

# Luke 6-15

Sunday 2/13/2011

SEC: The Humanity of Christ and the Depth of God's Word

We have been coming through the book of Luke, and we know now that the book of Luke deals with the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is portrayed here as the Son of Man. We have talked about this on Thursday night to some degree; it has been coming up here lately.

Within the Bible, there is a great series called what I call the "seven series." In other words, it is everything in the Bible that God lays out in the patterns of sevens, which is the way He designed for us to learn the Bible. People have asked questions here in the last couple of weeks. We have the complete study on the website.

There are seven mysteries in the Bible. Those seven mysteries are things that God has kept for Himself that He only gives to those who are believers, and with that concept, to those who really get into His Word as believers. Every one of those mysteries, the seven of them, a couple of weeks ago, somebody asked a question about the seven things that the Bible says that we are not to be ignorant of. I told you that night as I walked you through them that there are those seven things that we are specifically told not to be ignorant of, or the basic things that 99.9% of God's people are absolutely ignorant of. But once I laid them out, you saw how key and crucial they were to the whole Bible. The seven mysteries are the same way.

Once we would do the seven mysteries, we could go through the seven resurrections in your Bible. There are seven judgments in your Bible. We talked about that a couple of Thursday nights ago. Everything in your Bible that is meaningful in its concept comes through the series of sevens.

In the seven mysteries in the Bible, in the book of Luke, we are talking about the natures of Christ, the two natures of Christ. We are talking about in the book of Luke how He is portrayed as the Son of Man. When you study the mysteries of God, you will find that three of those mysteries are dealing with the nature of Christ.

You have one mystery which is called the mystery of godliness. That is over there in 1 Timothy 3:16. That mystery is the mystery of how God came and was manifested in the flesh. That is a great mystery in the Bible. When you lay that mystery out, you learn tremendous things about Christ and who He is, not only His deity, but also, as we are studying in the book of Luke here, His humanity.

In Colossians 1:27, you have another mystery about Christ, and this one is "Christ in you, the hope of glory." That mystery concerns how a holy God lived inside somebody like you and me who was such a sinner. When you understand that mystery, it gives you another dimension of the nature of Christ, not only from His humanity side, but from the deity side.

Then, of course, in Ephesians 5:32, this would be the mystery of the church. In this particular mystery, it is the mystery of how Christ joined Himself to you the day you got saved. Those are all key doctrinal things in the Bible that, very frankly, not knowing those mysteries—just those

three plus the seven—is the reason why so many of God's people have so many spiritual issues in their life and they really do not know much about the Bible.

The Bible, to me, is like skin diving. You have people who are snorkelers, and they do not have any tanks at all. They just have a little tube sticking out of their mouth, might as well be a straw. They will dive down 10, 15 feet and come back up. But basically, they cannot get down very deep, so they have to do the surface stuff.

Then you have the guys who are what they call scuba divers, and they wear their air tanks, and they go down a hundred feet, maybe fifty feet, and they sustain themselves down there. They get below the surface, and they have the ability to sustain themselves underwater for a period of time.

But then you have in the Navy what they call hard hat divers. Those guys go down to great depths, and they will stay down there nine or ten, twelve hours because their system of air and oxygen is not based on what they carry. It is now hooked to a source that allows them to go deeper than anybody else and stay down longer.

I actually looked at that and thought to myself, "That is the way Christians are." Most Christians are snorkelers. They just stay right below the surface or on the surface, and they never really get down into any depth. Then you find some Christians that get down deeper. But then you find what I call the hard hat diver Christians, who hook up their air supply to a source above them, and then they can stay down all day long, all night long, as long as it takes, at great depths in the Word of God.

I am interested in training not snorkelers. I am not even interested in just training guys and gals who can scuba dive. I want to build hard hat divers. I want to get people that can go down in the depth of the Word of God, grasp those principles, and stay down there all day long if they have to. That is what I am looking for.

In so many ways, I am so proud of all of you for all that you do with the Bible. I was looking back this week, and it has been about four or five years ago now that we actually came through each book of the Bible. At that particular point in time, we were just laying out the idea, the concept. I was basically showing you the book breakdowns. We were not getting in any depth to it. I have all those sermon outlines. When I prepare this one, I go back and look at the other one so I do not reproduce myself in the same way.

But this time, as I was going back, it was a good thing for me to do because I saw a real great comparison between where we were as a church back then to where we are as a church now. Back then, as I looked at those outlines, they were basically surface stuff, very important surface stuff. They began to form in many of your minds the concepts by which you have built on to get yourself where you are at today. Many of you are on the way; you are in scuba diving school, and you are on your way to being a hard hat diver. It all started with snorkeling through the books of the Bible.

I look at where we are at now, and the stuff that I have to take out of these books now is nowhere near the same. I did mark in one setting last time. I am not going to get through Mark yet today.

We have already been in it two weeks. The reason why is because when you start to look at Christ and how He is portrayed in each book, and you start to lay it out, and you start to put it all together, and you start to go down underneath the surface and you get into a deeper level, you are going to find that that requires more time.

The base level of our church has grown so much. Yet we still have new people coming in who have the attitude, and that is really what it takes, and the ability to broaden themselves. It is right now all the cylinders are firing, and everything is coming to the point where we tried to get it here, and it has taken us seven or eight years to get here.

This is what I am talking about when I talk about a philosophy in ministry. Teachers need to get to a goal. They need to have a point that they get to. You better have a plan to get to that point, and then when you get to that point, you better have another plan to get the church to the next level. Then when you get to that level, another level. The only way that you can do that is to understand that you have to teach people the basic fundamentals that grow your base.

