

## I. The Church's Mission and Purpose

If you have your Bibles this morning, I want you to turn with me very quickly to Proverbs chapter 2. I want to show you today that we are going to get some things done. We are going to get you the 30 principles that I want you to start getting down here. If you are visiting today, just so you understand what we are doing here, we have been in the book of 2 Corinthians. Our church has been building toward where we are at now for the last several years. With all the things that God has given us, it is clear to us now that we need to step up to that next level and really begin to build some things in our lives.

The church here, any church, exists for one reason: to finish the job that God has called us to do. God saved each one of us for a reason, for a purpose. This church, any church, is about finding out what that purpose is and then helping you accomplish it. Obviously, the ministry is people. The handbook of the Bible in the New Testament for dealing with people would be the book of 2 Corinthians.

We have talked about this for a number of years. My overall goal was to get to the place where our church could really impact our own city, our culture. Every culture has needs. When I was going down to Central America years ago, the needs down there were clothes, food, and desperately needed medicine. When I went to Romania and to Russia and those places years ago, when the wall came down, they desperately had a need for the basic things of life that they needed to get there after the communist wall came down.

The key to penetrating any culture, and that is our job, the job of a Christian church, is to penetrate the culture that they exist in and bring them the Gospel. The way that you do that is first of all, look and understand the need that is within that culture. America does not need clothes. America certainly does not need any food. America has an abundance of all of those things. But what America needs, and what America is, its families are broken. Marriages are broken.

The best way I can describe America is a common term that we have all heard for many, many years, but it fits America today better than anything else I know of: America is an insane asylum run by the inmates. Every aspect of our society is fractured and broken. What this city needs and what our culture needs is to get back to the biblical principles that will get people back on track with their relationship with the Lord. That is the only answer to man's problems. You know that and I know that.

I have had it in my mind for many, many years, but what I wanted to do, and it was not until this last year as things began to build, and this year, that it became very clear that we need to open up now and begin on a higher level than we have ever done before of training ourselves for that task. We need to get to the place in time where this church really has an outreach to the city with their problems, being able to take families, singles, couples, whatever it takes, and help them get

the problem solved in life. They are out there; there is no shortage of them. The problem is the shortage of God's people who are equipped to be able to deal with that.

I see now all around us everything that is in place. Whatever you are at, and I want to say this, it is hard to give you everything we are going to do in just one session. So I am going to have to kind of piece it together. But wherever you are at in your Christian life, I do not care if you just got saved three weeks ago, you will have enough time to get ready for some level of this. I am not looking at just a counseling ministry per se. I am looking at everybody being able to find where you are at.

Joe and Christina talked to me this week. They lost their baby right around Christmas, and they have gotten into a support group. They are going to be more of a support to the people there than the people will be to them. We talked about it, and I guarantee you, kids, right now, in time, you will head up a support system that will touch thousands of people's lives. I guarantee you, if you just stay doing what you are doing and keep on doing it, that will be a division of this church's ministry that you will be able to impact. God only knows how many people's lives, because you know the hurt, you know the pain, but you also know the answers and the victory. That is what you have that just a support group does not have.

So we have that aspect of it, and there will be people that will gravitate toward that as they develop that and head that up. I want to start a full-blown premarital counseling. Some of you will fit into that. I have already got a couple that heads that up for me. I want to develop couples that want to sit down with people who are going to get married. I am already, in many of these things, burning the midnight oil, rewriting the lessons, and helping everything so we have a curriculum for it that flows. We will have that section.

There is a tremendous need for couples who want to work in marital counseling or family counseling, dealing with just couples that are struggling in marriages or families with children that are having issues. Many of you will find yourself someplace in that. Discipleship, our discipleship ministry, will always be the core base. Those of you who are discipling in that ministry now for a number of years, you know that almost without deception, every discipleship thing you start turns into a counseling session. You know that is true; it is just the way that it goes.

On whatever level you are at, whatever level you need, whatever you feel you are at, there will be people who work with people with their personal issues, drug abuse, alcoholism. All of those things are vital. From a scale of one to ten, you can find yourself and let God take you where you are at, no matter how long you have been saved. You have this year to get that ready. All I have to know is your intentions, and I will start getting everything into your world to help you get that.

I said it last week: my job is to help you succeed. My job is not to throw this thing out there, make it so hard that nobody can get it, and then beat you over the head because you did not make it. That does not make any sense. My job is to take the people who, in your heart, know this is what you have to do. You know that this is the next level for you. Maybe it is level one or two for some of you. Maybe it is three or four for others. Maybe it is five to six for some others. But you

want to go up that next level. My job is to help you get there. But the only way we will get there is through an established biblical process.

## II. The Biblical Process of Understanding (Proverbs 2)

I want to talk about that for just a few minutes before we get into the principles. When you start putting these principles in your Bibles today, I want you to know this: you are going to have two sets of notes. One set of notes that you want to have will be the book of 2 Corinthians by itself. You want to have a running commentary of notes in your wide margin Bible of how that thing works. You want to be able to always go to it.

