

1 Corinthians 10

Sunday 7/10/2011

Well, if you have your Bibles, I want to invite you to turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 10. We have been coming through each book of the Bible in a unique way. We have been talking about and laying out how each book really portrays the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to spend the time giving you all the key areas. There are a lot of things that we have learned coming through these books. I want to do a, I do not want to do just a haphazard thing where I just blow through it. I think there are lots of things, the high points we can hit that I think are going to help you where you are at right now. Believe me, there is still plenty of stuff we could come back and teach each book again and spend literally the rest of our lives doing it.

We learned when we got into the book of Corinthians that here is a church that has all kinds of issues. The problems they have parallel the problems that we find in churches today. The main issue with this church is the main issue that most churches have and most Christians have, and that is how Christ is portrayed in this book. That is the fact that Christ is Lord, Christ being the Lord of our lives, Christ being the centerpiece in our lives, that everything that we do, all the relationships that we have, kind of revolve around that aspect.

As we come through chapter 10, one of the things that I want you to see here is we begin to get a glimpse at the underlying reason why the church of Corinth had the problems that they had. At the same time, what I want you to do today is what I ask you to do every week: make the parallels. Make the association between Israel's issues, excuse me, the first church of Corinth issues, to our issues. We will talk about the nation of Israel, how it plays in here in a moment.

They never grew past a certain point. Why is it that God's people legitimately get saved? I believe they begin a process just like the people at the church of Corinth, but they never get to a point where they ever become all that God wants them to be. In most cases, they never come to any point at all, and they just kind of get lost in everything like the church of Corinth did. Through the process of time, we saw that it caused problems, did it not? It is going to cause problems in our lives if we do not at some point begin to do what the Word of God says.

The dirtiest church is salvaged by Paul. Paul comes back, he writes basically 1 Corinthians to really take them to task, so to speak, chapter by chapter. Then he writes the book of 2 Corinthians to try to help them get restored. This is a great chapter for us, for you and for me today, as we really, if we really want to know your Bible and know God and to have a relationship.

I. The Desperate Need for Victory

Let me ask you a question. When we go down to the City Union Mission, we go down there every third Sunday of the month. This is not a question that will only affect a few of you because most of you come down. Many times we rival their attendance; they have to feed us, we come down in mass. What is their favorite song? Raise your hand. What is their favorite song they like to sing? Missy, what is their favorite song? Victory in Jesus.

Did you ever stop and analyze why that, and when you talk about that, I mean you can sing whatever you want to sing down there, but when you say "Victory in Jesus," everybody gets a hymnal, everybody gets excited. Have you ever analyzed why that is? I will tell you why that is. Because those men so desperately want that victory in Jesus. That song represents something for them that for most of them is out of their reach at this point in their life. To sing about it is an exhilarating thing.

Here they are, many of them have lost their families, lost their jobs, lost everything in society, and now are relegated to living in a City Union Mission that begins to restart their lives. The reason why that song is absolutely so important to them is because that is what they so desperately desire: the victory that comes from a life with Christ.

I make no bones about it. That was certainly not, in no way, shape or form, a reflection on those dear men down at the City Union Mission because I will tell you what, most of them, even in a dire situation they are in, have a better chance of getting the victory in Jesus than most of you do sitting in here today. Do you know why that is? Because you have not hit bottom yet. You have not come to the place in your life where you have lost everything to understand. That is so true in life. Sometimes you have to lose something to understand how valuable it was. That is where these men are at, and that is where God's people are at today.

You should want that victory in Jesus. You should pursue that victory in Jesus. Your life and everything that you do and everything that you put into your life, every relationship, every circumstance, ought to be geared toward you attaining that victory in Jesus. I am going to talk about that today in light of the church at Corinth. I am going to show you probably in chapter 10 one of the greatest concepts that you will ever get a hold of to help you get and understand the victory in Jesus that we all need and so desperately desire.

II. The Bible as a Survival Kit and the Power of Contrast

Last week I talked to you about our last Bible Basics, and I taught you a great concept in Bible Basics. We talked about it last week, the idea of contrast. How God, who automatically divides things out, then takes the two things that He divides and makes a contrast: light versus darkness, Heaven versus hell, and the old nature versus the new nature.

Contrast is a great thing. If you would go out and look at the moon through a telescope, you would think that the best time to look at the moon is when it is full. You will get your telescope out there, and there is the big full moon up there, and you will focus it on there, and suddenly you will look at it, and you will, if you have any idea of the moon at all, you will be greatly disappointed because the moon is so bright at that point that you really cannot see much detail.

Now, when you go out and you see the moon at about first quarter or last quarter where you have that dark line coming down through it, that line is called the terminator, and it terminates the light from the darkness. In other words, it serves as a contrast. You look at the moon when it is in first phase or second phase, or at least in one of its phases, and obviously the more it goes into phases, the more you can see. But my point is when you get to the first phase of the moon or the second phase of the moon, you look at that moon, it will absolutely knock you out of your socks,

the detail that you see. Do you know why? Because the terminator, not Arnold Schwarzenegger, the real terminator on the moon, the contrast between light and darkness brings out all of the details.

That is what God does in the Bible. He teaches us in a great way by contrast, contrasting the things that are right versus the things that are wrong, the things of darkness versus the things of light. Everything that you need to survive and grow in your Christian life and your relationship with God is based on what you get out of the Bible and how you recognize what the Bible is.

Years ago, I heard a great sermon, and I have used this message many, many times that is in my Bible. I have given it to you. I heard a guy preach a message on the Bible being a survival kit for Christians. He started out and told the story how that he was in the Air Force and they had to ditch in the ocean, and they got out safely, got into some nice big life rafts that they had in there. He said it was a fairly tolerable situation. They were in there for two days before they found them. But he said, "We had the first thing that we did before we ever took off is check everything in the plane, and we always made sure that we had our survival gear, we had everything that we needed in case we had to ditch at sea." In this case, they had to ditch at sea, and it was kind of a no-brainer experience simply because they had everything that they needed to survive.

The Bible talks about the nation of Israel, and when they start going on their wilderness journey, when they come out of Egypt in Exodus chapter 12, that is a great picture of your life and my life. They got saved by the blood as a nation in Exodus chapter 12 when they put the blood on the door. The Bible says then that they entered into a period of land over there in the Middle East called the wilderness of sin. That wilderness of sin was an absolute desolate place. This is where they could find no water. This is where they could find no food. This is where basically they had to rely on God to sustain them at this point every inch of the way.

Do you know what that represents for you and for me? It represents that the day you and I got saved, the day that was our exodus in our life when God put the blood on the door and passed over you and me and saved us, at that point as a child of God, you entered into the wilderness of sin. Do you know what that wilderness of sin represents? It represents the world system. There is nothing now as a child of God that would sustain you in this world, just as there was nothing that would sustain them. There was no water. There was no food. There was nothing for them. When you get saved, the things of this world will simply not do it for you anymore. Not that they did it for you in the first place. But this world has nothing for you. You have to now, like the nation of Israel in the Old Testament, you have to rely on the sustaining power of God of giving you everything you need to survive in the wilderness of sin.

Even though we live in Kansas City with a million restaurants and skyscrapers and malls and all of those things, as far spiritually speaking, that you and I are concerned, if you are saved this morning, there is nothing in this world that will satisfy you. You have to get sustained by the supernatural things that God gives you.

This guy took that and he preached about the Bible being our survival kit. He talked about the things that if you were in a survival mode, "Survivor Man" so to speak, like you see on TV, he says the first thing you need is water, and you find that in John chapter 4 likened to the Word of

God. He said you would have to have something to eat, so the Bible is likened to meat in Hebrews chapter 5. In 1 Peter chapter 2 verse 2, the Bible is likened to milk. In Psalms 119:105, the Bible is likened to light. In Hebrews chapter 12 verse 29, the Word of God is likened to fire. In Psalms 78:24, the Word of God is likened to vegetables. In Proverbs chapter 7 verse 2, it is likened to apples. In Psalms 119:103, it is likened to honey. In Jeremiah chapter 23 verse 29, it is likened to hammer and nails. Actually, Luke chapter 4 verse 4 is likened to bread. And in Hebrews chapter 4, it is likened to a sword. Everything you need. You have stuff to sustain you. If you have a hammer and nails, you can build just about anything you want. You have a sword to protect yourself. That was a great lesson that I learned of how the Bible is to sustain me.