We talked about this last week. Last week, I showed you in the book of Luke that there are four sections. You should have that in your Bible by now. I showed you that the first section was section one through three, where he talked about the Man of God, and that was "prepared," that was the Son of God, Son of Man, "prepared Christ." Then chapter four through chapter eight made up the second one, and that was the Son of Man "identified." Then we went into the third section, chapter nine through chapter eighteen, and that would be the teachings by the Son of Man on the issues of life, and there are some great practical things there. Then the last section, or the fourth section, was chapter nineteen through twenty-four, and that would deal with His crucifixion and His resurrection, and that would be the Son of Man "exalted." We got into chapter six. We ended in chapter six about halfway through the second section. Where we are at today, we are going to move on.

SEC: The Call to Be a Prepared Servant

I told you, and this is why I am taking my time, because I told you last week that my goal is to take men and women and get you to prepare to help other people in the Bible. You have people that God wants to put in your world, and in many of your lives, He has already put them there.

There is a great study in the Bible that I teach in Acts chapter 8 about the salvation of the Ethiopian eunuch. In that particular message there, I talk about how you see the two things that God is doing there. You have the old Ethiopian eunuch, and that Ethiopian eunuch is a good man. He loves God. He is following the light that he has, but he is down in Africa.

Then you have a guy by the name of Philip, and Philip is Philip the evangelist. He is one of the deacons over there in Acts chapter 7. Philip is over here having a great revival, while this old Ethiopian eunuch is down here asking questions in his heart about God. He is actually going to Jerusalem to try to find where God is at and try to get the answers to his questions.

Somewhere along the line, somewhere along the line God gave him, through some source that we will never know on this side of eternity, a copy of Isaiah, an Old Testament book. This old Ethiopian eunuch has no idea that Christ has died yet. He has no idea about the death, burial, and

resurrection of Christ and that eternal life is now in the finished work of Christ. All he is following is what he has been told. There is a great study in that. We do not have time to get into it this morning.

But he is going to Jerusalem, the Bible says, to worship, and then God has Philip over here. When you lay that story out, you begin to see how God does things in your life, or should I say, wants to do things in your life, in my life, because the study here is one of a prepared servant, that would be Philip, and a prepared sinner, that would be the Ethiopian eunuch.

What you are going to find right now, as you are sitting here and contemplating what you are going to do with the lesson this morning, or the lesson last week, or the Bible in general, is that God has people out there that are in trouble. God has people out there that are in heartache. God has people out there that are in sin. God has people out there that He is preparing to get the message to. What God needs is prepared servants that will take the message to the prepared sinners.

I believe personally, in my own personal life and watching Christianity for so many years, that He has many, many more prepared sinners than He has prepared servants. But that is what He wants you to get out of this. That is what He wants you to do. That is what He wants you to be in this church. I am not asking you to be sinless, because that is impossible. But I am asking you to be prepared. I am not asking you to be the greatest saint that ever walked on the planet, but I am asking you to be a prepared servant. I am asking you to recognize what God wants to do.

Right now, while you are sitting here, in your family, or somewhere in your work world, or somewhere in your social world, God is preparing in the heart of somebody right now their need. How many people come to this church and get saved because somebody else had the burden, and God put you into their life at the right moment, at the right time, and you saw that, you were ahead of the game, and you realized that God put you in that scenario?

As far as I am personally concerned, all life is just a matter of that once you get saved. Your life and my life after we become a Christian is for you to prepare yourself in God like Philip. I really like the way the story ends in Acts chapter 8 because the Bible says that the Ethiopian eunuch, once he gets saved, he goes on his way rejoicing. But it says that Philip was moving on, doing the same thing that God called him. He just went on to another adventure, to another Ethiopian eunuch, to another person, to another this. I will tell you what, I like you doing that a lot better than Jimmy doing it. That is the whole concept. That is what I want you to get out of this today.

SEC: Biblical Counseling: Addressing Root Problems, Not Symptoms

That is why I am going to take the time to lay out the counseling biblical principles. We talked about building a base of men and women who understand how to take situations and turn them back toward the Bible. There is no magic to it. There is no set of books you buy, no set of tapes. Once you learn the principles in your own life, then you simply take the victories that God has given you, you learn the principles, and then you share them with somebody else.

I told you last week that dealing with people or counseling people in the Word of God through their problems, and the book of Luke is just filled with them. I am going to mark them as we go

through. I am going to tell you each time that here is one, and I am going to, hopefully, you will get it down and restudy it and rework it in your own life, in your own ministry, in your own world.

But I told you that there are two types of counseling last week, and I failed to give you the definitive verses on it, and I always like to do that. I told you that the first type of counsel that you are going to find in the Bible is for an unsaved man. That will be Proverbs 19:24. That is your definitive verse. There are only two problems that man has: he is either unsaved or he is saved and he is out of fellowship. That pretty much covers the gamut.

So when we talk about counsel, we are not talking about Dr. Freud, or talking about therapeutic counseling, or talking about this guy or that guy, or Dr. Who or Dr. No. We are talking about, from God's standpoint, what it is that we need to understand that we do and why people have problems. Of course, Proverbs 19:24 is why an unsaved man has problems.

Proverbs says that there are many devices in the heart of man, but the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand. Man, all of his life, is putting devices in his heart to get around God. By the time he is 20, 30, 40 years old, he is finding out those devices are not only not working for him, they are causing him a lot of problems.

Now the second verse will be over there in Revelation 3:18, and that is a great one. This is for saved people. That one is found right in the middle of the Laodicean church, and he says there to the church, he says, "I counsel thee." God is giving counsel to a saved person, why the saved person has problems. "To buy of me gold tried in the fire." So when you deal with a saved person, a saved person will have problems because God saved them to be a prepared servant, and they are not fulfilling that. So that is where we left off last week.