Basically, when I teach it to you, you know what I do on Monday? Here is how my week goes. I start out on Monday forming out what I want to say. Sunday, I will think about it. The rest of the day, I will not really mess with it. I will let it go around in my mind. On Monday morning, when I get going on it, what I start to do then is I start to frame up what I am going to do in 2 Corinthians. All I really do is go to my Bible, and I have the complete breakdown outline of everything that is in that book. I just hitchhike off of that. I take out of that what I have, what I need. I may add a few other things over here. It is a lot like making a big bowl of chili. You get the base ingredient—that would be 2 Corinthians—and then you add the ingredients to it: spicy, hot, mild, whatever you want. But at the end of the day, you have got a great bowl of chili. At the end of the day, you have got the book of 2 Corinthians down. Just like me, who is teaching it to you now, you are going to use that down the line someplace teaching it to somebody else. You have to have it in your Bible.

The second set of notes will be the principles. Those will need to go in the back of your Bible. The wide margin Bibles we have back here have 29 blank pages; that is more than enough. But you need to start listing them in there with a very short definition about what it is. I am not only going to give you the principles today; I am also going to give you the definitions. You need to put it in there and get it in there so that you can work from it. What you are beginning to do is build your own counseling handbook manual out of your own Bible.

If I can show you my Bible, my mind is terribly more unneat than yours will ever be. My notes look like squiggles. I have to track my own footsteps through the snow to find all my notes. But it is what I did, how I did it. If I would have done it differently, I would have done it. But by the time I put them in there, I had all my room taken up and no blank pages. So I have to put them between maps and everything else. It is kind of like a little, nobody could ever steal my material, that is for sure. Many of you will do a better job than that because you are starting out with it. My job is to get you there. That is why it is so vitally important to get the tape, go down through it, sit down. I know that some of you are already going to put out handouts of the principles, that is great, but you need to hear my definitions and get them in there and put it all together. It is going to be the greatest challenge that you ever did, but it will be the single greatest thing that you ever did.

No matter where you are at, on what level that you are as a Christian, I will help you. I have already got older Christians that are waiting that if I put somebody with them to help them with

their notes, to help you make sure you stay on track. I have it all put in place for you, whatever you need. I told Thursday night, some of you were not here, that you are going to have to have a wide margin Bible to get this done. I told them to sell out what we have and order another couple of cases. I think we sell them for \$45 or whatever it is. I told them to sell them for \$30. We will just take the hit on it. I want everybody to get one. You have to have that to put it all together. It is not going to work any other way. You have to have it in your Bible. The best study Bible will always be your own.

Saying all of that, I want to show you the process for just a few moments before we get into the principles. I want to show you the process that we are going to follow. This is the process that I followed. I can safely say whatever I know about the Bible today, and it is not much, but whatever I do know and whatever I have gleaned, it has been because of this process that I am going to show you. If you fundamentally get this in your mind, you will use this over and over and over again with the people that you work with.

I want you to turn to Proverbs chapter 2. We have talked about this before. We just never talked about it in a context that we are going to talk about it right now.

Proverbs 2:1-9

*My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee;*

*So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding;*

*Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding;*

*If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;*

*Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.*

*For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.*

*He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.*

*He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.*

*Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.*

Now Father, we ask you to bless our time today. We love you. Thank you for all that you do for us. We pray that your hands will be upon us today and take the men and women in this church that so desire to go up to that next level. It does not matter where they are at. It only matters that they take these principles and apply them to their own life first. Then through that, Lord, you can apply it and show them and give them everything that they need. Help raise up the men and women who on every level will stand and be able to reach out to whatever problem someone has, whether it be a couple struggling with their marriage, whether it be a family struggling with their children, whatever it may be, that we can help them. We will thank you and praise you in Jesus' name. For his sake, we ask it. Amen.

What I am about to show you is this: six things. If you do these six things, if you follow these six things that I am going to tell you, and you are going to have to do it to get all this stuff done, but

if you do these six things, it shows you then what God will do for you. You do something for Him; He does something back for you. That is the process. That is the way it works in the Bible. As I said earlier, I owe everything that I know to this passage of scripture. I may not know a lot, but whatever it is, you can blame it on it.

With this passage and the beginning of its fulfillment in your life, you will enter into a phase of your life that, very frankly, most Christians never get to. You have heard me say it many, many times. The book of Proverbs breaks down real simply into three sections. Chapters 1 through chapter 7, they all start out with "My son," and that is where he gives us great instructions about how to get wisdom and how to be wise and not be a fool. Then you come to chapter 8 through chapter 30, and then you find the one-liners, the great principles, the issues of life. It is the most incredible thing you will ever get into in your life. When you come to chapter 31, you have the end result. The end result is the virtuous woman. The virtuous woman is a picture of the church. It is a picture of what your life and my life ought to be and what it will be if we do the first section, 1 through 8, and then follow the principles. This is what we are going to follow right now.