The greatest single teaching that comes out of chapter 10 that we are going to find, and I want you to focus on this this morning, is that the Bible is everything that you need. It contains everything for you to survive in the wilderness of sin. The problem is we do not know how to use the Bible. That is the problem. I want to use this chapter today to show you some things about contrast. I want to take this chapter and show you some things that how you can really make this Bible work for you.

III. Learning from Mistakes: Our Own and Others'

I always tell you that we should learn from our mistakes. That is true. We all make mistakes. There is nobody that is mistake-free. We like to fancy ourselves sometimes that maybe we are, but in reality that is not true. I always tell you that there is nothing wrong with making mistakes, as long as we learn from mistakes. That is true. But if you do not learn from them, then you just keep on making the same mistakes over and over again. How many times have we seen that? I have dealt with people in my life over the years that just continually go through one bad situation after another in everything in their life. The simple answer is, when you look at it, the fact that they have just never learned from their mistakes. They refuse to stop and sit down and say, "Okay, what did I do wrong?" and contrast it with something the Bible says that you should do right. It is just that simple.

But I will tell you one that is even better than that, that is in the Bible. That is, not only should you learn from your own mistakes, but if you can ever get to the place in the Word of God where you use the Bible to learn from the mistakes of others and the mistakes that they make in the Bible, not only will you learn from your own personal mistakes, but in many cases you will learn not to make those mistakes in the first place. Obviously, the best life is as close to a mistake-free life we can have. So you learn through the mistakes of others.

In this chapter, we have a great study on what the Bible calls ensamples and examples found in the Old Testament Scriptures. This was the Church of Corinth's basic fundamental problem. They never learned this. This is why Paul was talking to them, trying to get them to use their Bible the way God intended it.

I do not know of an issue. I do not know of a sin. I do not know of anything that a man can get into on planet earth that is not found in the Bible. It is laid out in such a fashion that it is so easy to follow. You realize that God takes every problem that a man gets into or a woman gets into.

God takes every issue that man falls into. If you are paying attention, the Bible teaches you three aspects about that.

1. The Bible shows you how they got into it.
2. The Bible shows the consequences of them getting into it.
3. The Bible shows how they got out of it or how they did not get out of it.

We talk about the Bible being the book of life. Many times when we use that phrase, we use it in a sense, and rightly so, that we got our eternal life from it, so it is the book of life. But I will tell you something. The Bible is also a book of life on planet earth. If you want to have the victory in Jesus, if you want to get the victory that the church of Corinth never got to, if you want to grasp the concepts that are going to keep you in your relationship with the Lord, then it is understanding what the church of Corinth did not do and then see the contrast of what Paul tells them of what not only they should do with the Bible but what we should do with the Bible. That is the format of knowing how to use your Bible in a personal way.

The Bible talks about a personal holiness. Most of God's people do not even understand what that means. Doing what I am going to show you today will help you not only have a personal holiness but maintain a personal holiness in your wilderness of sin journey. We talk about having a personal relationship with Christ. That is just a punchline today. That is talking points. That is something that we use for filler in a sermon that most of God's people cannot grasp. Yet the church of Corinth had the same issue. They are a church. They have Bibles. They have following things, but they are so far from where God is at. For all I can tell in 1 Corinthians, there is not one person in there who even has a personal relationship with Christ in the sense. They are saved, but I am not talking about just being saved. I am talking about the victory that comes from a walk with the Lord Jesus Christ that most of God's people and certainly the church at Corinth did not have, that Paul is trying to give them through a great study on contrast.

You have heard me say it many times, 2 Timothy 3:16.

2 Timothy 3:16

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

You have heard me say it many, many times. It is the same format. The Bible does four things for you.

4. The first thing it says is doctrine. Doctrine is what is right. So the Bible first of all shows you what is right.
5. The second thing it says is reproof. The Bible shows you what is wrong. There is your contrast.
6. Then the third thing is correction. The Bible shows you how to fix it.
7. And then the fourth thing is instructions in righteousness. The Bible shows you how to keep it fixed.

That is how you use your Bible. But you have to do that as he is laying out in 1 Corinthians chapter 10 because it is showing us that you do this by contrast, taking the sins and the mistakes that they have made in the Bible through the Old Testament and the New Testament for us. They did not have the New Testament then, but we do. Then learn through these three concepts to keep from making the same mistakes.

Folks, that is how you keep yourself from sin. That is how you keep yourself in a walk with the Lord, victory in the Lord Jesus Christ that we talk about. I do not know why that is so hard for people. You see it all the time in everything we do in life. You see it on NBC, CBS. You read the newspaper every day. You see the 6 o'clock news.

Last week a tragedy took place. I think it was Fourth of July morning about 8:30 on 435 and 63rd Street. Two people were driving down the road just going wherever they were going. Some drunk crossed the other line and hit them head-on and killed both of them. When you read that in the paper, do you know what that does? That not only makes you feel bad for the people that got killed, but it makes you just a little leery of paying more attention when you are driving. You not only have to pay attention to what is going on on either side of you and behind you. My goodness, now you have to look at the other car coming down the other lane and going to hit you head-on. It serves as a warning. Now that does not mean you do not drive anymore, does it? No, but it means that it is a warning to you. You see what happened to somebody else and then you apply it to yourself.

I read in the paper last week where they set up DWI checkpoints. There are like 20 of them across the city, and they got like some 40 people. Do you know what a DWI checkpoint is? You drive up and they kind of find out if you are drinking or not, and then they get you off the road. They talked about the 20 places in this city they have set those up. Now you read that, if I was a drinking type, if I was a man who drank, do you know what I would do? I would take that seriously and I would try to plot those on a map so I went home another way. It gives you a warning. It tells you that somebody is out there looking for you, and they are going to catch you. That is a great warning.

I read in the paper a couple of weeks ago that Mexico was the kidnap center of the world right now. Do you realize that about 35 to 40 people disappear in Mexico a month? Do you realize that they are targeting Americans in Mexico much worse than they are in the Middle East countries? With all the drug wars and the drug cartels and all the things that are going on, the statement partner will tell you, "Think twice about going to Mexico." I read in the paper that Mexico is a terrible place, and all kinds of people are being killed down there, and they are targeting Americans, and people are getting killed. Do you actually think that I am going to book plans to go on my vacation to Atlantic City? I mean to Mexico? I am going to Atlantic City where I am going. You learn from what is going on around you out of people's mistakes. Hey, when I read that 35 people last month made the wrong choice to go to Mexico and wound up dead or kidnapped, I am not going to be number one on the next month's hit parade, if you know what I mean. You will get warnings by that. Warnings.

They are coming out now with more graphic warnings on cigarette packs. The Surgeon General back in the 70s, they wanted to cut down smoking because smoking causes cancer and all of those things. So they put "Surgeon General's Warning" on it. That did nothing. Now they are going to put graphic pictures on. Every time you take out a cigarette, you are going to see a guy whose jaw is gone. You are going to see some guy who is emaciated with cancer because they smoked. It is the stupidest thing in the world. But you would think if you would look at that, every time you would put one of those in your mouth and you saw some guy that there is half jaw is gone because of cigarette smoke or throat cancer, you would think that was something which you knew. No, no, no, no.

My dad died of lung cancer when I was 19 years old. My dad grew up smoking cigarettes. He was born in a log cabin back in Maryland, and he probably started smoking when he was 3 years old. He smoked at least 4-6 packs a day. When I was in the Army and I got a call from my mom that he had been diagnosed with lung cancer, they went in and took out half his lung and took out all kinds of parts of him that had cancer. He was cut from one end to the other going around with half a lung. A doctor told him that he had to be careful and they did not get all the cancer. Do you know what we used to catch him doing? Now he had a lung removed and had half a lung. He was gutted for looking like a fish, and my mom and I would catch him going down the garage to have another smoke. What are you going to do with that? I mean, that is just the way that it is.