Let us have a word of prayer, and we will jump into chapter 7 here, and look forward to having a good time in the book.

Father, we do thank you and praise you for the Lord Jesus. We ask you now to take this time to use it for your honor and glory, and we will thank you and praise in Jesus' name for a sake we ask it. Amen.

Now I am going to make some notice of some things here that I wish I had time to develop, but I will give them out, and I look at it this way: those of you who are hungry for the Word of God, you will make it a project to get it done. Those that will not, it will not matter anyhow. But I cannot spend the time on all of this the way I want to, because I want to hit the principles that really help you.

SEC: Jesus, The Friend of Sinners (Luke 7)

In chapter 7, we see in this chapter the great stories unfolding of Jesus as a friend of sinners. That is the theme in the book of Luke. He is the friend of sinners. You may sit here this morning, and you may be out of fellowship with God, or you may be lost. I do not know. But I am telling you what, when all your friends are gone, and all your money is gone, and all your buddies and all your girlfriends leave you high and dry because they get a better deal, there will always be one

that will be better for you than anybody else. We sang about it this morning, or Donnie sang about it this morning, and that is, "What a friend we have in Jesus." Many times I have heard that song, and I ask myself, "What kind of friend does Jesus have in me?" because it is a two-way street. But in this great chapter, we see it.

The first story unfolds here. It is a familiar story, but maybe you do not know some of the background I am going to give you. In Luke 7:1-10, you have the story of the centurion. That centurion, he has got a servant that is sick. He sends, he goes, and he says, "Hey look, if you will just say the word, my servant will be healed." Of course, we know that the servant gets healed.

Centurions in the Bible are very key. You will not get this snorkeling. You will not even get this scuba diving. But you will get this as a hard hat diver. There are four or five centurions in the Bible, depending on how you count them. One of them may be the same guy twice, but you do not know. But there are at least four, maybe five centurions in the Bible, and they are all stand-up guys.

A centurion is like a first sergeant. He is somebody in the Roman army who is over a group of guys. He has tremendous responsibility, much like a first sergeant would have today, which would be over a whole company. A company would have four platoons; that would be almost 250 guys. So the centurions in the Bible, whenever you find them, they are a stand-up guy.

Two Passages That Pulls it all Together...

> *Matthew 8:5*

> *Matthew 27:54*

> *Acts 10*

> *Acts 22*

> *Acts 27*

Wherever you find them, they are a stand-up guy. In other words, they are the kind of guys that are always doing the right thing. It is an incredible under-the-surface study to take and study that. But that is the story, the centurion here, when we start into chapter 7.

Then in Luke 7:11-18, we find, you remember from our Zacchaeus message three or four weeks ago, you will find the raising of the widow's son. That is a great story. I do not know if you know this or not in the Bible, and we did not have time to go in and do it on all my Zacchaeus message because that was not my goal.

In Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, when you find somebody who is dead and then Jesus brings them back to life, it is always a picture of an unsaved person. The thinking behind that is that if you are here this morning and you are not saved, if you are here this morning and you do not know 100% for sure that if you died today, you would go to heaven to spend an eternity with the Lord Jesus Christ, then the bottom line is simply this: your Bible says you are dead in trespasses of sin. That is why in the Bible, dead people are pictures of unsaved people in most cases. Here is a guy that was dead, and yet Jesus brings him back to life. In every case, that is going to be for

a practical application, a picture of an unsaved person who then finds the newness of life in Christ Jesus.

In Luke 7:36-50, we find the great story, and there are a lot of things behind this story, the great story of Jesus going to the house of Pharisees and eating a meal. Here we find an introduction of a woman, an alabaster box, who takes the oil, precious oil, and wipes His feet with it, very costly. She uses her own hair to wipe His feet. We get to see a great contrast here in attitudes. The Pharisees, all they can see, is a woman who is a sinner. You are going to find that in Christianity today, there are a lot of Pharisees.

Jesus, it is always interesting in the New Testament, especially in the Gospels, especially in Luke when you are seeing the humanity, to watch how Jesus looks at people and how the scribes and the Pharisees looked at people. It is one of the greatest studies you will ever find. The scribes and the Pharisees are always listening to people's sins. Jesus is always looking past the sins and going to the people. That is a great principle.

If you are ever going to be in ministry, you have to realize that you have to get past the problems that people get into because Pharisees, all they see, they did not see the fact that she got this alabaster box full of precious ointment, very costly. They did not see the fact that she came to Jesus and was kneeling at His feet and then taking that ointment and putting it over His feet and then getting involved herself by using her own hair to wipe His feet. They did not see any of that. All they saw was that she was a sinner.

Behind the scenes, many times people who want to hold grudges against other people or have attitudes toward other people who maybe have not done what is right, or are struggling through something in their life, or maybe they have gotten right and they are trying to get right back with God, many times the Pharisee does what he does because he knows he is out of fellowship with God, and he resents the fact that another sinner is coming back to God. So he takes it out on them.

There is a psychology, there is a philosophy behind ministry. This is what I want to speak to you young men on places like Saturday when we get our times together that I can show you where we can go down where the hard hat divers are at. You have to learn these things. I do not necessarily know that you learn it just by us talking about it on Sunday morning because I pack a lot of things in here. The real key that makes you a hard hat diver is not coming on Sunday morning and coming on Thursday night. Those are very important. But the real thing that makes you the hard hat diver is the one-on-one time that we spend because there we get to really go down and dive together. It is not like a crowd of 100 people with you or whatever. It is me and you, and we are diving together, and we can get down there and get things done. But it all works together.