This morning, for just a second, I am going to show you the format, what you have to do, and then what God does. Then I am going to start to show you the principles that you are going to start to get down. Every one of these principles will work its way back to Proverbs in one way or the other. This is a very easy passage.

## ➤ The Six Things You Do

- 1.) Receive God's Word. The first thing he says here in Proverbs 2:1, "My son, if thou wilt receive my word." That is the first aspect. The first thing you have to get in your brain is that the Bible is everything God claims it to be. The Bible is the book that will fix every problem man has. The Bible is not just a book about truth. The Bible is not a book that contains truth. The Bible is all truth. 1 Thessalonians 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. The work that God begins to do in your life goes back to what you believe about that Bible. When you start today believing that it has the answers to everything in life, you are out of the gate and you are on your way.
- 2.) Hide God's Commandments. Proverbs 2:1 again, he says, "and hide my commandments with thee." Psalms 119:11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. These are the biblical principles. These are what you are going to get the next 10 months, over 300 of them. This is why I am saying, if you do not adjust yourself, if you do not discipline yourself, if you do not make this the single most important study that you are going to do, you are not going to make it. You just will not, because it is going to overwhelm you if you do not stay on top of it. But you have to take these principles and hide them into your heart. That is why you are going to put them in the back of your Bible. You are going to have a ready reference that once you take the time to detail it out, get your definitions, and put them in your Bible, they will be in your heart. You will have that ready reference you can go through.

- 3.) Incline Your Ear to Wisdom. Proverbs 2:2, "So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom." That is the learning process. "Thou incline thine ear." The word "incline" means that you get down. You have to work at hearing what God has to say. 2 Timothy 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. You have to work at getting God's Word. It does not come natural to you. You are going to have to work every day of your life to make this happen.
- 4.) Apply Your Heart to Understanding. Proverbs 2:2 again, "and apply thy heart to understanding." You see how it works? You get the principles, you hide them into your heart, and then you apply it. How do you apply it? That is where you get involved in ministry. That is what you are doing in Restart right now. That is what you are doing when you are discipling right now. That is what you are doing when you are working with people right now. It does not matter if you are wrapping hot dogs. It does not matter if you are out passing out tracts. It is the attitude that you are applying what God has given you, and then God takes that and He applies it to understanding. That is the application: taking what you have, no matter what it may be, and doing something with it. You have heard me use the story many, many times. Moses was the greatest leader under the law that Israel had, but when you go back and you see where he started, we always talk about how great he was, but we forget many times how he got started. He is out there, and God says, "I have a job for you to do," just like God says to you, "I have a job for you to do." Moses said the same thing that most of us say: "I cannot do it. I do not know anything about the Bible. I have never done this. I have never done that. I have only been saved a short time. How am I going to do all these great things?" You know what God said? He did not. He just simply said, "What do you have in your hand, Moses?" He says, "Well, I have a rod. I am a shepherd." He said, "Okay, we will start with that." God will start with whatever you are willing to give Him and then develop you to that point. That is what we have. You have to see this.
- 5.) Cry After Knowledge and Lift Up Your Voice for Understanding. Proverbs 2:3, "Yea, if thou criest after knowledge and lifted up thy voice for understanding." There is your prayer life. You have to begin to actively pray to God. "God, I want to do what you want me to do. I am dumb. I am stupid. I do not know how to get it done, but I want to do it. God, you have to help me with this because my ways are not your ways. Your thoughts are not my thoughts. I think all kinds of stuff that is not right. You always think only what is right. God, you have to help me get this." If you do not bring this thing into prayer, this is what your prayer groups need to begin to start to do: pray for each other. You pray for everybody else; that is great. Pray for each other that you can learn the material that God has for you. That is what He does.
- 6.) Seek Her as Silver and Search for Her as for Hid Treasure. Proverbs 2:4, "If thou will seek her as silver and searcheth her as for hid treasure." There is your first and your second benefit. You see that thing? "If thou seekest her as silver." Silver in the Bible is the price of redemption. Christ was sold for 30 pieces of silver. So the first thing you seek is learning what He did for you. Once you get that first benefit down and you learn what He did for you, then you search for hid treasures. That hid treasure is your second benefit. Once you understand where the silver is, you realize that you just did not find 30 pieces of silver. You

just did not find a silver mine. You found the whole wealth of the world based on what God wants to do with you. That is your next thing.

He says, "My son, if thou wilt receive my words and hide my commandments with thee, so that thou wilt incline thine ear unto wisdom and apply thine heart to understanding. Yea, if thou criest after knowledge and lift up thy voice for understanding, if thou seekest her as silver and searcheth her as for hid treasure, then..." You do these six things, then. Here is what God begins to do. This is where you are at right now. You have to get down these things that you have to do for Him the way I just told you. It all deals with attitude. Not one thing in there dealt with your ability. It dealt with your willingness to be what God wants you to do.