I remember how they used to have cigarette ads. It was always, they changed that. Cannot have them anymore. When I was in the Army, do you know what the favorite brand of cigarettes was? Marlboro. Do you know why the number one choice was Marlboro? It was because of the commercial. Remember? Some of you are too young to remember. The thing was, "Come to where the flavor is." It had this real tough-looking cowboy riding out on the range with 10,000 cattle. He is sitting on a horse like we all daydream about doing, real men. He is smoking a Marlboro and then a big sign, "Come to where the flavor is." Now, how stupid is that? Have you ever been around 10,000 cattle? "Come to where the flavor is?" They got everybody hooked on it. So, now they are going to try to reverse that. You would think when they put those packages on there or some guy emaciated with cancer, you would do something. But no, it will not. It will not at all. But these things ought to serve as warnings for us and everything in life. Then we look at that and we take caution in that.

I will tell you another one. Let us do it. Let us have a swim party this afternoon. Take all the kids. The Missouri River has overflown its banks. Right down here, what used to be a park is a great water thing that they can play in. Do not worry about the signs that say contaminated water. They do not know what they are talking about. Do not worry about that that water is soaked down into graveyards and with all the decomposing flesh. Do not worry about the fact that it has run through sewage plants and everybody's bathrooms and everything down through there. Do not worry about that. Do you realize there are actually parents that are allowing their kid to go in and have a swim day and that kind of stuff? You have one cut someplace on your body, you have permanent infant infection. Do you think we would learn? No, no, no, no. We do not learn. There are signs everywhere you go: "Contaminated water. Do not swim. Do not drink. Do not wash. Do not get within 50 feet." You are going to get the shoes at night.

The Bible does the same thing. Just like in life, we hear those things, and this is why with you with common sense, they are not going to let your kids swim in that. This is why with you with common sense, you have to try to get your kids to stay away from cigarettes and alcohol. With common sense, you are going to look at things like that, and that is what we do.

I am going to read 1 Corinthians chapter 10 here, first 13 verses today, and I am going to show you how to use your Bible in a personal way. I am going to show you how to keep your walk with God and not lose it by contrast of going back and looking at the mistakes that others made in the Bible and make the parallel.

My mother asked me a question years and years ago when I got back into the Bible. My mom had a limited understanding of the Word of God, but she asked me this question. It was a good question. She asked me one time, "How come the Bible, because people at work, and you hear this too, people will tell you how the Bible is such a dirty book that it is explicit with sin. I have heard people even equate the Bible to a pornographic book that is explicit in its sin." Do you know why the Bible is so explicit in the things that we call sin? To teach you the consequences, to teach you how a man falls into it, the consequences of it, and then to teach you to avoid it. That is more than Larry Flynt had in mind when he puts out his stuff.

1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;

And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

And did all eat the same spiritual meat;

And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.

Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

Now, Father, help us today to come to your word. We love you. Give us those things that we need today. Help us see the great parallels that the church at Corinth could not see. Help us look into the Bible and see how that, Lord, the record of men's failures, their successes, and the issues of their life, and the things that they struggle with are our same issues. If we can learn by their mistakes and apply them to our lives through the Bible, that we will never make those same mistakes. Our mistakes will be kept to a minimum, and, Father, we would never lose that relationship that we have with you. Thank you today for all that you do now. In Jesus' name, for a sake we ask it. Amen.

Now, the first thing I want to draw your attention to is the last part of that verse, in verse 13. It says, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man." That is the first thing I want you to see. My first thing I want to make a statement to you is that we are all in the same boat. Human nature is always the same. There are no new tricks of the devil that he is using today that he did not use back in the Old Testament. The same tricks that he uses from Genesis chapter 1 are true right up through Revelation chapter 22.

Do you know what our biggest problem is? Every one of us has this problem. Our biggest problem is, in our human spirit, we think that we are excluded from this. We take the position, "Not me. It cannot happen to me. It will not happen to me." We fall into the "not me" syndrome of life.

I remember when I worked down in Miami County a number of years ago, every spring when they were getting ready for spring break, they would lose two or three teenagers. What they would do, because I was all around the city of Paola and all around those places, I got tied in with a lot of the good old boys down there in the street department and places like that. It was always the talk of the town. What would they do back there is they do what they call hill jumping. They would get out on a country road, and there are plenty of them out there. They would get three or four teenagers in a car, they would get going about 80 miles an hour, and then hit a hill and actually come off the pavement for 40, 50, 60 feet, crash down, and that to them was the big deal. What obviously would happen is the fact that they would get airborne and lose control with a car, and every spring there were two or three kids killed.

I talked to a state trooper one time, and he was just lamenting the fact that that was a tragedy. He said, "Yeah, it was, but it happens every year." He said, "You know what? These kids see their friends killed every year. We could go to the graveyard, and there would be tombstone after tombstone where they put little baseballs on them, they put bottles of beer on it, they put everything there, stuffed animals and everything, but the kids never get it because everybody thinks that it will never happen to them." That is where we are at. That is the first big thing we need to get over.

A tragedy this week that you are all probably fresh in your mind is that little girl that was killed out on 470 Woods Chapel Road. They were going out for a Fourth of July picnic, and they were

in a pickup truck. Some stuff blew off the pickup truck, and the girl went out in the road to pick up the stuff off the thing, and a car came over the thing and killed her instantly. Those things are tragedies. I read, and I followed those up. I pray for those kind of situations. I read in my heartbreaks many times, the father, a statement by the father said that his daughter was headstrong, goal-oriented, refused to comply with anybody. If she would try anything once and if it did not work out for her, then she would try it again. I guarantee you, and I do not know the whole depth of the story, but I guarantee you, that little girl ran out of that freeway picking that stuff up because teenagers think, many of you think, and from her father it seemed that she thought that it would happen to somebody else, but it would never happen to her. That is just not true. It happens to all of us.

Temptation happens to all of us. There is nobody made of iron in Christianity. All of our feet are feet of clay. Yet the Bible says, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man." This attitude that you will not fall, that somebody else will fall, we see it all the time when people lose their lives because they think they can beat the odds. You and I will not beat the odds. It is foolish to even think that.

But yet verse 13 says God is faithful, that when you are tempted, that He will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape that you may be able to bear it. Now that escape route is found in the Bible. It is found in the Bible by learning by the mistakes of others and then looking and studying:

8. How they got into that mess so you can avoid it.
9. The consequences of getting into it so you can say, "My God, I do not want that happening to me."
10. How they got back to God or how they did not get back to God because many of them did not.

The two key words in this chapter, before we get into some of these things and look at it, are those two words that I told you. The first one is the word example. An example is something that you do. Then the next word is an ensample. An ensample is not something that you do, but an ensample is what you are. Those two key words are very important. What Paul tries to get this church to do is basically the exact same thing I try to get this church to do: to go back through the Bible, in this case the Old Testament, and learn the cause and effect of not following the Lord and learn from the mistakes so you and I do not have to make the same mistakes.

Character studies in the Bible are a great study. I think it is one of the greatest ways you can study the Bible. I put books back in the bookstore, that book, All the Men in the Bible, All the Women in the Bible. Great character studies. I cannot think of a better book than Arthur W. Pink's Gleaning in Genesis. Incredible character studies. His Gleaning in Exodus. Incredible stuff. It is that kind of stuff that you get that really helps you. I wrote one on the life of David that is just absolutely some of the greatest material. When he uses the word "Gleaning in Genesis," that is exactly what he is doing. He is gleaning the character studies, the good and the bad, that we might learn. That is some great stuff that you need to build into your life in time.

Now look at verse 1. He says in verse 1, the first thing he says, "I do not want you to be ignorant." We have talked about this before, but there are many new people here. There are seven things in the Bible that you are told not to be ignorant of. Those seven things are key things. This is just one of them. Those seven things are the seven things that the Bible tells you that as a child of God, we are not to be ignorant of. Yet, if I would lay those seven out today, which we have done on Thursday night many times, do you know what we would find? We would find that most of God's people are totally ignorant of what these seven are. There begins our problem.