Jesus did not care what she had done. This is the key. This is what you have got to build your ministry on with people because people are going to come in with all kinds of problems. Many times people who do not want to get right with God want to point their fingers at other people who have problems with God in the past simply because it helps them feel better about themselves. The great principle coming out of this is Jesus did not care where she was or what

she had done. He really did not. All He cared about is where she was at that moment. You know where she was at that moment? Where the Pharisee should have been: at His feet. No matter what you have done in life, no matter where you have been or the mistakes you have made, let me tell you something: your best position to be in is at His feet. You will never go wrong hanging out at the feet of Jesus. That is a great principle for you and for me.

SEC: God's Revelation and the Authority of His Word (Luke 10-11)

Then we come to chapter 10. Luke 10, probably my favorite chapter in the Bible. I told you guys this Thursday night, there are seven things in the Bible that the Bible says they rejoice over in heaven. That is that seven series. Seven things they rejoice over in heaven. As a child of God, you ought to know what those are because God forbid you get to the judgment seat of Christ and be rejoicing over the wrong things. I mean, I would not want to be rejoicing over something that God is not rejoicing over, nor would I want to miss what He is rejoicing over. We do not have time getting in this morning, but this chapter 10 is one of my favorite ones because it will show you where, when you get in the middle of things, these things are great.

> *Luke 10:21*

> *In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.*

It says that in that hour, Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit. Do you know what He rejoiced over? He rejoiced over the Bible, over the fact that God hid the Word of God from the high-educated crowd, from the scribes and the Pharisees, to the doctors, to the theologians, and gave it to the babies, you and me. I like that.

Scribes always had two problems with everything that Jesus did. They always had a problem, first of all, with His doctrine. The second thing they had a problem with was His authority because they had neither. They had no doctrine, and we know now that the Pharisees and the Sadducees, they had no authority. It is the same today.

Do you know why back then the scribes and the Pharisees had those two problems, and the Pharisees and the scribes today religiously have the same problem? Because they want to be the final authority in your life, not the Word of God. That is the big issue today. I think this is one of the greatest verses in the Bible that talks about how Jesus rejoiced at the fact that He hid the Word of God. This is why when you try to explain to some educated person about Genesis chapter 6, Genesis chapter 1, or lay some deep content out in the Bible, they cannot get it. Do you know why? Because God hid it from them. Because the scribes and the Pharisees in His day or in our day have the same issue. It is an issue with the authority of the Word of God and an issue with His doctrine. The Bible is the only book in the universe that you have got to, if you are going to get it, if you get anything out of it, it depends on your attitude about it. That is a great verse in your Bible.

Then we come to chapter 11. This is another good one here. In chapter 11, we find the Lord's Prayer. I want you to follow along in your King James Bible here, and I am going to read it to

you as this Lord's Prayer in Luke 11:2 is laid out in your NIV. Maybe you will understand a little better why I am so rabid about these things, but please, if you would placate me, and I am not sure what placate means, but if you will just indulge me for a moment and read along with me here, I will read it in my NIV, which I now have switched to, and you read it in your King James Bible. This is called the Lord's Prayer.

> *Luke 11:2-4 (NIV as read by speaker)*

> *2 Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come.*

> *3 Give us each day our daily bread.*

> *4 Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.*

Now that is the end of it. Left out 20 words. Let me just say something to you here. There is no Greek manuscript on this planet that contains that reading. There is no Greek New Testament anywhere on this planet. Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, wherever you want to go. There is no Greek New Testament that that reading is found in. Then somebody says, "Where do you find it?" I will tell you where you find it. You find it in the occult encyclopedia. You find it in Catherine Paulson's book called *The Complete Book of Magic and Witchcraft*. You find it on page 84 of the *Dogma and Ritual of High Black Magic*. You find it word for word in all of these areas as a prayer to Satan in your Bible and an NIV. That reading comes from the third century from a guy who was rightly named Marcion the heretic.

Now how did it get into your NIV? If you got an NIV out there this morning, did you get in a book that is supposed to be God's book, a prayer that every occultist knows is a prayer to the devil in that book? Well, I will tell you how you got in it. Most of you that went through church history will have a better grasp on this, but you will know that Westcott and Hort in 1888 came up with a new Greek text, and they changed all of those things which formulated the Greek text that was going to become the Greek text for every Bible. Long after their death, their own family talked about how both of them used mediums in translating their Bible. They called it the "Ghost Guild," and they actually were into witchcraft and asked the mediums, the demons, to give them the right translation, and that is how a prayer of the devil wound up rightly in the devil's Bible, the NIV. That people are so absolutely stupid, absolutely ridiculously stupid they cannot figure it out. Do you know why? Go back to the chapter before because God hid it from them. That is why. That is the greatest concept you will ever get.

SEC: Biblical Counseling: Addressing Root Problems, Not Symptoms (Continued)

Luke 12, 13, and 14, let us move on here. We are having fun. Luke 12, 13, and 14, I am more interested in accounting principles than I am the devil's Bible today. We can talk about that all day long. I want to get this time, and I want to broaden my base today.

In Luke 12, we have the great story of the number one problem we all have. We all have a fundamental issue, and it is the main problem that we have that leads to all the other problems we have. I am just telling you, and you need to understand this when you work with people. One

of the things that you do not want to get caught up to when you are dealing with people, and this is what happens in most churches. This is what happens with all counselors who do not use the Bible and the models in the Bible. You are going to find that what most people think are their problems are really not the problem, but rather the symptoms. What most teachers do is they treat the symptoms without ever solving the problem.

I remember years ago one of my kids was very sick and had a fever, and I was in the room about two o'clock in the morning, and they were burning up, and I was praying for them. I was saying, "Lord, I said, Lord, you have got to stop this fever. You are the only one that can do it. Would you just please take away that fever?" Just like that God said to me, "It is not the fever that is the problem. There is an infection in the body that is causing the fever. The fever is just the symptom of the problem. You are praying for the symptom to be taken away when you ought to be praying for Me to take away the problem." Now that was a goofy little thing, but it taught me a great principle that when I deal with you or anybody else or whatever your issues are, I am not interested in treating your symptoms. I am not interested in putting a band-aid on your ouchie. I am interested in solving your problem.