### ➤ What God Gives You

- 1.) Understand the Fear of the Lord. Proverbs 2:5, "Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD." We always get our little wimpy little definition of the fear of the Lord, but the book of Proverbs defines the fear of the Lord in seven concepts. We do not have time to go into it this morning, but he defines it in seven concepts. That is what it means when he says, "then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD." The Bible says the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge in one place. It says the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom in another place. The reason why it is the beginning of those two things and the process of you learning in your life is because of what the fear of the Lord in those seven things takes out of your life. That is a good study for you. I will let you work on that for a while. It will probably pop up on Thursday night. We will deal with it then.
- 2.) Find the Knowledge of God. Proverbs 2:5, "and find the knowledge of God." Notice he did not say the knowledge about God. He did not say the knowledge concerning God. He said, when you do these six things and you search the Word of God and get into it, then you find the knowledge of God. He did not say the knowledge about God. He said, you will find the same knowledge that God has. That is exactly what happens. You start operating on biblical principles, just like I talk to you all the time. You start doing it God's way instead of your way, and you find the knowledge of God.
- 3.) Wisdom, Knowledge, and Understanding from His Mouth. Proverbs 2:6, "For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." "Out of his mouth," that is the Word of God. Revelation 19:15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. What the words that come out of His mouth, wisdom out of His mouth, come knowledge and understanding. That is you getting into the Bible.
- 4.) Sound Wisdom for the Righteous. Proverbs 2:7, "He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous." Once you approach the Bible the way you are supposed to, and you do those six things, then He begins an automatic process in your life that leads to Him building sound doctrine in your life. Now you have sound doctrine principles by which you can get into somebody else's life and help them. Why? Because you put them into your own life first.

This is why you have to have these principles working in your own life first. You cannot go deal with somebody else when they have a problem and you say, "Well, this is how you fix it," when you have the same problem and you are not willing to fix yours. It just will not work that way. It will not work that way. I know we all have bugs and we all have fleas and we all have our problems. I am not talking about that. I am talking about the absolute things that are right and wrong in the Bible that have to be out of your life.

- 5.) He Keepeth the Paths of Judgment and Preserveth the Way of His Saints. Proverbs 2:8, "He keepeth the paths of judgment and preserveth the way of his saints." That is what you are supposed to be doing. You are helping people preserve their way. The way is their walk. When you get the biblical principles down and you apply this and you start doing it the way you are supposed to do it, and God starts putting in your life the things that need to be done, then He preserves first of all your way, and then He gives you the ability to help somebody else in their way. That word "preserve" there is a great concept.

### ➤ The End Result: Four Understandings

- After you get this, it is not done yet. You do your part; He does His part. Here is the end result. It is just like the book of Proverbs. You do your part, "My son." You get the principles down, chapter 8 through chapter 30. Then here is chapter 31, the end result. You ever notice in this passage, there are two "thens"? Proverbs 2:5, after you do this, "then shall thou understand." Then you come down through 6, 7, 8. Then in Proverbs 2:9, "then shall thou understand" again. The whole thing is broken around three sections here. "Then shall thou understand." Here come four things you have to have to deal effectively with people. Here they are:
- 1.) Righteousness. Proverbs 2:9, "Then shalt thou understand righteousness." That is doing what is right. You have to know what is right in your life first and have it working in your life first, so you can get it working in somebody else's life. I am not talking about sinless perfection. I am talking about conscious things in our life that will hurt the work of God and keep our relationship from God from going where it needs to go. So the first thing he said, "thou shalt understand." This is not saying you are going to have righteousness. It does not say you are going to be righteous. He says now you are going to understand righteousness. That means you are not going to understand it for yourself. You understand how to help somebody else with it, doing what is right.
- 2.) Judgment. Proverbs 2:9, "Then shalt thou understand judgment." Judgment is dealing with what is wrong in people's lives, but it has to start in your life and my life first. You have to understand what righteousness is, but you also have to understand what judgment is, because when you deal with people, they need to see that many times in the problems that they have gotten into, even though we can put them on the right path. There are consequences to that, and they are all on different levels, and you will learn all of that in time.
- 3.) Equity. Proverbs 2:9, "Then shalt thou understand equity." Equity is balance. Proverbs 11:1A false balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight. That is exactly what you have to have. The balance is between righteousness and judgment. You have to be able to tell people what is right about life, and you have to be able to show them what is wrong with their life, but you have to have the ability to balance it out between the

two. You cannot just always beat on them on one or the other. You have to be smarter and realize that it is a balance. Jesus Himself said when He came, He came with grace and truth. You have to be able to balance out the righteousness and the judgment and have the balance in your life that you know when you drop the hammer and when you do not. That is exactly what comes when you find the knowledge of God. When you find the knowledge of God, you find how to handle God gives you these things. They come automatically, and these are the absolute four things that we are going to talk about in everything we do.