Now I want you to see down here in verse 2, verse 1 and 2. He says, in verse 1 and 2, we talked about the crossing of the Red Sea. There are a lot of things that you learn about your own relationship by going back and understanding what he calls the baptism of Moses. Again, there are seven distinct baptisms in the Bible.

He says in verse 3 and 4 that they had spiritual meat. That will be Exodus chapter 16. That is the manna. Remember that supernatural food that God gave them in the wilderness of sin? Exodus chapter 16. He says in the same verse, water out of the rock and tells you that rock was Christ. You will find that in Exodus chapter 17, where they do not have any water, and Moses smites the rock and the water comes out.

The next thing he says is in verse 7, how they fell into idolatry. This will be Exodus chapter 32. That they ate and they drank and they rose up to play. They simply forgot God and who He was. He says the next thing in verse 8 and 9, fornication, tempting Christ. In one day, 23,000 died. That would be Numbers chapter 21 down there in Baal-Peor. Then he says in verse 10 that they murmured against Moses and were destroyed by the destroyer. That is Numbers chapter 14 verse 2. You see, all these things are found in the Bible in the Old Testament.

Then he tells us in verse 6 and verse 11 that these were for our examples and our ensamples. Then the Bible says that they were written for our admonition. Our admonition upon whom the ends of the world come? Well, that pretty much solves that problem, who it is written to. It is written to you and me. Because we are standing in a day and age when the end of the world of Christ's return is imminent. We are right here. He tells us that these things were for our examples and our ensamples and for our admonition.

Now an admonition is a very strong warning. It would be like the sign that would be up at the contaminated water. It would be like somebody telling you, "Do not go here, do not do this." That is what it is like. Many kids, the reason why they get into the problems they get into is because they do not heed the admonition of their parents. That is why God's people get into the problems they get into because we do not heed the admonition.

The key verse is in verse 12 as far as I am concerned. He says, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." He says, "Take heed." Do not get into that syndrome where you think you are going to beat the system because you are not. Do not get in that syndrome that you think that it applies to everybody else but not you. It will not. He tells you very clearly that you ought to take heed because if you think you are standing and these things do not apply to you, that is when you are going to fall.

The key to success of maintaining a walk with God in this world that we live in, this wilderness of sin, is your personal relationship, not just with the Lord Jesus Christ but with the Word of God, the Bible. We talked about learning by contrast through the mistakes of others, how you and I, so we will not fall into the same mess.

A man asked me one time years ago, I was having lunch with him, and he asked me this question. He says, "As a pastor and as a Christian," he says, "be honest now. It is just you and me talking. What would you classify as your greatest strength and what would you classify as your greatest weakness?" I told him, and it is such a true thing, and I told him, "I have the same issues as anybody else. My human nature is just as bad as your human nature. I would be susceptible to any and all sin and any and all lifestyles that come along with that if I chose and did not stay in that book." That is the truth.

We think that preachers are made of cast iron. That is not true. We think that I do not identify with where you are at because I am who I am and you who you are. Let me tell you something, kid. I have the same struggles in my flesh as you have in yours. I have the same problems and the same issues that you deal with. Maybe not on the same level, but certainly human nature is the same across the board. If I did not stay in that book, if I did not choose to make that book the book of my life and stay in it and stay with it, I am susceptible to any sin, anybody, other human being is on planet earth. There are no iron men in Christianity. There are just men and women who are smart enough or dumb enough, however you want to put it, to learn by their own mistakes and then in time get into that Bible and learn from the mistakes of others and actually apply that to your life.

I am going to show you this morning what I mean today and what Paul is trying to talk to them about in chapter 10. I am going to give you a few thumbnail pictures, just the tip of the iceberg of really what is in that Bible. Time would not even begin to permit us to give you even one tenth of the scenarios found in the Bible. I have chosen a very easy subject, one I think that we can all identify with, one I think is very important, and it is simply based around the Christian life, the Christian walk, the Christian relationship with God, the Christian's faith in God, the Christian's courage to believe the Word of God and to live for God today. Even in this, it is just a glimpse, just a glimpse.

IV. Israel: A Prime Example of Failure

I do not know if you picked it up yet or not, but the overall greatest example of what we have of our life and our struggles and by the mistakes that were made is the one that Paul uses, the nation of Israel. I think hands down, the nation of Israel is the greatest picture and the greatest parallel of the struggles that you and I go through. I think the nation of Israel in every aspect of it, I think that it pictures and shows you and me what we need to be and what we need to do.

Have you ever noticed that you are God's son? The Bible says if you got saved, you are God's child. Yet, God's son, yet the Bible says in Exodus chapter 4 verse 22 that Israel was God's son. You see, you are God's son as an individual, but in the Old Testament, God looked at the nation of Israel as a corporate nation and looked at them as His son.

You realize that when you got saved, you got saved by the blood of Christ. You realize that when Israel got their calling out from Egypt, they got it by the blood of a lamb, a sinless lamb without spot. It is a picture of Christ. Their baptism that Paul talked about here is a picture of the fact that after you got saved, you got baptized. You will find that in Exodus chapter 20, God gives them the Word of God just like He gave you the Word of God. You will find in Exodus chapter 13 that God sanctified them just like He set you apart. You will find in Exodus chapter 16, He gave them the supernatural food, and in chapter 17, He gave them the supernatural water in the wilderness of sin. You will find in chapter 17, He taught them how to pray. Almost every aspect of the Christian life is laid out.

You realize that God had a plan for the nation of Israel, and do you realize that God has a plan for you today if you are saved? You realize that God saved you for a purpose just like He called the nation of Israel out of Egypt for a purpose? You think God just said, "Well, I will just get them out and just let them wander for a while. They are a nice bunch of people." No, God had a plan for them, and when God brought them out of the nation of Israel in Exodus chapter 12, it is a picture of God shedding you free by the blood of Christ, and God has a plan for you just like He had a plan for them.

Do you know what the parallel is? They never fulfilled that plan, and neither do most of God's people today. Do you know why? Because of the mistakes. That is why Paul lets us see, and he tells that church at Corinth, "Look back at what they did. Learn from the examples and the ensamples, and take the admonition, lest you fall into the same problems." That is all. Paul uses them as a prime example in chapter 10, and they are absolutely the best example that you will ever find.

Did you ever notice, just in a quick overview here, four major issues that Israel had that was their tragedy, a tragedy of tragedies that led to them never accomplishing what God wanted them to accomplish? They never did. Four basic things, and my friend, they are the four basic things that will mess you up and mess me up.

11. The first thing is they always forgot what God had just done for them.

Psalms 77:10-12

And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High.

I will remember the works of the LORD: surely I will remember thy wonders of old.

I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.

Do you know what our biggest problem is? It was their biggest problem, and their first problem. They forgot what God did for them. Do you know what your problem is? You have forgotten what God has done for you. You have had situations in your family where your mother or your father was lost, and God came in and saved them before they died and split hell wide open. Many of those things happened before you knew me. Many of them happened after you knew me. But God's hand came in, and God, you were so worried about your parents, or you were so worried about your brother and your sister, or your grandmother, or whatever the case. You were so

worried that you wanted them to be saved. God came down and miraculously saved them. Sometimes it was on the deathbed in the hospital. Sometimes it was in a retirement home. Sometimes it was there.

Now, here you are today. What? Three, four, five, six, seven years later? Back out in the world? Forgot about that? Lost all interest in that? Now you are on to your next great conquest. You are living your life just like you did. Do you know what happened? We forget what God did for us.

I have told you this before. Do you know the big difference between me and a lot of you? This is not true of probably most of you, but it is obviously true of some of you. Maybe if you are not here and here today, and you are hearing the sound of my voice, maybe it is true of you. Do you know the biggest fundamental difference between me and you? You got over today, God saves you. I just never got over it. I never forgot what He did for me. Now I am not telling you I am perfect. I am far from perfect. You would follow me around all day. You would probably never come back to church. But I will tell you one thing I probably do not have, and that is forgetting what He did for me. I can go back in my life, and I have it recorded in my Bible, recorded in books that I keep, in my journals and things like that, of everything that God did in my life. I look back, and there is never going to be a hell's chance on planet earth that I am ever going to forget what God did for me. I may go out and lose my mind and become a drunk. I may squander down the streets of Kansas City, puking in the alleys. But when you pick me up, I will wipe the slobber off my face and then tell you what God did for me. And then confess how I failed Him. That is the only difference.