Now this is why my style of ministry does not go down with everybody. This is why a lot of people, I mean, I have a lot of people I work with, a lot of people get their lives put back together. A lot of them do not want any part of it. Do you know why? Because I am a Baptist. I do not dance. We are going to deal with the issue. We are not going to treat the symptoms that waste my time and yours, and there is no value in it. Let us get right to the hard problem. The core problem. Let us get right there and solve the problem, and when we fix the problem, the symptoms are just gone.

I tell husband and wives all the time, they come in, and it is this, "Well, she did this, and he did this," and you could go on all day with that. I mean, I get some great illustrations out of it, but we do not ever solve anything. Here is what I tell them. "Look, I do not care what a bozo he is. I already know that, and I do not care how goofy you are. I already know that. The bottom line is this. You are not going to change him, and you are not going to change her. So here is the deal. Sweetheart, why do not you just work on changing who you are, get in line with the Bible, and let Billy Bozo over here change in his life and get what is right with the Bible, and when you two start solving the problems instead of telling me about your symptoms, when you come in, we will solve your issues, and sure, you will fix your problem. Your symptoms are gone." That is the way it works.

Now whether you know it or not, this great story in Luke 12, the great problem we have that is the source of all our problems is one word: it is covetousness. That is a killer.

Read with me here Luke 12:16.

> *Luke 12:16-20*

> *16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:*

> 17 *And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?*

> 18 *And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.*

> 19 *And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.*

> 20 *But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall these things be, which thou hast provided?*

Now you see that thing? Now I want you to flip back in your Bible to Isaiah 14:13-15, and I want you to see where this originates from. Covetousness has, every sin in the Bible has to have its source point. I got some bad news for you, your source point is not you for your problem. It goes back somewhere along the line, and it will start back with the devil and God someplace.

> *Isaiah 14:13-15*

> 13 *For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:*

> 14 *I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.*

> 15 *Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.*

"I will, I will, I will, I will, I will," five times. You go over there in Luke 12:16-19, you find six "I's" and five "my's." It is covetousness. This is where the whole body of Christ is today. We focus on what we do not have. Your will versus God's will. Churches and pastors say, "We have got to have bigger building, better sound equipment, better multimedia, better this, better that, better this." No, you do not.

The Bible says over there in 1 Timothy 6:10:

> *1 Timothy 6:10*

> *For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

I had a pastor one time, he told me that the King James Bible had mistakes in it. I said, "Show me what?" He pulled out 1 Timothy chapter 6, and he said, "There is one right there." I said, "What is that one?" He said, "The Bible says the love of money is the root of all evil." He says, "Money is not the root of all evil." I said, "Well, not only do you not know your Bible, you cannot read. It did not say that money was the root of all evil. It said the love of money was the root of all evil." He said, "Well, the love of money is the root of all evil." I said, "Yes, it is because the love of money goes back to the single problem we all got that is covetousness. That is the love of money. That is the love of cars. That is the love of home. That is the love of planes. That is the love of whatever. Love of baseball, football, covetousness."

Great principle, 1 Timothy 6:6:

> *1 Timothy 6:6*

> *But godliness with contentment is great gain.*

I have given it to you before. You know, back when you go all the way back to Genesis chapter 3, when Eve got, when the devil got Eve to sin, do you know what buttons he pushed? He pushed the covetous button. The Bible says back there when Eve saw that the food was pleasant to the eyes, she coveted it. It is what she saw, lust to the eyes.

SEC: The Downfall of Christianity and God's Invitation (Luke 13-14)

In Luke 13, we have a picture of the downfall of Christianity. We have the leaven of the scribes and the Pharisees. Leaven in your Bible will always be false doctrine.

> > *Matthew 16:6-12*

> > *Galatians 5:9*

> > *1 Corinthians 5:6-8*

You will find all that down through there, it is in that chapter for Luke 13:20-21, all a picture of the false doctrine that creeps in. We laid that out in church history.

Luke 14, you have a picture of God putting away the nations of Israel and taking the kingdom of God to the church. In Luke 14:15-22, you have got the great story. Where He goes in there and He says God prepared a great supper. That would be the marriage supper of the Lamb, by the way. He sends people to the nation of Israel to get to that supper. They want nothing to do with it. They all make their excuses. "Well, I just built a new house. I just got some oxen. I just got married."

Finally, God gets fed up, and He says, "You know what? You go to the highways and the byways and you find everybody you can and invite them." Boy, that is where you and I got in. You and I were the old beggars along the highway. You and I were the old broken, busted ones that nobody cared about. When Israel, Romans chapter 9, Romans chapter 11, we were the wild olive tree grafted in, and boy, I still remember today. God sent somebody down to me and said, "Hey, you want to go to a wedding? There is a great banquet. You want to go eat?" Oh, I tasted the crud of this world, and I was ready for some fresh stuff from God. What a great story that is.

SEC: Redemption, Eternal Security, and Forgiveness (Luke 15)

Then we come to another great one in Luke 15:4-5.

> *Luke 15:4-5*

> *4 What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?*

> *5 And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.*

Now there is a great principle in dealing with people. In ministry, you never give up on people. I do not care what you have got to do to them, but you never really give up on people because if you know God and the Word of God, you know that God can do. Sometimes it takes 20 years. It took Moses 40 years at Wilderness University to figure out what he needed to do with God. You will find that many, many people in the Bible have to go through many, many things. I mean, I am sorry, but they have got to. But you never cast people out, never give people up because you always follow this principle.

