again, I think that the last chapter here is a great introduction to 1 Corinthians, the handbook of ministry, for when we start this great book next week. We already know some things about what we should not be and what we should not do because we have learned a lot of things from the book of 1 Corinthians.

We have learned, first of all, that churches are full of baby Christians. Every church has two nurseries: the one in the back where all the kids are, that is the physical one, and the one here where all the people are, that is where the spiritual babies are. There is really nothing wrong with that because a good, healthy church needs to have baby Christians that are coming in and growing, that are getting saved, and that is what it is supposed to be. The problem becomes when you stay that way and you never really grow up spiritually and get to that place in your life.

We also learned this: you stay a spiritual baby by either never beginning to grow spiritually or quitting your spiritual growth someplace along the line. I have in my mind a couple of you folks, and I would not embarrass you this morning, but my wife and I were talking about it this week, how in the last year, just in the last year, you have gone from a baby Christian who basically knew nothing to a point where you are doing things that many Christians who have been saved five or ten years do not do. I would not throw out any name because my purpose today is, if you are not doing anything, not to make you feel any worse than you should already feel, but at the same time, just put it in the generality: some of you are coming up on your two-year anniversary in this church, and when you got saved, you are doing more than most Christians and in the leadership role of many Christians in my life in the last 40-some years that I have seen have been in churches for 10 years. You know why? Because, as I said before, you only get out of something what you put into it. When your attitude is ministry, when your attitude is addicting yourself to the ministry—and boy, it can get addicting—that is exactly what it takes, and that is exactly what we want to keep fostering here in time.

Then we saw a true, biblical church—and we have already talked about this—is built around three people groups, and they are key: the Timothys of a church, the Apolloses of the church, and the Aquilas and Priscillas. If I look out here today and I see you, and I know you by Bill, George, Ralph, Tom, all the names that you are in my mind, I look at you today and I put you into three categories: the Timothys of my life, the Apolloses of my life, and the Aquilas and Priscillas of my life. Men and women who have made a choice, when God put it in my heart to start a church, to band with me, get my heart, get my vision, get my passion, get my addiction, and together we minister. The success of any church will be defined by the attitude of what we do with ministry. We are going to talk about that next week.

The last thing, and we want to look at this today in summary, is we want to look at the five commandments, the five charges. This will be our lesson today that Paul gave to this church. I close this study the same way that Paul closed this letter, by leaving the church with five things that they need to do and keep before them.

Let us begin reading here in 1 Corinthians 16:9.

*1 Corinthians 16:9-14*

*For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.*

*If Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do.*

*Let no man therefore despise him: but conduct him forth in peace, that he may come unto me: for I look for him with the brethren.*

*As touching our brother Apollos, I greatly desired him to come unto you with the brethren: but his will was not at all to come at this time; but he will come when he shall have convenient time.*

*Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.*

*Let all your things be done with charity.*

Father, we do thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus today. We love You, Father, and we come to You today asking You, Lord, to bless us and to give us all the things that we need. We love You so much and thank You for all the opportunities. I thank You for the Timothy's of this church. I look back at my own life and I recognize how that one time in my life that I was a Timothy, and You put the men in my world who, as far as I was concerned, Father, they were the Apostle Pauls of my life. I recognized the fact that I was stupid, I was dumb, and I was prone to making a lot of bad decisions and choices. Lord only knows where my life would have been if You would not have put the men in my life to give me the advice and the structure and all of the things that I needed. Lord, help me to be that to these young Timothy's, male and female. Then, Lord, we do thank You today for the Apolloses and for the Aquilas and the Priscillas. We thank You for all that You have given us. We just pray Your blessing today as we continue to grow in all that we endeavor to do for You with all the opportunities that You have given us. Lord, we will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.

### III. 1.) Watch

The first thing he says here is in 1 Corinthians 16:13, and he says that we are to watch. He says, "Watch ye." The Christian is told to watch out for many things in the Bible. It does not seem like it would be a very great study, but one of the greatest studies that you will ever take is to study the things that you and I are to watch out for. He could go on forever and ever.

The idea of the example of standing and watching, we saw it, if you remember, all the way back in the book of Ezra and Nehemiah. Remember that back in Ezra and Nehemiah, how when they built the wall around the city—and we talked about the city being a picture of the church, and this church is made up of individuals, and the Bible says that our bodies are a temple, a house, a building of God not made with hands—the wall around that city was what the church believes. It protected them, kept the enemy out. It protected them, a picture of what we believe in the Bible doctrine we hold to. Then we talked about how the elders, the men of the nation of Israel, they stood watch on the wall. David talks about a high tower, the Tower of David, and they stood on

this wall and they watched. The wall was good, but the wall was not enough because people can always breach a wall. People can just get inside and fat and happy and sassy and having a good time, and on the other side of the wall, somebody is drilling a hole in it, and while you go to sleep at night, they are going to come through. So the wall is not enough. They had to have people that were standing on the wall that were watching, and they had people at the gates, the gates that you went into the city, they were watching. That is really a picture of what our job is, the job of a church. We are to watch. This is our church. If you feel that way about it, this is the church that God gave us. We already know that the devil wants to stop it, and God wants it to go forth, and we all know that our job is to protect what God has given us here. I would not give you two hoots and a holler for somebody who comes to a church but cares nothing about protecting it. You are no good to me. I already know where the attacks are going to come from, and I can almost predict when they are going to happen. The bottom line is for you just to stand by blasé and say, "Yes, my church, go ahead and knock the front door down, it is fine." That is not what we are looking for. So the first thing we find is that we take our watch on the wall.