God's people get mad at God, mad at church, mad at people, mad at preachers, simply because they forget what God did for them. Look what He said there. He says, "I will remember. I will remember the years." Some of you forgot how bad it was before you got saved. Some of you have forgotten what destitute situations you were in before you got saved. You simply let it slide. You have everything now. You are happy now. You have the desires of your heart. You slip into that mode that you forget how it was in the filth and the godliness of this old world. Like Psalms chapter 4, He said, "I waited patiently on the Lord, and I cried unto Him, and He heard my cry. He brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock." You have forgotten that. You have forgotten that. He says, "I will remember the years." Verse 11 says, "I will remember the works." You forgot the day God saved you when He did that work in your life, when He brought you out of the darkness, into the light, when He made you a new creature in Christ Jesus. Why in the world, my God, why in the world would you go back to the filth and the sloth of the world in any form or fashion if you did not forget that? You tell me. You enlighten me. Then He says, "I remember the works of the Lord. Sure, I remember the wonders of old." Do you know what that is? You forget how God got you where you are at today. Some of the things that you guys and girls have been through in life, it is only a miracle that you are here today. It is only the other wonder that God did that nobody can explain. Situations that are unexplainable. Circumstances that you just shake your head at and say, "I do not understand how that happened." The only answer is God did a wondrous thing in your life that gets you where you are at right now, and what? You are going to forget it? Yes, you are. Yes, you will.

12. The second thing, they would not stay within the law, the Word of God that God gave them.

Interesting thing in the Bible, and I am not going to spend a lot of time with this, but there is an interesting thing in the Word of God. That interesting thing is you ought to go back to Joshua chapter 24. You ought to see Joshua giving them the admonition back there, "Boy, you better stay with that book." Then you go to the next book, which is Judges chapter 1, and you see another great admonition for them to stay in the book, the Word of God. Do you know what? They never did. They never did. Because they forgot what God did for them, because they forgot the day God brought them out of Egypt. Do you ever notice how God in Psalms chapter 78, when He wants to bring them to reality before He clobbers them, He takes them back in Psalms 78 and shows them all the things that He did for them that they had forgotten.

13. Then the third thing, the third thing that messed them up was the friends that they kept company with.

Numbers 11:4-6

And the mixed multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?

We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick:

But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes.

It has always been amazing to me that the mixed multitude was always concerned about flesh. Do you know why that is? Because they live in the flesh. Everything about them is fleshly. "We remember the fish which we did in Egypt, freely, the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic." Oh, they have forgotten here because here they are saying they used to have those things freely. You were a slave back then. "But now our soul is dried away." Oh, yes it is, terrible thing, poor baby. "There is nothing at all beside this manna." That manna is the type of the Word of God. Do you know what that is a picture of? That is a picture of a Christian who used to go to church and love the Bible, love the things of God, love the Word of God. And then something happened. Then they wind up six months later, a year later, two years later, and they complain about church, they complain about everything in the church. They look at the Bible and they say, "Oh man, I am not going to Bible study tonight. It is the same old stuff over and over again." Yeah, you are right, and you still have not learned it. That a mixed multitude, all they got to eat is that all boring, dry Bible. Where there was a time in your life when the Bible was premier with you, what happened? Oh, I know it is my fault. I should have guessed that with another shoot.

I am telling you what, every time they turn around, they had nagging on them, the mixed multitude, showing doubt, putting thoughts in their mind to pull them away from God. Do you know why? Because misery loves company, that is why. They never had what it took to take the mixed multitude, square off sometime on a football field, put them about the 30-yard line, back up and kick them through the goalpost of life. It was their downfall. It will be your downfall. Things never change.

14. The fourth thing, that they would never keep focus on what they had, but always were drawn away to focus on what they did not have.

Out of sight, out of mind. Moses goes up in Exodus chapter 32, he stays a little longer than planned up there with God, 40 days. The children of Israel get nervous. Children of Israel, out of sight, out of mind. They never focused on the promise of the God. They never focused on what they were going to get, what God was going to do for them. They only focused on what they did not have, and so they moved on with that. They got a golden altar calf and they built that thing, and they are all dancing around there, having a great time. That is God's people.

Israel never got over their issues and it destroyed them in time. They never really enjoyed the full benefit of the promised land. Have you ever stopped thinking about this, and I think this is the tragedy of tragedies? Five thousand years, five thousand years of Jewish history, and out of five thousand years of Jewish history, they only have 40 years by which they enjoy the blessings that God had for them. 40 years out of five thousand years. The only thing more tragic of that is God's people's lives. Do you know what? Some of you live 80, 90 years and never have a minute of it. And you are going to heaven. I am talking to you this morning. I hope you brought your umbrella because there is going to be a lot of reality raining on you today.

V. Old Testament Men as Examples

Now let us look at another aspect of the Old Testament, examples and ensamples. Let us carry this thing a little bit farther. We have seen the nation of Israel, like I said, I want to give you a thumbnail sketch today. We will do this quickly. Let me ask you a question. Do you want to walk at a work, at a worship, at a relationship with God? One that you walk by faith and not by sight? Do you desire a ministry that is a work of God and not a work for God? Do you want a relationship with His Word, courage to stand, courage to suffer and to witness for Him?

Once you get past the nation of Israel, and this is just, I am going to pick these things out of here because they are fast, they are quick, and it will give you a glimpse of, but boy, we can spend the next 40 years of our life here. There are seven men in the Old Testament who by their examples and their ensamples teach us all. They teach us these things by what they do right and also by what they do wrong. They are just tip of the iceberg. There are tens of thousands of them in the Bible. The Bible has an example of good men. The Bible has an example of bad men. The Bible has an example of good women. It has examples of bad women.

In all of that, we find that it is true of life. Many times good people do dumb things. Many times good people do bad things. But you do not very often find very often bad people doing good things. But we learn from that. We learn from that.

Now, the first man that we are going to look at here, and we are just going to, like I said, briefly come through this. I could take 10 weeks on each one of these guys. You ought to do that at some point in your life. You ought to get a handle on it.

> *Noah*

The first man I want to look at is the man Noah. If you are wondering where Noah is found out in your Bible, he will primarily be found in Genesis 6. I will make it easy for you. Genesis 6, Genesis 7, Genesis 8, Genesis 9. This is the life of Noah. You will find he is mentioned again in Hebrews 11:7, and over there in 2 Peter 2:5, and maybe a few other places in the Bible.

When we look at Noah, do you know what we see? Do you know what we learn by contrast from Noah? Do you know what we learn by example and ensample of Noah? We learn from him, if we make the parallels, how to be a witness in this world.

2 Peter 2:5

And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

Hebrews 11:7

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

Those two concepts are great because it shows you and I, and of course you do not think about the Bible at all. You know that Matthew 24:39 says:

Matthew 24:39

And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

You and I are living again in the days of Noah. History always repeats itself. Now we find ourselves not in the same kind of time period without learning from his mistakes or learning what he did right, learning from the mistakes of the people in that time, and therefore we never get any admonition about it.

The first thing it says is he built an ark, and he prepared an ark to the saving of his household. Do you know what that tells me? The first thing he was concerned about was his family. The first thing he was concerned about is, "Are all my kids saved?" The first thing he did, and he moved with fear, and I know he was a preacher of righteousness, and I know he preached the world. But before he ever got to the world, do you know what he did? He built an ark, listen to me, he built an ark, he prepared an ark to what? The saving of his household. He was not guaranteed that anybody else was going to get in that ark, and by the way, nobody else did. But he made sure his family got in. What are you doing? What are you doing? That is not even my message. I just threw that in there when I saw that.