This is a great principle not only on looking at people and never giving up on them, but I do not know if you saw it in here or not, but it is a great principle on eternal security. See that thing? It says, "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, and lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after you." The first thing that tells me is this: when you get out of fellowship with God, God is coming after you. That is a scary thought in itself. He will leave the other, He will leave all the other sheep, and He will go and He will come after you personally.

I love this thing: when He finds that sheep, do you know what He does? That Bible says He puts it over His shoulder. I do not know if you know how that works. I have seen pictures of this, and I love these paintings. He takes the sheep laying on the ground, He takes the two front feet in this hand and the two back feet in this hand. He takes that sheep, throws it up over His shoulders. That is how He brings that sheep back. So that is neat. That is eternal security, man. That is a great picture. That is a great picture.

In the last story, I saved the best for last. You may not have found yourself on all the other ones. I may have excused myself from some of them too. We will all find ourselves within this story, and this is the great story we all can identify with: the story of the prodigal son. Every one of us at some time in our life have been the prodigal son. I look across this crowd at many of you that I have known for many, many years. Many of us started out together, and then you got out in a far country, and then God came after you and brought you back. I am glad for it. I praise the Lord for it. I have been out in the wild country. We all have been out there. This is a story we can all identify with.

You know the story, so I am not going to read it all, but I want to hit the point. It is in Luke 15, and it starts in verse 11 and goes all the way down to verse 32. Let me just say this to you. I am going to address a couple of things here this morning. First of all, I want every young person that is in here, 14 to 20, to listen to what I have got to say. I have a message for you this morning. Every kid that is 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, maybe even a little bit older. I want you to listen to me today. I want you to hear what I have got to say. I have a message for you, and then I am coming back, and I have a message for your parents. I want you to understand this great story and how it applies and how the principles work.

It starts out by saying that a man has two sons. These two sons are working together in the family, and the Bible says that after a while the younger one starts giving them some problems. He starts having some issues, and we can all identify with that. We have all been there. You get rebellious toward your parents. You think you know more about life than your father does. It has

always impressed me that, and I was the same way. When I talk about this, I am talking about myself. It always impressed me how when I was 17 and 18 years old, how I wanted to be an adult and I wanted to act like an adult. I wanted to do the things adults did. I just did not want the responsibility that came along with it. I wanted to go out and party till I puke and do all the things, but I wanted Mom to still do my laundry. I wanted her to have a nice bed for me. I wanted her to have the food cooked. I wanted to go and live like hell like an adult, but I wanted to come back home to Mama because I wanted the freedom of an adult, but I did not want the responsibility of an adult. That is just kidding. He thinks he knows more about it than Dad does.

You know how that goes. Boy, I was there. When I was 16, 17, 18 years old, I thought my dad was the dumbest guy in the world. I thought I knew more about life than he ever could hope to know. When I got out of the army at 21 or 22 and came back home, I could not figure out how my dad got so smart so fast.

The Bible says that the younger one has some problems, and he says, "I want my inheritance. I am not going to be under your authority anymore. I am going to do my own thing." The Bible says that he gives him his inheritance. The Bible says that he goes into a far country. Let me talk about the far country for a moment. The far country is as far as you can get away from where God wants you to be. The far country is when you get out there on your own, and you get out there, and now you are out of your house, you are out of your comfort level, you are out of everything, and now we are going to see how big of a lady you really are and what a tough guy you really are. Now you are on your own. Boy, did he make a mess out of it.

The Bible says in Luke 15:13 that he wasted his substance. That is because he had no value system to start with. He got his inheritance, and it was party, party until Daddy takes the T-bird away. It was a great time. It was a great fun time, and he was out there, and when you got money, do you have friends? Do you have women? Woo! They will tell you you are cute, \$20 a pop. He was the life of the party. He was a good old boy. He was there. He had fun. Everybody just loved him. He was good old so and so. The Bible says it was riotous living. The Bible says it was living with harlots.

Oh, but Luke 15:14. Let me tell you something, kid. The far country, from where you are sitting right now, you better leave it just the way it sounds: a far way. You better realize that God, I do not preach down the mission because I just do not want to, but if I ever did, well, I mean it is your guys' gig, but if I ever did, I sit up there and I hear out there and I hear these guys whine and belly ache about the mission. I would get up there and I would simply say, "Do you like living out in the cold? You got a place that God provided that is warm. They feed you. They give you a bed. You get a shower, and whether you like it or not, they are concerned about your soul, and after they give you all of that, you got the gall to complain and be bitter and be mean-spirited about the very people who are providing a roof over you when you do not give them a dime." That is why I do not preach down there. There are some things I best not get started on. I am just telling you. If you guys steal that message and try to pull that off next time you preach down there, you are on your own. When they escort you into the shower room to cut you up into little pieces and feed you to their pet fish, that is on you. I am going to the place to eat. I am just giving you fair warning, friend, but I am telling you.

Let me tell you something, kids. God gave you those parents. That was not by accident. Those are your parents. They labored. They gave up. I never understood. I looked down at a casket of my dead dad, and a thousand times I would have thanked him for all the sacrifice that he made. I thought it was too late. Do not get into that mode. They feed you. They clothe you. They give you everything. And then what? You are going to cop an attitude? Glad I am not your father. I know you probably are too. They say, "How come your son does not smile?" "Because he has not got no teeth."

Luke 15:14, when the money runs out, and the fun times run out, and the friends run out, and the harlots run out. When all that takes place, he winds up working in a pig farm, living with pigs, eating the husks that the swine eat. That is a great verse, "when he came to himself." That is the great pivotal verse in this story.