The second thing, Matthew 26:41, for the Christian is told to watch and pray that you enter not into temptation. That is a good one.

Matthew 24:42, a Christian is to watch for his Lord's return. He says, "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." So a Christian is to keep an eye on his church to keep the devil out, but he is also to keep an eye on himself to keep the world out and the temptations out and all of those things that go along with that.

Here is another one, Acts 20:29-31. Here is a good one: every church ought to watch its pastor. You have got to watch the pastor over there and make sure.

*Acts 20:29-31*

*For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.*

*Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.*

*Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.*

You make sure that he is preaching the truth and not a wolf in sheep's clothing that is going to rob you at the judgment seat of Christ or get you involved in some kind of heretical teaching.

Here is another good one, Hebrews 13:17. A pastor is supposed to watch his congregation. The Bible says in Hebrews 13:17:

*Hebrews 13:17*

*Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.*

You see, it is a two-way street. You are supposed to watch me, I am supposed to watch you. The bottom line is that when you go to a church and you understand what a church is and what it does for you, the Bible says the leaders of the church, they watch for your souls.

Then it says, if that was not a big enough job, 2 Timothy 4:5 says the pastor is to watch in all things. That means you have cable TV, satellite TV, so you can get all the channels. I guess I am not sure how that works. If you watch all things, you will not have time for that stuff, I guarantee you.

I have an old sermon that I have preached for many, many years, and I call it the five watchwords in the Bible. Five being the number of death, that if you want to get killed spiritually, or not want to get killed spiritually, watch these five things. In the sermon, I kind of lay it out and build around five things that a Christian should watch in his life.

6. The first thing he should watch in his life is his words, what he says. 2 Timothy 1:13 says that we are to have sound words. 1 Timothy 6:3 says that our words are to be wholesome words.

A Christian needs to watch his words, and he needs to watch what he says, who he says it to. He needs to watch what he is talking about.

7. We have talked about it before many, many times: a Christian ought to watch his actions. Romans 14:7 says that no man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. Somebody is always watching your life, so you have got to watch your actions.

8. The next thing he says is that I preach in it as a Christian ought to watch his thoughts. That will be over there in 2 Corinthians 10:5, where it says: 2 Corinthians 10:5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

9. The next thing that you need to watch, or the fourth thing, would be your companions, who you hang out with.

The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 15:33—we got into it at great length here when we came through that chapter—is: 1 Corinthians 15:33

Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

10. Then the fifth thing is that a Christian ought to watch his heart.

The Bible says in Proverbs 4:23 that: Proverbs 4:23

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. The Bible says that: Matthew 22:37

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. Psalms 119:11 says: Psalms 119:11

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

You take and give me somebody that guards all five of those things in their life, and I will tell you somebody who has got something going. The first thing he says is you and I are to watch. We are to watch.

## IV. 2.) Stand Fast in the Faith

Then the next thing he says there in 1 Corinthians 16:13 is that we are to stand fast in the faith. A church should take a stand on some things. The problem is that most churches take a stand that takes them on the wrong things. A good Bible-believing church ought to take a doctrinal stand on things and be unmovable on it. One of the first things and the foremost thing for me is the Bible. A church ought to stand on the Bible being the Word of God. It is just that simple. We have a lot of churches today that believe that the Bible is not the Word of God, that there is other truth out there beside the Bible. Of course, we do not take that stand. We believe the Bible is the Word of God as God gave it to us. We believe it is infallible, we believe it is perfect, we believe it is inspired, and we believe it is everything that God claimed it to be.

I have told you all the time, everybody says, "Well, we believe the Bible when God in the original was all inspired, when it was inspired." Well, let me ask you a question: what good is the fact that God inspired something one time if you cannot get it today? The bottom line is, what good is inspiration without preservation? Somebody said, "Oh, I am excited, God wrote the Bible." Yeah, but where do you find it today? Can you get it today? Our church takes a stand that the Bible you have in your lap, a King James 1611 Authorized Version, is the absolute infallible Word of God. That is just where it is at.

We believe the virgin birth. A lot of churches do not believe that anymore. We believe in eternal security. A lot of churches do not believe that anymore. We believe in a literal hell and a literal judgment. Most people do not believe that anymore. We believe in the premillennial return of the Lord Jesus Christ. People do not believe that anymore. We believe in the holiness of the believer. What does that mean? Once you get saved, you ought to let the world go, and you ought to live for God and do what is right.

A church is to take a stand for things, but then a church takes a stand against some things. You see, you stand against false religions, false teachings. You stand against the charismatic movement. You stand against liberalism. You stand against things that teach heresy. Each one of them to the Bible. The Bible says in Ephesians 4:14:

*Ephesians 4:14*

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

*But speaking the truth in love may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ. Now that is a great verse. If you do not have that verse marked in your Bible, you ought to mark that verse in your Bible. That verse tells you right there that you are to come to the point where you grow up and you know what the Bible means, you know what it says. The thing that drives me crazy is God's people who have been saved for a number of years, and they know more about the Bible now than when they got saved. They could not defend themselves if somebody attacked them or their Bible or what they believe, if their life depended on it. You know why? Because you are carried about by every wind of doctrine. I know people that their whole belief about the Bible changes by what they get on the internet and hear somebody lay out and somebody do this or somebody do that. Their whole life is built on finding out what somebody on the internet says and then coming around saying, "Look what I found! Look at this new thing I got!" The bottom*

line is, if you know the Bible, the Bible is the Bible. It is as simple as that. But that is where we are at today.