I will tell you what he is to me. He is the only man in the Bible to stand alone against what, five or six billion people? A conservative estimate of life on planet earth when you have the, at the time of Noah, of the population, is about five to six billion people. Certainly what it is today, if not more, when you consider all the factors. Yet, he is a great character study on a man who basically stood alone. There is no mention of his wife, no mention of his boys, no mention of

their wives, anybody taking a stand for God in this world other than him. One man against six billion people. One man who took a stand. One man who looked at the world and took a stand for God with that world when he was hated by the world, made fun of by the world, and he was ridiculed by the world, and do you know what? It never fazed him one bit because he had seen, he had heard, God told him what to do and God told him what was coming. Now that is a great model for you and for me. Yes, he made his mistakes, yes he had his issues, but when you learn his life, you see how that thing is a picture of what you and I ought to do.

We get the idea sometimes that in ministry, I do not think we form the right attitude. Nobody likes to be alone. Nobody likes to stand alone. It is the hardest thing in the world when you have got 50 people out there thinking one way and you have got to take the stand the opposite of those 50 people. But do you know what? If it is God's stand, take that stand. But you see, we are weak people today. We do not have any, we do not have any steel in our legs today. We do not stand against opposition today. We bend to it. Because we bend to it, that is why we have the problems we have. That is why men do not make it in the ministry. Or if they do make it in the ministry, it is a wishy-washy amalgamated mess.

Let me tell you something. The ministry, if you cannot understand these two next concepts, do not get in it. The ministry is not a popularity contest. You are not a pastor so you can win friends and influence enemies. You are not in the ministry for that. You are in the ministry to preach the truth. A lot of people are not going to like the truth. A lot of people are going to come after you because you preach the truth. A lot of people are going to hate you because you preach the truth. They are going to malign you. They are going to criticize you. They are going to assassinate your character. Do you know what? So what? Man, if that old boy can stand up against one guy, up against five or six billion people, and he did not stand for just, he stood for 120 years, he took it. He took it. He preached God's coming judgment to a world that taught that God is love. If you want to know what that world was like, just look around you. He stood by himself.

Do you know what he formed? He formed the idea, if you are going to go into the ministry, it is nice to have all of you folks here today. I love you. Thank you for being here. Most of you, if I know you, you are my friends. We serve together. We serve God together. But let me just tell you something. Please do not take this the wrong way. In the back of my mind, I know if push comes to shove, I am probably by myself. That is probably not true, but I cannot afford, I cannot allow myself not to think that is not true. Because I know there may come a time when this thing goes down that, let me tell you something. If it hit the fan this morning, this thing would be cut in half. As the persecution went on and things got tough, you know what? You would find a nicer, easier thing to do. At the end of the day, I am fully prepared to stand by myself if that is what it takes. I am fully prepared to stand by myself if nobody else stands with me. It is not about popularity. It is not about anything other than that is what God has called me to do. I learned that from men like Noah. Great character study.

> *Moses*

Then the next one is Moses. You will find Moses, folks, probably more written about Moses than any man in the Bible. You will find him in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy

throughout it. There is more good stuff on Moses than you will ever find. I will tell you what, it is just incredible. Do you know what Moses does for us? Moses teaches us how to be the friend of God. Do you know what? Moses did not start out being God's friend. That is what I like about Moses. Moses did not start out being God's friend. Moses started out timid. He was afraid. He did not talk very well. He could not talk, could not speak. I do not know what his speech problem was, but he just did not have a good self-image of himself. There is more information on the Bible and the life of Moses than any other man. If you want to be God's friend, then you study Moses' life.

You realize the first some 80 years of his life, it was a washout. He had to spend 40 years on the backside of the desert after he spent, what, 40 years down in Egypt. He was raised as an Egyptian, and he was called by God and to lead God's people. Do you know what? That is what God did with you. You were born an Egyptian. You were born into this world. Then God brought you out of this world and called you and saved you to lead His people. You want to learn how to be God's friend. No better example, no better ensample of a real relationship with God the way God wants it to be than Moses.

We see his failures. We see his triumphs. We see a timid man in Exodus chapter 4, 5, and 6. We see God's man by the time you get out of Egypt and into the Exodus of Deuteronomy. We see him standing up not only to the enemies of God but the people of God. Moses not only had to contend with the world out there that hated God. He had to contend with a mixed multitude in the nation of Israel always forgetting what God did. Boy, there lies some great study material for you.

It is interesting, in the beginning Aaron spoke for Moses but in the end Moses spoke for God. There is a process there. Moses speaks in the place of God and God's place. Do you know why? Because he knew God so well he knew exactly what God would say and what God would do. That is the place you have to get to in life. That is called speaking with authority. That is not your own authority. That is the authority of the Word of God.

When you come to his life, the great talks they have, the great arguments they have. Boy, you want to see a real plain relationship with God where a man just gets with God, it is Moses. Boy, he argues with God sometimes, and I mean it is incredible. Then God argues with him sometimes. It is exactly what it means in Exodus 33:11 where it simply says:

Exodus 33:11

And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle.

Boy, that is, that is, there is no truer statement in the Bible. I remember one time that Moses is so fed up with all of God's people and their godliness and all the stupid stuff they are doing. He comes into that tent, throws that tent flap, God says, "What is going on with you?" And he just cusses up a storm and he tells God he had to kill these blankety-blank people, wipe out every one of them. God just lets him go on for a while, and then after he steams on off for a while, God

says, "Now Moses, come on. You know they are goofy people. You know they got their problems. But you know that bottom line is they are, my son is going to come through them, and I know you got a tough job." And Moses says, "Yeah, I know you are right. But sometimes did it drive me nuts?" He said, "Well, you know what Moses, I picked you because I knew you could handle it. You know what, yes, they are goofy. Yes, they are going to drive you nuts. Yes, you want to kill them tomorrow. But you know what, it is okay." Moses says, "Gee, God, thanks a lot, man. No problem, Moses. Me and you are buds. Good deal. Okay. Well, I am good better now, Lord. I can go out and handle it." "You go out there and handle it."

Two weeks later, God comes into the tent, throws the flap. Moses says, "Hey, God, what is going on with you?" And He says, "I am going to kill them people." He says, "I am going to wipe them out." And He says, "I am just going to kill them. I am going to strip their skin off. I am going to boil them in oil. I am going to cut their heads off, put them on steaks. I am going to just open up the whole earth, open up and swallow up. What I ever thought of that I could trust these people, I called them. I want them to do this. I have done everything for them. I have given them everything. They have not, not one thing they have not needed that I have not given them. Do you see what they did? They got some graven image out there. They are dancing around that thing naked. I am going to go out there and I am going to toast their little hineys till they come. They just get that thing straight. I am going to kill them all."

Moses says, "Now, come on, Lord, you know better than that. You are not going to do that. Come on. Here, sit down. Chill out for a little bit. Now, you know that they are goofy people." "Well, it was just two weeks ago. You told me how goofy they were." "Yeah, I know that was then. They are goofy now for me. I want to kill them." "No, that is not going to work. Stop and think about this, Lord. What are you going to do when you go out and wipe them? What are all the other nations going to say? You know we came through the land last week and the Hittites were out there. When I went up to that King Hittite guy and I told him, 'We are going to kill them.' We are going to kill the Hittite guy and I told him, 'We are the nation of Israel. We would like to pass through your land, get a little water.' Do you know what he did? He said, 'Help yourself.' He said, 'Anything you need, my people will get it for you. You just help yourself. You come on through that land.' And I said, 'Well, thank you very much.' He said, 'Nope, do not thank me.' He said, 'You know what? We have heard what your God did to the other nations that did not let you come through. You come on through.' He said, 'What are they going to say? They are going to say that you started this thing and couldn't finish it.'" God says, "Yeah, you are right. Okay, Moses, thanks a lot. I needed that. I feel better now."

Some of you do not even get that. Some of you cannot conceive of a man talking to God that way. Do you know what? I feel sorry for you. You do not have any relationship with God. You can always talk about where a man is at by how he prays. You get somebody up there to pray and they start talking about the God of the flowers, the mountains, and, "God, take us ugly ducklings and make us swans." Give me a break. Do you know what a real man who has got a real relationship with God will talk about? He will just get right down there where it is at.

I led a man to Christ one time years ago when I led him to the Lord, and he prayed, he wanted to pray his own sin in his prayer. When I led him to the Lord, he about knocked me off my socks.