Now this is where I want to quit preaching to the kids. I want to preach to the parents. You all got little kids growing up. We had 75 little kids in that elementary last week. Some kids are going to translate into teenagers. Someday they are going to translate into young adults. Someday, if God forbid, they are going to run the world.

Now there are three great principles that I want to talk about with this father that he did. You need to learn these principles. These are good principles. I have already warned your kids. Now I am warning you. When you look at the father, we see his position. We see his perspective, and we see his prayer. That really forms this father who gets his son back.

It says down here in Luke 15:17, the kid says, "I am going back to my father." He said, "I am tired." I got an old throwback message that I want to preach someday called "One More Night with the Frogs." It is out of Exodus. But this message here I would title "No More Nights with the Pigs." "I am going back to my dad. I am going back to my father. I am going back. The least of the servants eat better than me. I am tired of the mud, the pig crap. I am tired of eating muck and mud and living in his filth. I am going back to my father."

Now I want to talk to your parents for a moment. May I give you a bit of advice? Sell your helicopter. "We do not have a helicopter." Oh, yes, you do. Every time your kid gets in a jam, you are circling over him, throwing him a life raft. You are so afraid that something is going to happen to them. You have got them so bunged up and so corralled. You are not doing anything biblical with them, but every time there is a problem, you get held hostage. You are not in charge of your family. They are in charge of you. When your kid tells you what they are going to do, and you have no reason to tell them what they are not going to do, you are in trouble. He says, "Well, he is bigger than I am." He has got to sleep sometime. My dad told me that once.

I love this part. The prodigal son story, moms and dads, is an absolute tool in your tool belt. There comes a time when all reason exhausts itself. I have been there 40 years, man. There comes a time when all normalcy, I am not saying you do not try, but there comes a time when they take advantage of you, they are not going to do what is right. They keep lying. They keep going through the motions. They keep doing it, and they start tearing up, and if you have got younger kids, you are going to lose. If you do not do something, you are going to, I have seen it. You are going to lose that one, then you are going to lose the next one, and you are going to lose

the next one, and you are going to lose them all. You say, "Well, I may." Touch your losses. Stand up in your family and say, "This is not going to be." I do not know what to tell you.

The greatest example I had in my 40 some years is I had a guy one time years ago, and he brought his rebellious boy into me, and this kid was a piece of work, and this kid was causing all kinds of problems, and this kid, he brought him in there, and he sat down, and this kid was in trouble with the law. He was in trouble with money. He yelled this, he did that, and he said to this kid, and I was all ready to do my spiel. I do not even know why I was there. He took charge of the whole thing. I guess he just wanted to witness, and he said the greatest thing I ever heard. He said, "Son, I want to tell you something. I love you. Your mother loves you. We would do anything for you. We would die for you, but what we will not do is allow you to bring your ungodliness into God's home. Now, son, you see our house. God gave me this house. You see that food in that pantry. God provided that food. You see what do we got our furniture, our TV, the car in the garage, and what we have in our jobs and the money in the bank. God. God gave us that. Now, son, I love you, but if you think I am going to take God's money to pay for your devil's lifestyle, you are wrong." He says, "If serving the devil and that ungodly crowd is so fun, let them feed you. Let them clothe you. Let them give you all you need. We are not taking God's money, God's house. I am not any longer going to aid and abet you by let you go out and whore around, do drugs, drink, do what you want to do, and then crawl back into a nice warm bed." Boy, he got it. That kid left out of that office that day, stormed out.

You see, the father had the right position. There should be no option in your house if your house is God's house. What are we talking about? What argument do we have? What is it to say, "For me and my house, we serve the Lord"? This is God's house. You either play by the rules or go find someplace else where you can make up your own rules. He had the right position. He said, "If you want to go, go." He had the right perspective. He knew it was an act of biblical principle. Then he had the right prayer, did he not? He realized that this is what you have got to do sometimes. This was not an act of meanness. This was not an act of uncaring. I do not care what they throw up in your face. This was not a parent, a man who did not love his son. Sometimes when you get into a situation, and it has been for so long, there is only one thing you can do. There is no option now. This kid wanted to leave. He was going to do it his way. So out he goes. The father took the right position. "Don't let the door hit you on the rear end on the way out." How many times I heard that kid growing up. He turned the right perspective. He turned him over to God. Then he had the right prayer. That old man never lost sight of that boy. In fact, the Bible says that when that boy decided to go back, when he was a far way off, the father saw him. Do you know what that tells me? That father was looking for him to come back every day. He had the right perspective. He knew that sometimes this is what you have got to do. Sometimes you have got to let him go. If you want to keep it, you have got to give it away. He realized that you cannot deal with a rebellious child. He will just take your house and destroy it. They will wreck your marriage. They will wreck the rest of the kids. If they are hell-bent on the election of being elected, then make them a candidate. That is really good. I never even said that before. I do not know how that came from. Let him out. But always keep the right purpose, the right perspective, and the right prayer.

Finally, in Luke 15:21-24, the right prayer, the right perspective, and the right purpose paid off. Pigsty University was good for him. It always is. My life, my world was a little different. I never left home to get out, but in my mind, when I went into the Army, I thought, "You know what? This is worth solving all my problems. I am away from any authority. I can do what I want to do." Boy, was that a great ride going in and out. First day I was there, on no uncertain terms, with great literary language, I was told, "I am not your mother. I am not your father. I am not your friend." I will tell you what, it got my attention.

Finally, in Luke 15:21-24, the younger son makes it right, and fellowship is restored.

> *Luke 15:24*

> *For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to make merry.*

They had a great party. Not the end of the story yet.

Second set of principles. Luke 15:25.