- 4.) Every Good Path. Proverbs 2:9, "yea, every good path." You understand what is the right path in every situation you are going to deal with in time. People are going to come into you with all kinds of circumstances and all kinds of problems, and you are going to look at it and you are going to say, "Okay, now where do I start?" The first thing you have to realize is that you do not tell people what to do. You just lay out people's options. But you are going to find, when you understand the knowledge of the Lord and you understand how this whole thing works and it balances it out, you are going to find that in every given situation there is the best way out. There is the next best way out. There is the least worst bad way out, and then there is the no way out. Your job is to give them the best way out and say, "This is the best option for the circumstances you are in. But it is your choice. It is your choice." That is what you learn. You learn the path, the right path. You learn and understand what it is in any given situation.

There it is: the six things that you do, then what God gives you, and then the end result of that understanding these four concepts. That is the process we are going to follow. This is what, in your heart, if you have decided to do what we are going to do, this is where you are at. If you have decided not to do it, that is okay too. But these things will absolutely help you in your everyday life. So everybody wins. Everybody wins.

### III. Preparing for the Principles: Note-Taking and Application

Now, let us go back to 2 Corinthians chapter 1 and just start on these principles. Remember now, you are going to have two sets of notes. I see you getting all your notebooks out, and I think personally that is a waste of time. But do it as you want to do it. You are going to find you are never going to write as fast as I can talk, and you are never going to get everything I say. So you are better off just to sit back and look at me and smile and enjoy it, and then go get the tape and go break it down and get the CD and go to work on it, because that is the only way you are going to do it. But I appreciate it that you see if you want to write faster than I can talk and get it all down. We will see about that, but probably not.

What we are doing is starting a ministry principle checklist. Some of these are out of the book of 2 Corinthians chapter 1 and 2. We are going to do chapter 1 first, chapter 2 second. Some of them are very clearly dated with a verse in a chapter. Some of them are just principles of dealing with people that came about because of what we are at in 2 Corinthians. Either way, if you are a visitor here today, these things will change your life if you just start to look at them and put them into your life. They are very simple, but they are very profound. Now what you are doing is you

are getting your, you are going to weed out here your two areas of notes, and you are going to put these in here. I have listed, I would basically say that all 30 of these need to go back in your back section, and then you list them down with a short thing around.

You need to see and completely understand these. These are not just writing these down and "I got them." You need to understand what the definition is because you are going to use these. When we get into the really high-end stuff here at the beginning of next year, we are going to use these, and you are going to see how these weave in. If you do not already have a platform for them to work from, you are going to be lost with a golf ball in high weeds, friend. You are not going to get it.

## IV. Ministry Principles from 2 Corinthians Chapter 1

### ➤ Principles from 2 Corinthians Chapter 1

- 1.) Contrast between 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians. You need to be able to explain and understand the contrast between 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians. The contrast is simple: in 1 Corinthians, they are all screwed up; in 2 Corinthians, he gets them back on track, and by getting them back on track, he teaches us the handbook of ministry. That is pretty easy, but you need to understand the contrast of those two books.
- 2.) The Key to Ministry is Suffering. The theme of chapter 1 will be the key to ministry is suffering. The passage that defines that will be 2 Corinthians 1:4-5. 2 Corinthians 1:4-5 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. That is where he says we go through the things that we go through. Christ consoles us that we might be able to take the consoling that Christ gave us and console someone else through our sufferings. The key to ministry is suffering with the people that God gives you. If you start to work with somebody, that will be your key. Your key will be feeling their pain, going through what they are going through, coming to the place where you do not just make them a number on your list, that they are a person in your life, and you care about them, you know about them, their kids, their issues, their problems. You absorb the whole thing and put it into your life.

- 3.) The Four-Aspect Key to Our Life in Christ. This is an incredible principle for our own personal lives, but this is going to be a tool in dealing with people. In dealing with people, you want to help them be accountable, and you want to help them give them something that they can work through their problems with. This is a tangible, workable thing that you give them that they work through. That is that four-point outline aspect. Examine yourself. The first thing we have to do is quit looking at the people around us, blaming our problems on somebody else, and then take responsibility for our own actions. That is vital, absolutely vital, to teach somebody that. Know yourself. The second thing they have to do is know themselves. They have to know how dishonest we really are with ourselves. That is why people do not like the Bible, because the Bible is like a looking glass. You look into it and you see what a man or a woman you are. That is why the second aspect is know

yourself. Take heed to yourself. The third one is take heed to yourself. You have to do something with it, and when you do something with it, that is, you start to do whatever the Bible says: fix whatever your weakness is, go to work on your problem. So many of God's people focus on all of the things that they do not need to focus on that are good in their life, and they never attack the one problem that they have, and that simply will not work. Forget the good stuff; go after the bad stuff. Work on that first. That is the key. Prove yourself. The last thing is prove yourself, and that is getting in ministry. Letting God take you wherever you are at, where He finds you, what do you have in your hand, and then work you through the process through a New Testament local church to get you to the place where God can use you. It is a system of proving yourself. That tool will be absolutely invaluable. You use that over and over and over. It would be a great devotion for your softball team this summer or your basketball or your volleyball team or whatever. It is a great concept. It is a great sermon, but it is exactly one of the vital tools that you will ever use.