When he started to pray, he used every cuss word in the book. The average preacher would look at that and he would stop him and say, "Oh, you cannot talk like that." Do you know what? That is the way God wants you to talk to Him. He wants you to talk to Him the way you are in your heart right then. This guy said, "Oh, Lord, I am a goddamn sinner." Mike started to think, "I am out here. Whoa, let us back up. That is not what maybe we want to do that thing though." But then do you know what I thought? That is exactly what he was. He got saved. He got saved. You see, that is the kind of relationship God wants to have. That is what he had with Moses. They had great talks, great arguments. Moses had great fears, but Moses took great steps and became a great tool in God's hands.

God said to him one time when Moses was alibiing around and did not want to be able to do things, and God says to him, "Moses, what do you have in your hand?" Moses just said, "I do not know how I am going to do all these things." He says, "What do you have in your hand?" He says, "Well, I have a rod." God said, "That is just what we will start with." Do you know what? All through the early part of Exodus when he did all the great miracles, do you know what he used? The rod that Moses had. Do you know what God wants you to do? He just wants you to come to Him and say, "God, I cannot do it. I do not know how to do it." And God will say to you, "Well, what do you have in your hand, Bob? What do you have in your hand, Tom? What do you have in your hand, Ralph? What do you have in your hand, Bill? What do you have in your hand, Mary? What do you have in your hand, Sue?" You will say, "Well, I have this." And God said, "Well, just start using that." You get the idea God wants you to be able to do something for Him. God does not want you to be able. He just wants you to be willing. If you are willing, God will be able.

> *Abraham*

Then we have Abraham. You are going to find Abraham, folks, in Genesis 11 all the way up to Genesis 25. He is also, by the way, called the friend of God in Isaiah 41:8. You will find him also in Hebrews 11 and other key places. Now what does Abraham teach us by his life? Oh, what a life this is. He teaches us how to walk by faith and not by sight. The life of Abraham is one of the greatest studies in the Bible, one of my favorite characters in the Bible. He is the first man in the Bible where God changes his name from Abram, which means "high father," to Abraham, which means "the father of many nations."

Do you know what it means when you find God changing a man's name in the Bible? It is a very spiritual significance. It means that that guy has come to the point in his life now that he is no longer the way that he was, and from that point on he is going to do whatever God wanted him to do. You have a study when God changes Jacob's name to Israel. You have a study when he takes Saul and changes his name to Paul. You have a study through the Bible where he takes Sarai and calls her Sarah. You have to look when the places in the Bible when God changes somebody's name. Believe it or not, I have seen that same thing in some of your lives. Do you know what it means in the Bible when God changes your name? It means that you are not going back to the world anymore. It means you finally got to that point. You are not perfect. You are going to have mistakes. Every one of these guys made mistakes after God changed their name, but one thing was sure, they are not going back to the world anymore. When you get to that point in your life

and you say, "That is it, I am here and I am never going back. I may struggle tomorrow. I may do some dumb things down the line, but I will tell you one thing. I am not going back to that world system and I am going to build my relationship with God." When you get to that point in your life, God changes your name.

Abram started out in Genesis 12 when he had his wife down in Egypt. When Pharaoh saw how beautiful she was, he had to lie and he said, "She is my sister." He could not even trust God for that. Then you get to Genesis 22, somewhat 35, 40 years later in his life, and he is down there and now he is willing to offer up Isaac, his own son on the altar, if that is what God wants. Do you know what happened between point A and point B? He grew. He learned to walk by faith and not by sight. Boy, what a process. He made some mistakes. He made some mistakes. It took him 99 years to figure it out. You see, that is why in the ministry you have to have patience and you have to have long suffering. I would like you all to be where I want you to be, but that is not me. That is not a reality. You are where you are at. I will take you where you are at as long as you keep growing. I have had people all my life that I worked with in the ministry that they took four steps forward and three steps back. I do not care. I do not care at all, as long as you keep making progress, as long as you keep doing what is right, as long as you keep picking it up and keep putting them down and keep moving forward, that is all I can ask for you. The rest will take care of itself. His life as an example and an ensample of how to learn, to trust God in whatever he says, whatever he wants you to do is absolutely incredible. He is a great study.

> *Samuel*

Then we have Samuel. Samuel is another favorite in mind, and you are going to find Samuel. He writes the first Samuel and second Samuel, and he is in predominantly the book of 1 Samuel. What will Samuel do for us? Samuel, through his life of examples and ensamples, he will show you how to build a work of God. He will show you the aspect of ministry, how to get into ministry. He is the first real prophet that Israel ever has, and he is the last of the judges. If you want to, in the ministry, study this young man, study his call, study the process that God used for him to become a great prophet of God's people.

Do you know what? In a lot of ways, you and I today as New Testament Christians, that is what we are. We are prophets. We are New Testament prophets. Except you do not get a vision from God, the prophecy you need to tell is already in a book. Back in the Old Testament, they did not have the completed Bible, so God would come down and tell a prophet what he needed to say. He would go out and tell the people what God wanted him to say. We do not have that issue today. You have got the written revelation of God in your hand. You have got a more sure word of prophecy. You have got everything you need, and everything that God told you is in that book. You need nothing from the outside. No hocus pocus experiences, no visions, no nothing, all that stuff. You have got everything you need in that book, and you take that book and you go to a people, and you be God's prophet, man and woman. That is what you do. That is exactly what you do.

You are going to find that every issue, a young man or a young woman faces in God calling them to do what worked for him is found in his life. His struggle with God, his call into the ministry,

the God calling and dealing in his life. There is a great parallel here that I look that why, and I ask myself many times why some people make it and some people do not. It is a thing in my business, I want everybody to make it. I would be less than who I needed to be if I did not analyze why people do not make it. I mean, my goodness, we have got the Word of God, we have got everything you want. You have got the Holy Spirit of God inside you, living inside you, sealed inside you. You have got everything you need. You have got a Bible. Why do not you make it? Why do not God's people make it? And Samuel answers that question. It is the key really, it is in 1 Samuel chapter 3, verses 9 through 21.

1 Samuel 3:9-21

Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.

And the LORD said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle.

In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end.

For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.

And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever.

And Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house of the LORD. And Samuel feared to shew Eli the vision.

Then Eli called Samuel, and said, Samuel, my son. And he answered, Here am I.

And he said, What is the thing that the LORD hath said unto thee? I pray thee hide it not from me: God do so to thee, and more also, if thou hide any thing from me of all the things that he said unto thee.

And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, It is the LORD: let him do what seemeth him good.

And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground.

And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the LORD.

And the LORD appeared again in Shiloh: for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the LORD.

You see, there is the key. There is what separates you from the person sitting next to you or the person in front of you behind you. There is why some will make it and some will not make it. Samuel determined in his heart that when he heard what God said, he would let none of those words fall to the ground. You do not even know what that means, do you? It means every time you come to Thursday night, it means every time you come to Sunday morning, when something is laid out that is to your benefit, you get it. That means you have got to get the tape and work it out, because you could not get down fast enough. That is what you do. But you let none of the Word of God, you stop and think of everything that we said today up to this point and everything that we laid out. If you could just get that and you put that into your life, how it would work and change who you are. But you know what? Most of you will not do it. Do you know why? Because you are in a lifestyle of letting God's words fall to the ground. You just get a little bit here and a little bit there.

> *David*

David, the next one. David is written about in 1 Samuel, the book of 2 Samuel and the book of 1 Chronicles. Those are three very important books. 1 Samuel is the beginning years of David. 2 Samuel is the years of David once he becomes king and it shows you all of his problems. Ah, here is the contrast. Then 1 Chronicles shows David without any sin, because he is a type of Christ. That would have formed the great contrast.

Now, what does David do for us? David shows us how to worship God through a relationship with the Word of God. There is no worship of God without knowing and loving and having the Word of God. John 4:24 says:

John 4:24

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Two aspects. The spirit there is a small "s." It is man's spirit. The truth there is the Word of God. In other words, it is your spirit lined up to the truth of God's Word that produces worship. Worship is not a ceremony. Worship is not a service. Worship is not anything. Worship is a state of attitude of heart that you ought to live in 24 hours, 7 days a week. It is that simple.