He says over there in Galatians 5:1:

Galatians 5:1

*Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.*

*You and I are to stand fast in our liberty. In Ephesians 6, he says the Christian is told to take a stand against the wiles of the devil.*

Ephesians 6:13-17

*Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

*Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;*

*And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;*

*Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.*

*And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:*

*I am going to tell you something, folks, if you do not stand for something, you are going to fall for everything, and that is just the way it works.*

3.) *Quit You Like Men (Play the Man)*

*Then the next thing, or the third thing, he says there, and this is kind of an interesting one, he says, "Quit you like men." The word "quit" there does not mean to stop doing something. It is an old English word that means to do your part, to do your part like a man, behave yourself like a man. The definitive passage on it would be 1 Samuel 4:9, I believe, where it pretty much explains how the word is used if you compare scripture with scripture. But it basically means to do your part, to do your part like a man, behave yourself like a man, bear yourself in the manner of a man. In today's words, it would be like, "Act like a man."*

*The companion verse of that would be found in a great verse in 2 Samuel 10:12, where Joab makes a statement that kind of explains the verse, even though it does not use the exact same words. When you put it all together, you can get the gist of it. I think Joab is a great study in the Bible. Joab was one of the generals back in the Old Testament, and he planned battles. I think guys like that are invaluable to study in the Word of God when you realize that you need to have a battle plan. You need to have a battle plan. Where the nation of Israel fought literal wars, that is not what we are concerned with as a Christian; we are concerned with spiritual warfare, Ephesians 6. But the principles are the same.*

*Joab was a great general, and I have learned a lot over the years about how to deal with young men and young ladies, the Timothys of my ministry, by things that some of the great generals did in the Bible. Here is a case where not only do you have a great story, but I find my life verse for ministry. I have different verses that really have set my course in life, and I could just about take every subject and give you a verse, but for me and for ministry personally, this is my verse. This is my verse right here, and this verse has served me well over the years, and I have had to call on it many, many times, and it is a good verse.*

*Joab is in a battle. This will be 2 Samuel 10. Joab is in a battle, and he is in a battle against the Syrians, and he calls his second in command, Abishai, and he gets him over there, and he says, "Look, we are in a hot conflict here. We are in a hot LZ. We have got them coming. We have got the zips coming over the wire, man. We have got some problems." So here is what we are going to do. He says, "I am going to take all the choice men, and I am going to put them right at the front of the battle. You take the other half, and you stay in reserve." He says, "But I am going to take the choice men, and I am going to put them in the forefront." Now, the first principle I get out of that is, you have heard me say it many, many times, and I learned it from my own spiritual father, it is the fact that God never sends green troops into combat. He never does. He said to take the choice men, put them in the heat, front of the battle. The ones that are not ready for it yet, keep them in the rear with the gear, so to speak. Do not let them get into there until they get ready. That is a great battle plan because most young men and young ladies are not ready to handle the heat that comes into it because they do not have the experience of it. So it is good to get a little experience in life in ministry, see what goes on, glean from somebody who has been there and done it. Once you get to that point in your life, then you too can be put in the forefront of the battle.*

*But the verse that he gives him here is a great verse in 2 Samuel 10:12, and it gives this to Abishai as they are getting ready to part because he knows that probably in time he is going to have to call up the reserves. Just like I know in time some of you here this morning that maybe you are not ready to get into the heat of the battle yet, but you are in the reserve, so to speak. But in time, you ought to get up to the point where I can put you right up in the forefront of that thing, and where they are coming over the wire, and you can man an M60 with a guy holding the ammo for you, and you can just cut them in half as they are coming over the wire. That is what you have got to get to. I know most of you do not understand that, but that is okay.*

*Here is the verse. Oh, I love this verse. He says, Joab says to Abishai:*

*2 Samuel 10:12*

*Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God: and the Lord do that which seemeth him good.*

*That is a great verse. That is my life verse in ministry right there: "Play the man."*

*I have a message I preach out of Ezekiel 22:30. I think I preached it here probably once, maybe twice, and that message is based on the great passage there, and I call it "When God Looked for a Man." That verse says:*

*Ezekiel 22:30*

*And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.*

*God is always looking for men and women who are going to stand, but the key to making his stand is having the courage to play the man.*

*When you—most young men, again, and I use young men, but put ladies in the same category in the ministry aspect of it—they have the heat, they have the energy, but they do not have the wisdom. There is more to warfare than just going out and charging the target. You have got to understand the logistics behind it, and that is the key. Many times, you learn to be a man by simply acting like one when in fact you are absolutely scared to death. That is the aspect of playing the man.*