> *Luke 15:25-30*

> *25 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing.*

> *26 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.*

> *27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.*

> *28 And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him.*

> *29 And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:*

> *30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.*

We have an attitude 101 problem here. You really find that the attitude toward the father has nothing to do with whether you leave or whether you stay, does it? There is not much difference between these two guys. One left with an attitude, one stayed with an attitude. But they had an attitude. Let us go on.

Now I see that always bothered me because if this guy never left the ranch, how did he know he was hanging out with the harlots? I listen to everything everybody ever says to me. I do not think he knew anything what this kid was doing. He just wanted to trump up his side, so he just threw that in there. In the salad, we call that parsley. You cannot eat it, but it gives it color. This was not true, but it gave it color. Padded it from his side.

> *Luke 15:31-32*

> 31 *And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.*

> 32 *It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.*

When I look at this, this is what bothers me, if I may just speak candidly today. This is what bothers me with Christianity on a whole. I see it in every aspect. We as God's people, we rejoice when a Christian falls. Then we get an attitude when they get right. I do not know what is wrong with us. Does not this model fit into anything in your world? It never ceases to amaze me. The last part of this story shows the absolute self-righteous, pharisaical mindset of not only this kid but Christians today. I mean, we ought to rejoice when somebody comes back to God. We ought to weep when somebody falls. No, no, not us. We rejoice. He got what he needed. And we grab an attitude.

I want to look at this elder brother in a few remaining seconds that we have here. This elder brother is worth studying. First of all, he should have acted differently because he was the elder brother, and as the elder brother, he represented the father. As soon as the father was off the scenes, he took over the family. This shows me that the younger son, the elder son, he has no prayer, he has no position, he has no perspective.

If you look at Luke 15:12, I mean, what is he upset about? I have a real problem with people who get upset with other people when that particular person did nothing to them. I mean, I can understand if somebody did you wrong that you can work on that for a while. I will give you that. But me getting upset because you did something to somebody else and holding a grudge or being angry or becoming a Pharisee or having an attitude in my heart when you did nothing to me, that is this kid.

I want you to, you have got to read all of these stories. If you look down there in Luke 15:12, it is almost like this kid presenting to his father that this kid screwed me somehow. If you look at Luke 15:12, you will find that when the father divided the inheritance, he gave both those kids their inheritance. He just did not give the kid who went out of town. He gave both of them. It says he divided his inheritance unto them. This kid did not lose anything. This younger son going out in the world did absolutely nothing to this kid. He stayed at home. He got everything he would have got. He got his fair share. He just has a pharisaical attitude toward his brother getting right.

Ladies and gentlemen, there is only one reason for God's people who get an attitude toward another brother and sister when they fall or when they get right. That self-righteous, pious, pharisaical being a gas bag. Do you know what? Do you know all the reasons we have problems? You do know. You do know. I mean, you are not just all snorkelers. You do know. You can even get this snorkeling. You do know that as long as you are unwilling to forgive somebody else, God shuts down your forgiveness in your life of your sins, and that is why your sins build up, and your marriage goes to pot, and you have problems, and you have all the issues in your life because you are not willing to forgive somebody else. So God said, "That is fine. If you are not willing to forgive them, I am drawing a line. I am not forgiving you." You better understand that

whatever action there is a reaction out of the Bible. This is a great story. These are great principles.

> *Mark 11:25-26*

> *25 And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.*

> *26 But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.*

I do not have time to go into it this morning, but trespasses and sins in the Bible are two different things. In the Old Testament, there were sin offerings and there were trespass offerings. The sin offerings were sins against God. The trespass offerings were sins against men. He says, "You are not willing to forgive what somebody does against you." He says, "I am not forgiving you." This is a great answer to why some of God's people's lives are so climatic. Why they get to the place when they have a problem, and a year down the line, they have the same problem. They have the same attitude.

I am telling you, kids, better understand who your parents are and why God gave them to you. You better change your action by changing your attitude. You better realize that God put them in your life as an authority figure, whether they are good or bad, that is immaterial. This church is filled with good kids that are strong and love the Lord who had crappy parents. Most of the cases in this church, you do not have that. If not all the cases in this church, you do not have bad parents. You have parents that want to do what is right. They are trying to figure it out themselves. They are trying to do everything they need to do. You need to be part of the solution and cease being part of the problem because of that passage right there.

Parents, I have said this for 40 years in ministry, there comes a time you have got to shoot that helicopter down. At the time, the only thing they are going to learn is get out there and live with the pigs and find out what it is really like. But always remember the three positions: he had the right perspective, he had the right position, he had the right prayer. And God brought him back.

On an inspirational side, that father there is a picture of Jesus Christ seated at the right hand of God. On an inspirational application, that is a picture of God always seeing when you are out in the far country and I am out in the far country. Sometimes God has to give us the taste of a pigsty before we really, I say it all the time, and it is so true, so true. Sometimes we have to lose something before we really understand the value of it. Sometimes husbands and wives have to split up before they get their head out of wherever it is at and realize that they both got rules they have to play, and you have got to quit playing the phony rule you are playing. Sometimes it works, sometimes it does not.

These individuals, they get to the point where they just really have got to realize that there is more to life than just what I want. You have got to get past yourself. You have got to get to the place where you get past the snorkeling most Christians are like when I used to like to throw rocks across the lake. You just skim across the top; you never get down in the depth of it. You need to learn that there are principles in there for everything. This is what the Bible is for. This is what this church is for. This is what you do. Do not just go hee haw and ride off into the sunset

and shoot our six shooters in the air and say this is what you do. It is based on biblical principles, and I am telling you every issue you face in life is going to come back to a story in the Bible that illustrates the principles. This is why we take the time we take with books like this. You will not fix it by just treating the symptoms. You will not fix it by just adjusting the action. You fix it by changing the attitude.

Let us pray. Father, we thank you for this great book.