- 4.) God's Deliverance: Past, Present, and Future. This is a great principle found in 2 Corinthians 1:10. You will use this a lot. This is where Paul talks about himself being in a very bad scenario, almost at a point of death. You are going to find people who think there is no hope. You are going to find people who struggle with everything in life. There are so many problems in their life, so many things before you got to them, so much bad water under the bridge that they are just almost impossible. The only time sometimes you can give them hope is to take them and show you where Paul was at, and then he says about Jesus Christ in his own life, the three little concepts: 2 Corinthians 1:10 Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us; You take that principle and you show them that there is the light at the end of the tunnel. God delivered you when you got saved. God will take care of you now, and He will take care of your problems tomorrow if you just simply start doing what He says. That is a great principle that you will use.
- 5.) Everything Rises and Falls on Leadership. This is a great principle not found in the book itself, but it is a great principle found in the aspect of dealing with people. In ministry, everything rises and falls on leadership. I hold people in leadership positions to a much higher accountable standard than I do just the average person that comes in here. If you are just a nice guy and you just like to come to church, or a gal, and you do not want to get involved, that is fine. You are welcome to come. I would love to have you. I know someplace down the line, maybe in your own time, you will put it together. I am good to go with that. You are welcome to this church. I will help you any way I can. Enjoy everything you can. But the moment you say to me, "I want to take this. I want to be a prayer group leader. I want to disciple somebody. I want to do this. I want to do that. I want to be part of this, or I want to get to the level where I take responsibility for people and their failures and help them," let me tell you something: at that point, you better understand, "to whom much is given, much is required." You better realize that you better understand the responsibility that comes along with that. You are no longer just the old goofball that can go do whatever you want to do whenever you want to do it. You cannot now just throw life away and get in with any relationship you want to get in because you think you can. Let me tell you something: at that point in time, you better understand that you are going to be held to a higher accountable

standard than just the average person in this church. If you are a deacon in this church, if you are a pastor in this church, if you are a leader in any shape or form, I will come down harder on you than I will anybody else in the church. You know why? Because nobody made you take that point. If you decide you are going to take that, and I am counting right now, there is responsibility and accountability that comes along with it. I am a fair guy, and I am a nice guy, and you will find nobody nicer and sweeter than me to hang out with all the rest of your life. But you screw up my ministry, and I will drop-kick you through the goalposts of life. If I have to hold the line, you have to hold the line. Just that simple. I did not say that to scare you. I just said that to tell you that is the truth. That is the way it is going to be.

- 6.) Three Kinds of People in Every Church. This is just something in general you need to know and remember because it is true. It will help you put a lot of things together sometimes when you cannot figure it out. In every church, I do not care where you go, you have: People who know what is going on. People who do not know what is going on. People who do not care what is going on. That gives you a perspective about dealing with people. I can look at my church and I can pretty much ferret out. We do not have very many, I do not think anyhow, but I am just saying you can just pretty much read it down the line. I classify mine a little differently. I guess it is because I have been watching all those paranormal ghost hunters things on TV. You get into this business of ministry, you are going to find out, and it just happens, what I call ghost Christians. Ghost Christians are Christians that used to be on fire and they used to do something, and now they do not do it anymore. They come to give the presence, but they are here, but they are really not here. They are ghost Christians. They are here, they are visible, but they never do anything anymore. I do not know what their deal is. They pretend like they are smiling and happy and all that stuff, but you can see it in their face, and there is something going on someplace down inside. I do not ever ask; it is none of my business, but I am just telling you. These are things. The Bible says for a pastor that you need to know the state of your flocks and look well to your herd, and you are a herd. If there is anybody heard, you are a herd. So you have to look to those things. You have to always look down the line and look for potential areas where you can either help somebody or somebody is going to try to hurt you.
- 7.) Learning to Be Smarter Than the Problem. This is a great principle of life and dealing with people. I talk about learning to be smarter than the problem. You hear me say it all the time, and you and I, in our language vocabulary, that is changing. We talk about these things for those of you who are on board with this thing, and it is simply learning to be smarter than the problem. You need to see every issue in its long-term, not its short-term. I think that is the biggest failure that many people, we make decisions in our life based on short-term. We do not make the decision of our lives based on the long-term. The short-term never shows you the consequences. The long-term always does, but we are nearsighted people. We are short-term people, and God's people, that is one of the things that all of us have to work on and always struggle with because we always focus on the immediate, and we will take an opportunity just focusing on the immediate. We will never take the opportunity and step back and look at it and look at it through the long-term. That is what you have to do. That is being smarter than the problem. Being smarter than the problem is the ability to be able to look at something and see the long-term consequences out of it versus the short-term, because most