*I think it is tragic today, and it is pathetic today, that in Christianity we do not have many men who really understand to stand. Oh, you carry your right Bible, and you stand it, but you fall for some temptation just like that. You stand with your Bible, you claim to be saved, but when push comes to shove and the battle is raging, you are not going to be anywhere around because you always have an excuse, you always have an angle. There were guys like that in the military. There are guys like that in the military that always wanted to, they wear the ribbons on their chest, and they always wanted to talk about it, but when the action was coming, they just were not anywhere to be found. It is true in Christianity.*

*I love this verse. I think I love this verse because I think of not only what it means to me, understanding it, of playing the man, being God's man even when you are scared to death, but knowing it is the right thing to do and playing the man. I think of, in church history, a guy by the name of Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley. They were two guys that were burned at the stake in Oxford, England, right around 1555, October 16th, if I remember right, 1555. They were being burned at the stake by the Roman Catholic Church—I think it was the Church of England at that point—but they were being burned at the stake because of heresy. The heresy they were being burned at the stake for was believing exactly what you believe and taking a stand the way Paul told them to take a stand. I remember studying this as a young kid when I just got into church history, and Dr. Ruckman makes a reference to it in his church history book, and I remember, and then I got researching it all out. I do not know these guys, but this is what I mean, what I tell you, and I have told you before, even preached a message on it one time, this is what I mean when I say that I was born in the wrong time. These are the kind of guys I like to be around right here. I mean, I know we have some great men in this church, and I love you to death, and you would stand to fight, and I appreciate that, and we do, we have more than our share. But I want to tell you, in the overall realm of Christianity, I will tell you what, I have never seen such an amalgamated and godless mess in all my life of people who have bad imitations of what God's man should be. Incredible.*

*They are taking these two guys out there, and they burn them at the stake side by side. They tie their hands behind them and put them on a pole, and put all the wood underneath them there, and they begin to light that fire. Latimer was an older man, and Ridley was the younger guy. I do*

not know exactly how old they were, but Latimer was the older guy, and Ridley was the younger guy. As the fire began to come up and consume them, young Ridley began to panic a little bit. Not that you probably wouldn't, but he began to kind of lose his grip. Old Latimer looked over at him as the flames began to come up, and he was heard to yell over the flames, "Master Ridley, play the man! Play the man! For this day we shall light such a candle in England that the whole world will not be able to put out." That is my kind of guy right there. That is my kind of guy. My advice to you, when the Bible says that, "Quit you like men," my advice to you is to play the man. Be the man that God wants you to be. Be the man.

#### 4.) Be Strong

Now the fourth one is really important, and this is another one, and it is, he says to be strong. Joshua 1:9 says, "Be strong and of a good courage." If you come down through Joshua 1, you are going to find in verse 6, verse 7, verse 9, and verse 8, four times he tells them to be strong and have courage. Being strong and courageous are two different things, but you are going to find in the Bible they always go hand in hand.

Courage is knowing what to do and the ability to make the right choice. That is courage. Courage is to know what is right, be able to make your call, and to do what is right because you know it needs to be done. That is courage. But you see, that is not strength. That is courage. Strength is the ability that after you make the decision, you live with it when all hell breaks loose and you have got to pay the price for it. That is strength. You say, "Very courageous the statements you made, Pastor." Yeah, but when your phones start ringing off this afternoon and people say they start leaving the church, everybody gets mad at you, that is where you have got to have the strength. Say, "If it is right, it is right." That is what is missing today. You have people with courage, but they have no strength. You have some people with strength, but they have no courage. Most of God's people do not have either one of them.

Paul says in Ephesians 6:10:

Ephesians 6:10

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Nehemiah told the Jews back there in Nehemiah 8:10:

Nehemiah 8:10

For the joy of the Lord is your strength.

That is a great key. That is a great key. Most people that get into ministry, they have got the courage. It is one thing to get up and make a big stand, that is courage, that is good. But along with ministry comes the enduring process of counting the cost, and that is where you have got to be strong. It is easy to stand up when you are in a church and everybody is there and believes it. The real problem comes in is when your own family attacks you, when your friends attack you, when people that you thought were your friends now are no longer your friends, all because of the fact that you made a biblical stand that was right. You are holding the line, but along with

*that comes the strength of enduring it. That is the key, and it all comes back to the joy of the Lord.*

*I cannot tell you, I cannot explain to you, there is no way I could probably do this, but the thing that will get you through when nothing else will get you through, and the thing that will help you endure everything and give you the strength to get through after you made the decision, the only thing it will be will be the joy in your heart knowing that you made the right choice, that it was the biblical choice.*

*The reason he says all this, and we are going to see this when we get into the book of 2 Corinthians, is because you are going to see in 2 Corinthians that the key to ministry is going to be your suffering. This is what God's people do not like today, and this is why God's people for the most part do not make very good ministers. They talk a lot about it, but when it comes down to the suffering of it, they are just not ready to do it. I look at most of God's people today, and I walk around with my finger in the back of my throat; you just want to make you throw up because God's people have no courage, they have no strength. They talk a great fight, but when push comes to shove, they are nowhere to be found. The bottom line for that is, and I understand it, but the bottom line is that they do not want any suffering in their life. I am telling you, the thing that is going to make you the minister that God wants you to be is enduring through the sufferings and the troubles that you go through so you can help somebody else.*