David gets the sure mercies of David, a picture of the New Testament Christian eternal security. You see, the heart of God is the Word of God. There are many commentaries on the life of David. Arthur W. Pink has a great commentary on him. But the greatest commentary on his life was not written by man, but it was written by God. God said in Acts 13:22:

Acts 13:22

And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

That was God's testimony about David now. "A man after my own heart." He said in 1 Kings 15:5:

1 Kings 15:5

Because David did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from any thing that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.

David is the standard. When you get over there into Kings and Chronicles, he is the standard by which all the kings are judged by. He is an incredible study. You want to learn how to have a relationship with God? Then study Psalms. Study the Psalms of David. Psalms 119, 176 verses, all dealing with David's relationship with the Word of God.

> *Daniel*

Then the next man is Daniel. Daniel is a great study. He is taken captive in Nebuchadnezzar's siege of 606, the first time he comes down. Do you know what? Daniel could have rationalized the situation. I mean, he was taken without anything he could do about it. He could have just blended in and blamed God and everybody else, but he did not. He did not. In chapter 1 and chapter 2, we see him refuse to become a child of Babylon. He will not become one with the world because the Bible says he is of the king's seed. He is in the line of Christ.

In chapter 3, we see that him and the three Hebrew children are thrown into the fiery furnace, are they not? They are thrown into the fiery furnace because they would not do what Nebuchadnezzar wanted him to do. That fiery furnace is a picture of what you are going to get thrown into as a Christian. When you do what God wants you to do and you do not do what the world wants you to do, and a lot of times even what God's people want you to do, do you know what they are going to do to you? They are going to throw you into the fiery furnace and they are going to turn the heat up. But there is an old song that is sung, and it is based on this story, and the Statler Brothers made it famous, and it was the old song, "They didn't bend, they didn't bow, they didn't burn." Boy, that is so true. They did not bend into Nebuchadnezzar. They did not bow down to him, and because of that they did not burn. Do you know why they did not burn? Because old Nebuchadnezzar looked in there and he saw those three guys that he threw in there. He said, "There is a fourth man in the fire. I thought we threw three in. Who is that fourth guy?" Somebody looked in and said, "Who, who that is? That is the Son of God." You see, every time the world of Christianity wants to throw you into the fiery furnace, the Lord will be there with you.

Then in chapter 6, the great story of Daniel and the Lion's Den. There is a case where because God has got His hand in his life, the jealousy persists among all the other people that are around him. So they make up a story and they assassinate his character and they lie about him, all to get him thrown in the Lion's Den. The king falls for it. The king falls for it, and finally they take Daniel and they put him down in that Lion's Den. That is a great picture. That is a great picture. If they cannot get you burned up in the fire, then they will throw you in the Lion's Den. The Bible says that the devil, your adversary, going about is a roaring lion, seeing who he may devour. That is the picture there. They cannot burn you up, then they will throw you in the Lion's Den and let the devil get to you.

But do you know what I have learned from that great story? You learn from guys' mistakes. You learn from what they do, right? You look at these things, and these are parallels. If you take a stand for God to this world, they will throw you into the fiery furnace, but God will be with you. If you are in that fire, they will see Him standing right there with you. You will say, "Could you close the door? There is a draft in here. It is a little cool." But they are throwing the Lion's Den, let me tell you something. I heard an old preacher tell me this years and years and years ago, and I never forgot it. He said, "It is okay for the world and the Christian to throw you in the Lion's Den as long as the Lion of the tribe of Judah goes in there with you." He is the head lion.

> *Job*

Then we have Job. You will sustain yourself with these examples and ensamples when it becomes your day. When it becomes your day in the Lion's Den and becomes your day in the fiery furnace. Or when it becomes your day that you lose everything like our next guy, our last guy, Job does. Job teaches us how to suffer for God. James 5:11 talks about the patience of Job.

James 5:11

Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

There is a great truth found in the book of Job, and we do not have time to explore it all. You have heard me talk about it many, many times, and that is simply God is enough. Job did not have anything that you and I have got. He loses everything. It has always been amazing to me that he loses what we will never lose, but he maintains his integrity and he does not have anything that you and I have. Yet you and I give it up all the time. Job has no Bible. Job has no indwelling Holy Spirit. Job has no pastor. Job has no church. Job has no Christian radio. He has no Christian books. He does not have any Christian friend, the three friends he had with friends like that who need enemies. The helpmeet that God gave him is more of a help mess than a helpmeet. She did not do any good. The best advice she would come up with, "Curse God and die." She would throw her in a lion's den. Wrong story, excuse me.

Now the great truth of this book is, do you know what? God is enough. I look at you and I look at me and how frail we are and how we fold up like a broken accordion when you have got a Bible. You have got the Holy Spirit of God living inside you. You have got a church. You have got a pastor. You have got Christian friends. Most of you have a good godly spouse. Most of you have a good relationship with the Holy Spirit of God. You know a little bit about your Bible. You have the right Bible. You have everything. We are placed where you can get every answer you want to get about anything. What is the excuse for your failure? There is no excuse. Other than the fact you do not want to. You see, Job teaches us how to suffer. Through the examples and his ensample.

2 Timothy 2:12

If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

2 Timothy 3:12

Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

Philippians 3:10

That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

Now there it is right there. There is why, the reason why we do not really do what we want to do. We want the power of God. We want the ministry of God. We just do not want the sufferings of God. That is where we are at. Yet Hebrews 13:12-13 says:

Hebrews 13:12-13

Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp bearing his reproach.

That means he was crucified outside the city. Then he says this, verse 13, "Let us go forth therefore unto him, without the camp bearing his reproach." You see, you are supposed to pay the price right now. If there is not some suffering you are going through for Christ's cause, somebody else to get you, somebody hates you, somebody is slandering you. If you get along with everybody, nicey-nicey, and may those people hate God, hate the Word of God, hate church, hate all the things going with it, you better get along and take a good dark look at yourself. We just do not want to suffer. Yet the Bible says in Romans 8:18:

Romans 8:18

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

You see, these are the things that God gave them. These are the things that the church of Corinth had, that Paul is trying to get them to see that they would not learn. These are the same things today I bring you, that if you want the victory in Jesus, this is how you get it. You learn from others' mistakes. The church of Corinth never learned these things.

I could take you this morning to Hebrews chapter 12, and in chapter 11 it gives you what? 17 men and women. In chapter 12 is the great chapter on God's people in perseverance, holding on, keeping on, do not fade in your mind. Do you know what he uses for an example and an ensample of them? The great people in chapter 11 that take a stand. 17 people. It is a great chapter. I mean, we talk about people who subdued kingdoms, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness was made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight armies of the aliens. Women received their dead, raised to life again. Others tortured, not accepting deliverance that they might obtain a better resurrection. Cruel mockings, scourging, bonding, imprisonment, stoned, sawn asunder, tempted, slain with a sword, wandered about in sheepskin, in desert, and in mountains, dens and caves. Yet the Bible says in the last verse 39 that they obtained a better report.

You see those things are in there that we might learn. If you lose a loved one, let me tell you something. You go there and find the women who received their dead and reeled and looked for a resurrection. You are going through somebody being on you and making problems for you. Go back and study the cruel mockings, or the scourging. Somebody out to get you and trying to hurt you, study the bonds and imprisonment, slain with a sword, tempted. I mean, it is all right there. These are the lives of the lives of people who went through the things that they did wrong. Many times because they did things wrong and these were the consequences. Many times because they just suffered righteously. But learn them. Learn them. And then apply them to your own life. That when you go out tomorrow, you do not forget what God has done for you. You do not make the same mistakes that so many people made in the Bible. This is what the Church of Corinth could not get through. This is why they were a church full of spiritual babies. If this church is ever going to be all that God wants it to be, it is going to take men and women who not only learn from their own mistakes and correct them, bring them back in line with the Bible, but will learn from the mistakes in the Bible, the ensamples and the examples.

Every head bowed. Now, Father, we do thank you and praise you today. Thank you for the Lord Jesus. Thank you for the Word of God. Thank you for the things in this book that give us exactly what we know.