of the people that you will deal with in life, like you and myself, we always take the short, we always just look at it the short way. You have to, this is where it goes back to, you have to incline your ear unto understanding. You have to work at that. You have to work at every circumstance you are involved in your own life first, and you look at it from not the fun you are having right now, not what it is right now, but look at the short-term. That is how people have ruined up the rest of their lives. I have seen young men and young ladies marry an unsaved person, and at the time they were dating, it was fun because it was everything I wanted. That was the short-term, but once they got married, they realized that the person did not want to do anything with God, and they lost everything that God had for them because they did not look at the long-term. You have to be smarter than the problem.

- 8.) The Testimony of a Good Conscience Toward God. This goes back to 2 Corinthians 1:12. 2 Corinthians 1:12 For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward. That just simply means that whoever you deal with, whatever circumstance you are in, you can walk away from it no matter how it ends, because the truth of the matter is there is no guarantee it is always going to come out right. That is just in the fairy tales. They have lived happily ever after. That does not always work well in real life, and you cannot be responsible for that, but you have to realize that when you were in there pitching, you threw the best game you could throw, and you gave them every opportunity to do what is right. If it falls apart, blows up, goes to pieces, it does not work out, you can walk away saying, "You know what, I am sorry about it. I feel bad about it, but I know that I did everything that I needed to do the right way." Good conscience toward God.
- 9.) God Will Not Lay Upon Man More Than Right. This is a principle found in Job 34:23. Job 34:23 For he will not lay upon man more than right; that he should enter into judgment with God. What he is basically saying is this: whatever a person is going through, however bad it is, you need to look at it smarter than a problem. Look at the long end of it. You need to realize that it is not about what they are going through right now. It is about God allowing this to happen in their life so that they will come to God and do what they need to do. You have to see that.
- 10.) First and Second Benefit. This will be 2 Corinthians 1:15 and 2 Corinthians 1:22. The tenth one will be the first and second benefit. Understand what that is. The first benefit is when you got saved. The second benefit is when you understand the benefit of the first one and you give your life to God. It is what I told you. This is a simple way to write it down and remember it and give you the right definition. When you got saved, God gave you all of Him. That is your first benefit. At the second benefit, you give God all of you. You recognize what He did for you. You give it back to Him. 2 Corinthians 1:15 And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit;
- 11.) The Earnest of the Spirit. 2 Corinthians 1:22. 2 Corinthians 1:22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. We talked about the concept of the earnest money. When you buy a house, you put some earnest money down that says you are good for it. When Christ died on the cross, He put the earnest of the Spirit down on you, thinking you were good for it, that you were going to do with your life what He wanted you to do. Great

principles. You need to understand that because you are going to use this and see this, and understanding this concept is vital in knowing how to lay it out to your people that you are trying to help, that they can see this whole thing. Give them the perspective, but you have to see it for yourself first.

- 12.) The Great Building Process: Sealed, Promised, Established, Anointed. 2 Corinthians 1:21-22. This is the great building process. This is vital in measuring a person's spiritual growth that you work with. It is how I look at you. It is how I put where you are at. I do not always have to see where you go or what you do. When you have the right things in your life, these things will absolutely be there. I do not have to know the details. All I have to see is the concept being fulfilled in your life. 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 Now he which stablishing us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God;

Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. It is basically: He sealed us, He promised, established us, and anointed us. We talked about those. Sealed us: The day you got saved. God sealed you with His Holy Spirit of God. Promises: That is the principles you start to put in the Word of God. Established: That is where God begins to mature you. Anointed us: God has a job for you. Very simple. You get sealed, you get saved. The day you got saved, God sealed you with His Holy Spirit of God. Then you enter into a process of learning the promises and the principles of the Word of God. It is those promises and principles that establish you. They ground you in the Word of God. They give you the confidence of knowing the Bible, and they mature you. When you come to a point in your life and God takes you and anoints you, and does something with you. Anointing in the Bible always stands for being anointed to do something for God, like the kings in the Old Testament of the nation of Israel.