*I watch some of you when you are struggling. I watch some of you struggle with problems in your life. I watch some of you struggle with your marriages, your family, your friends. I watch some of you struggle with your job situation. Maybe you are just too young for it at this point, I do not know. Somebody, I would think, you would have figured out by now. Many of God's people, they go through this, and they never see what they are going through and the struggles they are going through is exactly what God wants them to go through so they can endure through that because it is your suffering that you go through and the things that you do. Even when you do dumb things, in this particular case, it is not about just suffering for the right things. You can make some of the most goofiest, stupidest mistakes in your life that you will ever make any place, anytime, anywhere, and yet if you want to and turn the thing around, God will take the mess that you got yourself into, and He will bring you through it so that down the line you can help somebody else. But the price you have got to pay to do that could be a tough price. You know what gets you through? The joy of knowing you are doing what is right.*

*You know what some of your biggest problems are? You care too much what people think about you. That is some of your biggest problems out there. You care more about what your friends think about you than you do what God thinks about you, and that is a bad situation to find yourself in. You know what will happen every time you get in that position? You will never have any joy for the Lord. You know why? Somebody will keep taking it from you because joy only comes from getting strength, and strength comes from your suffering. When you are not willing to suffer, and you are not willing to put yourself into that mode so that you can help somebody else, you are not going anywhere. You are not going anywhere at all, and there will be no joy in your life. Joy in your life is the fact that whatever you are going through, no matter how bad it is, no matter how terrible it may be, whether you caused it because you are an idiot or you happen*

to fall into it because you are doing what is right, when you get to that point in your life and you know that you made it right with God and you are coming back and you are going to do it, the joy that gets you through the suffering is the fact that no matter what anybody else thinks about you, you know you are doing what God wants you to do. The tragedy is, in most of God's people's lives, that is not enough for you today, and I feel sorry for you. That is why you will never make it, why you will never get anywhere. One, you are not willing to suffer. Two, when you get into it to suffer, it is a thing where you are just not willing to pay that price. You see, it was all right for Him to suffer for you on the cross, but you are not willing to suffer for Him on this cross. You are to bear His cross. You are not willing to do it.

Every time you accept that something happens in your life that you are happy, you have got somebody in your world, whether it is your family, whether it is your friends, whether it is your wife, whether it is your husband, whether it is your boyfriend or your girlfriend, every time you start to get into that mode where you do something, and you just let somebody else take that joy from you. You know why? You let them steal it from you. You cannot steal my joy. You will never be able to do it. You may be able to steal a lot of things from me, but my joy is one thing you will never take from me. You know why? Because I do not give a flying flip what you think about me. I do not care what he thinks about me. Well, that does not give me a license to be an idiot, and I can be when I want to be, but that does not give me the license to do it. But it does tell me that if you do not understand that it is between you and Him, and there really nobody else matters.

I am glad you are here today. You know what? I am glad you are here today, but you know what? In my mind, deep down inside, I know when the push comes to shove and this whole thing goes to hell in a handbasket, there will probably be 10 of you here. You know what? I am okay with that. How could you say that? Because I will get more done with that 10 than I would if you all would have stayed because you have no heart in it. See, that is my joy. That is my joy. I love you for being here, and I hope you stay forever, and I hope I am dead wrong, and everybody here, we all just fight them out together. But I do not really think that is going to happen. I just know human nature.

But where do you get the strength you need to get through the issues of life without absolutely folding up like a broken accordion? Where do you get the strength and the endurance to go through your suffering that you may minister to somebody else? It is real simple: it comes from your personal relationship and the joy you have got in your heart. Never let anybody take your joy. I have seen people, I have seen people I have had in my own life, God will do some great thing, and then you get a phone call from somebody, and they want to rag on somebody else or tell you about this stupid thing, and then that guy, and it just tries to sap, just like somebody tries to put a hole in your leg and all that God just did come flowing out. Do not let that happen. Do not let that happen.

I think the greatest study that you will ever take on strength and being strong in the midst of adversity is the book of Psalms, going through David and his troubles. I mean, I do not know if you know it or not, but 80 verses in one book, all built around and deal with God's strength, giving him strength when he goes through the things that he needed to go with. You see, the key to you having the strength to endure all that you have to endure is your personal relationship,

*and the key to that is Psalms and a study of David's struggles with life and the things that he went through and God being his strength. His joy was in God, what God was doing in his life.*

*So you find verses like Psalms 18:1-3:*

*Psalms 18:1*

*I will love thee, O Lord, my strength.*

*Psalms 18:2*

*The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.*

*Psalms 18:3*

*I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.*

*There it is. Have you got that on your three by five card? Can you memorize that one?*

*Psalms 18:30-34:*

*Psalms 18:30*

*As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the Lord is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust in him.*

*Psalms 18:31*

*For who is God save the Lord? or who is a rock save our God?*

*Psalms 18:32*

*It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.*

*Psalms 18:33*

*He maketh my feet like hinds' feet, and setteth me upon my high places.*

*Psalms 18:34*

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

*Now there is the verse. Have you got that one? Have you got that one down, or do you just kind of willow up like a little tadpole someplace when the adversity comes? Play the man. Play the man.*

*Psalms 19:14 says:*

*Psalms 19:14*

*Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.*

*See that thing, the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart.*

*Psalms 27:1 says:*

*Psalms 27:1*

*The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?*

*There is the joy. What have you got to be afraid of? What have you got to be afraid about anybody on this planet as long as you are doing what God wants you to do? You say, "Well, you do not know what they will say about it." They are going to say about it no matter what you do. It does not matter. It only matters at the end of the day God is blessing you and you have the things that God has. They have absolutely nothing. You are too stupid to see that, and you let all the joy that God wants to give you through ministry and helping others, and you let what somebody thinks or somebody says suck out of you what God is doing. You are nuts. You have got to be a job witness. You probably could not even make that cut.*

*I know we get so strong, and we think we are so tough, and we think we are so big. Psalms 33:16 says:*

*Psalms 33:16*

*There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength.*

*You will fall on your face if you trust in yourself. God's strength is everywhere for you and for me.*

*Psalms 93:1 says:*

*Psalms 93:1*

*The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.*

*So when you put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh, there is your strength.*

*Psalms 95:4 says:*

*Psalms 95:4*

*In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.*

*He is in the hills.*

*Psalms 96:6 says:*

*Psalms 96:6*

*Honour and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.*

*Psalms 105:4 says:*

*Psalms 105:4*

*Seek the Lord, and his strength: seek his face evermore.*

*When you come through Psalms, you have historically David. He is going through all the tough times and the troubles that he is going through, and the promises that God gives him. God gets David through. You know why? Because he delights himself in the Lord and seeks His face evermore. Israel doctrinally, Israel is going to go through some great times and tribulation, and that is what doctrine the book of Psalms is all about. Through their prayer and through their enduring to the end, they are going to be saved. Inspirationally, it is you and me. You and I will go through our own tribulations, will not we? Some of us self-induced because of our stupidity, others have just come because you are going to do what is right. It is okay, it does not matter. We all make dumb choices, we all do dumb things. Nobody can hold that against you. The bottom line is you have to come to the place where you realize that part of the Christian life, as far as ministry is, is suffering, suffering, suffering, suffering, suffering, suffering for Him.*

*You do not get that. You do not get it. You have never figured it out. Like 2 Corinthians 12:9 says:*

*2 Corinthians 12:9*

*And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.*

*There it is. You go through what you go through, you struggle what you go through, and you are to be strong and you endure, and it is through what you hang on to and all of that that you deal with, God makes you strong.*

#### *5.) Let All Things Be Done With Charity*

*The last command he gives this church is again, it goes back to the attitude of heart. He says, "Let all things be done with charity." We studied charity when we came through 1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14, the great love chapter, chapter 13. We now know that you never take the word charity in 1 Corinthians 13 and make it love. We now understand why you do not do that, because we now know that charity is the biblical form of love. It is unconditional. The kind of love that God gave you is unconditional. The kind of love that you give Him back is unconditional, and the kind of love that we give to other people is unconditional. There lies the problem.*

*In most churches, most pastors love you because they want something from you. I just simply love you because you need it. You need it just like I need it. You need it unconditionally just like God gave it to me, like He gave it to you. But God's people have a tough time with that today because we always want something back. That is the mode of Christianity today. We ought to take the Christ out of Christianity, just call it "ianity" because there is no Christ in it. The greatest quality that Christ ever had, character quality, is giving. "God so loved the world, that he gave." He gave to you and me unconditionally. He gave to you and me unconditionally before*

*you were ever born. He saw you in your hell and died for you on the cross, and me too. He gave that love. God put that love in Christ, but He made it unconditional. There are no bars, nobody. Everybody can have it, anybody can get it. It does not know any social barrier, social class, no ethnic group. Anybody on planet Earth can have it if they want it. It is unconditional.*

*That is the way our love has to be for Him, for each other, because the greatest character quality of God is giving. The greatest character quality of a child of God should be giving to others, taking care of others. The greatest character quality of a Bible-based New Testament church, it is an unconditional giving to others, whether it be teaching you the Bible without asking anything back. You ought to go through some of the churches, and I have got one great one in mind this morning, that you walk in the door, and everything you get costs you something. If you want to be discipled, you have got to pay a price to be discipled. If you want to go to a Bible institute, it costs you about six or seven hundred dollars to go. If you want to get married in the church, if you are a tithing member of the church—I mean, if you have given to the church and you have tithed—if you are not a tithing member, you cannot even get married in it. But if you are a tithing member, they check your tithing record, and if you are a tithing member, then it is going to cost you about \$800 to get married in that church. I mean, it is your church, you helped build it, and now when you want it, they are going to charge you something. Then they are going to tack on somebody to come in and do the sound, yell loud. Then they are going to charge another hundred dollars for somebody to clean up. You see, everybody wants something, and it is usually around money. So the love of money is the root of all evil. Everything you do, you want to learn the Bible? Fine, it costs you \$25. You want to come in and get marital help? You have marital problems? Fine, it is \$30 an hour. That is exactly how it exists today because everybody wants something back from you, and it is usually around money. The bottom line is, that is not New Testament Christianity.*

*Now, you ought to give, you ought to support the church. We have talked about it many, many times, that is your responsibility. But you want to get taught the Bible? I have never understood, and this is what drives me crazy and flips my selector to full auto, nothing drives me crazy faster than somebody having something that God gave us free and then charging you to get it. I just do not understand that other than the fact that you are demon possessed and need to burn in the lake of fire for all of eternity. I do not understand that. God gave us the book and the principles, and you think that you have such a control of it that you are now going to give out to somebody else what God gave you, and you are going to charge them for it. Crazy. Just absolutely nuts.*

*Next week, we are going to start the book of dealing with ministry, and it will be a great time from where we are at right now. The real key to ministry is doing all things with charity because great biblical love, or real biblical love, is uncomprehendable. It works so well in the world that we live in because everybody expects to be taken advantage of, and real biblical love is uncomprehendable. People cannot understand why somebody would do this without wanting something back. True biblical love is undefendable. People can get mad at you for doing things because you have an ulterior motive, but it is kind of hard to really get mad at somebody who has no ulterior motive. They are just doing it because they love you.*

*If you are out there, if you are a single lady and you have got your kids in the car—not single lady, but your husband is not with you—and you have got your kids in the car, you are driving down the road, it is a rainstorm about 9:30 at night, and it is dark, and you are along the road and you get a flat tire. About that time, another person pulls up behind you out there, and it is a guy, and he has got his wife and family in the car, and he sees you are out there trying to get the jack out. He just says, "No, please get in the car, I will take care of it, and I will take care of it for you." When he gets it all done, and you try to give him five dollars or ten dollars or whatever, and he says, "No, no, no, no, no, I want somebody to do it for my wife. I am just doing it for that reason. God bless you, go on your way." What do you think when you are driving away? Do you think, "Well, that rascal, I will tell you what, I just think he is a jerk"? No, you are going to think, "Man, I wish there were more people in the world just like that." That is exactly what this new world needs. It needs people just like that, but they ought to be God's people. But God's people, we have this hand to help you, and you say, "Oh, you went unarmed." No, you just cannot see my hand. It is in your back pocket after your wallet.*

*Real Bible-based love is uncomprehendable. It is undefendable, but it is also undeniable. When you take the time to suffer with someone and go through what they are going through, that is how you minister to them. That is why, when it comes to restarting, I cannot tell you how many guys have tried to start churches in the inner city, and they all fell on their face. They all fall on their face because they do not want to do what they have got to do. It is like a lot of God's people, they do not want to pay the price, pay to do what they need to do. They just want to go in, and everybody jumps in line because, "Oh, you are here to start a church, let us just line up." It does not work that way. People suffer, people go through tough things. Your job and my job is to identify with their sufferings, go through those sufferings with them, be there for them, earn the right to give them the biblical concept of charity and love, and to help them any way that we can. That is why if you are going to build a church in the inner city, you are going to have to do it the way we are going to do it. We go down there unconditional.*

*This church amazes me on one hand, and I guess this is a good thing. On one hand, this church infuriates me so much I can hardly stand you. But on the other hand, you make me so proud of you, I just think you are the greatest people in the world. They do not know what to think of us down there, and that is a good thing. They have already said it to me, they have said it to Jamie, they said it to our ladies when we went down there. They said, "You know what?" They are watching us. They are watching us because they think right now, because all the groups that they have been with, they have come down there always wanting something back. So they are watching us right now. They told me that most groups that come down, they come down through the Christmas season because they are—these are their words, not mine—because they want that nice warm fuzzy feeling, and then they go back and forget about us the rest of the year. I understand that nice warm fuzzy feeling is what most of God's people want.*

*I am just not a—this is not a criticism, maybe it is, probably is, the more I think about it, it is a criticism. I drive through Raytown, all these places. I watch these churches put on these big extravagant Christmas pageants and get all kinds of thousands of people to come in. You know what the underlying reason all it is? They want your money. You know why those places will be*

*packed out? You know why? Because God's people want a nice warm fuzzy feeling. You like going in, and they will shuttle you up to the door, and you go in, and you take off your six-thousand-dollar mink coat, and you sit in there, and you fill the place out, and a bunch of little goofy people down there put on a little Christmas pageant, and you get a nice warm glow about Jesus, and you hear a pastor get up and talk about it, and it is all a game. You would not go down in the cold freezing streets to give anybody a tract, to give anybody a hot dog, or to give anybody a cup of water if your life depended on it. It brings you out of your comfort zone. You see, that is the way God's people are today.*

*Last week, and I love it, I think these things are great. The lady down there, I got to tell you, I was amazed. The lady down there called us, and she said, "No pressure, no pressure, I am just telling you, we have got a kind of an emergency down here. We have got all these families down here, and all these things. We are out of baby wipes, and we are out of toothbrushes. I do not know what you can do. No, please, no pressure, no pressure." Jamie called me on the phone, and I said, "We have got six thousand toothbrushes over here." I said, "We have got any baby wipes?" We got on and made a few things out there. I came back Thursday night, that was Thursday morning. Thursday night, there must have been 643 cans of baby wipes out there. We took those down the next morning. They went out of their mind. Nobody has ever done that before. You know what? That is charity. That is not coming down and saying, "Well, we are going to do this, but we have got an ulterior motive." Failing an ulterior motive. You say you want to start a church? That is not an ulterior motive. I am not starting a church. I am never going to say to them, "Can we start a church?" I am going to wait for them to say, "Will you come down and start a church?" So stick that ulterior motive in your pipe and smoke it. See, that is the difference between somebody who tries to manipulate the circumstances and somebody who just believes that God is in charge, and if He wants it down there, then He will do it. I was not looking for this place when I found it. I just go through doors. But the only way to get through doors is charity, unconditional giving, getting out of your comfort zone, and going out there where people are.*

*I know that not everybody can do it. I am not saying you should, and I do not look down on anybody that does not. I really do not. I do not even think that way. But I am telling them, they told us last week that Christmas time, everybody comes down and adopts a family, but they have got like 20-some singles down there. Nobody wanted to adopt the singles for Christmas. I said, "We will adopt." I said, "We will adopt. Done. Send me a list of the names." Then I get my little, I said, "I will take that to our prayer groups, and our prayer groups will adopt those 19 people out just like that. You give me the list of what they want, and we will take care of it." Then she says, "Well, could you come down and do a Christmas party?" "No, we cannot. No, no, we cannot do that. How about if we just drove by and threw them out in the front? Would that work for you?" Christmas party? Yeah, we will do a Christmas party. "You have got a Santa Claus suit?" "Yeah, got nine of them." I do not have any, but I will get one. So now they want us to come down and do a Christmas party, bring all the people in there. We are going to adopt those 19 people plus the kids. Then I said, "How about all those overnight guys over there?" I said, "Anybody doing this?" He says, "Oh, nobody knows." I said, "I will tell you what, I said, here is the deal. I said, we will take that date. I think we have got it on the sign-up sheet back. We will take that date.*

*That is a Sunday night. We will take that date. We will come down, bake cookies, bring all the parties down, and then I will say, we will get some presents for the overnight guys, and while people are still doing their thing, we will send Santa Claus over with some of our men to visit with those guys over there, spend the evening with them, take them some treats, take them some presents. Then we will come back over, do the presents over here." No strings attached.*

*It will not be long at the time that somebody is going to say, "Hey, we even had one lady last week, she says, 'I want a Bible.' She says, 'Could you get me a Bible?' She says, 'But I want a King James Bible.'" We have got a revival going down today. It is coming that way, guys. You want to start a church in the inner city? Earn the right to do it. Go down and suffer with them. Sit down with those guys over there who sleep out in the cold and put your arm around them and talk to them. Spend some time with them. Do not look like they have got the plague and say, "Here is your present, God bless you." Do not just surround yourself with all the nice warm things. Get out of your comfort zone. Get down where the real world is. Do not make God have to take everything out of your life and take it away for you to put you down there for you to figure it out. See, that is the key. When we get into 2 Corinthians, we are going to see that the key to ministry is suffering. It is you and me identifying with the people that we are working with and the things that you have gone through.*

*I watch you people do it all the time. You are working with a couple, you are working with this, and you are drawing off your horrendous past with all the struggles that you had, and now you are telling them what God has done for you. That is invaluable. It is more important not to tell somebody what God will do for them, but you tell that person what God has done for you, and then bring it into their world. What I am talking about now, if you guys are smart on the prayer groups things—I do not, and you are pretty smart, you guys are smart on the prayer group things—you will adopt one of these people, and then you will go back where you work, and you will tell your people at work, "How would you guys all like to adopt a homeless person for Christmas?" And you will get everything you need, will not have to spend a dime. Bob Jones used to say, "The devil is going your way." Right, he used that. That is in the Bible, it is called "wiser than serpents, harmless as doves." Sometimes three serpents to one dove, but nevertheless, use the system against the system. That is what it is for.*

*Real biblical love is uncomprehendable. Real biblical love is undefendable, but real biblical love is undeniable. It is you and me going through the doors that God opens, unconditionally giving people back to them what God has done for us. That is where it is at. That is what it will be. This is where God gave us this. He could have given it to anybody else on the planet. He gave it to us. Every day of my life, I thank God for the door He gave us. But you see, He would not have given us the door if we did not have the people to get it done. That is what matters. We have everybody, almost to a man and a woman, in this church will do whatever needs to be done. Somebody cannot go down. I have people that cannot walk. They called me on the phone, and I cannot walk and go anywhere, I cannot really get out, but can you bring the chair down there and can I do something sitting down? Absolutely. We have people in the world out there today that have strong bodies, can do everything they want, and they would not give God five minutes of their time to it. That is what it is all about. See, that is the difference that you make. It is the difference*

*that you make because many of you, you got addicted to it, and there is nothing more addictive than going down there and watching God do something in your life.*

*We are going to get into 2 Corinthians next week. It will be a good book. You will be able to now, and I could not work the state of this if I wanted to. You are going to go through play by play, almost verse by verse, chapter by chapter, seeing what that book says unfold into what we are doing right now in all the different areas of ministry that we have. It will take you folks, it will take you Timothys, you Apolloses, and you Aquilas and Priscillas. I do not know why everybody is getting nervous, we are not going anywhere. It will take all of you guys and take you to the next level that we work better together, not harder, just smarter. That you learn that everybody here is absolutely invaluable, but you will also remember that God saved you for a reason, and that reason is to minister. But the only way to minister is through your suffering.*

*Father, we do thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus, and I do love You today. Thank You for all You have done for us. Thank You for the great people here today. Lord, I pray that You will bless all the endeavors today. I thank You for the turkeys that everybody brought in and the clothes that just keep coming in and the bread and the cookies and everybody who just absolutely is doing their part.*