- 13.) Helpers of Your Joy, Not Dominion Over Your Faith. 2 Corinthians 1:24. This is what you always want to keep in your mind, and I always keep before you. 2 Corinthians 1:24 Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand. That is basically one of the greatest simple principles. I do not have a right to tell you what to do. No pastor has dominion over you. No pastor ought to be in your world and micromanage everything that you do. No pastor ought to be checking on all the things you do, the places you go. That is not a pastor's job. A pastor's job is not to have dominion over you. A pastor's job is to be a helper of your joy. Your joy comes from your fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. 1 John 1:4 And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. He says that He wants you to have fellowship with Him, and He wants that fellowship is what your joy comes from. He wants it to be full. That is all I want for you. All I want for God's people, all I want for everybody in here, is to try to get you to see that there is more joy in living for God than there is living for the devil. Just that simple. But at the end of the day, it is your choice. You say, "Well, you yell and scream." Well, I am passionate about it. You go to the ball game, you do not sit there like a bump on a stump, do you? If Mizzou is playing KU, you guys are going crazy, and the KU guys are going crazy, you are screaming, yelling all in and out. You do not see me coming down. "Settle down now. I think you are fanatic about this." Well, you get excited about what you get excited about. I get excited about what I get excited about. Why is

it? Because I get excited about the things of God. There is some idiot putting a round pig in a hole over there in a wall someplace. It does not do it for me as much as it does for you. There is something wrong with me. I kind of think there is something wrong with you, but that is just me or you or somebody. I am not sure.

- 14.) Learning to Use These First in Your Own Life. I want you to mark that one in red. You have to have these things working in your life first. I cannot put you working with somebody that they have a problem with this when you have the same problem and you are not willing to fix yours. Because either you are going to tell them something that you are not willing to do yourself, or you are going to tell them the wrong thing. If you are going to tell them it is okay to do what you are doing, that is not going to happen. You have to be working in your own life first.
- 15.) It is Never Right to Do Wrong to Get the Chance to Do Right. This is one of my favorites, and I have used this so many times over the years in my life and everything that I have preached, said, and done. It is one of the greatest principles that you will ever find. That is simply, it is never right to do wrong to get the chance to do right. It has to be done by the book. You can begin to see how that just, most of those, if you do not ever do anything with it as far as what we are trying to go, they will change your life. If you just put them in, they are great principles of life. They are all things out of the book of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes that you glean out when you really get into that book, especially Proverbs. We are famous for taking shortcuts. We are. When McDonald's first came out, everybody loved McDonald's, and then it was fast food. Everybody said, "Boy, it is fast food. That is great, man. We just pull in here, go in, they have the food ready for us. We sit down and eat." But then it was not fast enough. So they had to put a drive-through so you get fast food even faster. Everything it is. I tell you all the time, I kid you all the time, you used to, when I was a kid, you used to get brand new jeans. We used to hate them because they were all dark, real dark blue. You had to wash them and wash them and wash them a thousand times. You would just get them dirty, and you really liked them. They got that lived-in look after about 600 washings. You liked when they got holes in them, and it gave you a lived-in look, and they were really comfortable and soft and all that. But now you do not have to do that anymore. You buy them. You can go to Walmart and buy a \$12 pair of jeans that are starchy and you have to wash through the process, or you can go pay \$80 for one with holes in them. What is wrong with this picture? I mean, would not you think that the one with holes in would be less than the ones without the holes in them? I would. I mean, I was at Walmart buying water, and the whole stack of Wrangler jeans there are \$14. I go out to the mall and go to JB Buckle or whatever those places, you know, Abercrombie and Fitch and all those places, and there they are, stacks of jeans, pull them out there. They got the knees out of them. They got holes in them here. They got some got holes here, and they are \$90. I do not get it. I told you many times I have been born the wrong time. That is the reason everyone is fast. Used to be you go to the bank. Now you do not go to the bank, go drive-through. Used to be you go to the bank and get money. Now, you go to an ATM machine. Everything is fast, and people try to do the exact same thing with the Bible. That is why everybody buys a book, shows a tape, and tells everything out. "If you buy this, you will know everything about the Bible." So stupid people go on by like my book. I was telling the Bible thing. You will learn in air power. It takes a

long time to get it down. There is no fast track when it comes to this. It is the same way with people. The reason why people got into, I am going to tell you the reason why people got problems in life to begin with is very simple: they always try to take the shortcut. Somebody got problems in schools that are studying for the test. You try to cheat for the test, which I do not particularly have a problem with. I did it myself, but anyway, that was the shortcut. You want to do everything the short way, and you do not want it. You want to get married. You do not care about the person, who she is or who he is, really getting to know him. You see him, you like him. So you marry him, shortcut. It is the way it breaks down all the time. When you start to deal with people, you have to realize that it has to be by the book. It is never right to do wrong to get the chance to do right. That is one of the greatest fundamental principles of life.

## V. Ministry Principles from 2 Corinthians Chapter 2

Now, you want to put those in. All of those need to go back into your back section. But some of those also will be in the book of 2 Corinthians and chapter 1. You have to break down the book for me, and you have to put the principles in the back. It is real easy. I am giving you all the answers here. I mean, I am doing all the work. What are you sweating it for?

### ➤ Principles from 2 Corinthians Chapter 2

- 1.) The Forgiving Spirit of the Minister. The theme of this chapter is going to be the forgiving spirit of the minister. That is crucial. You want to get that at the beginning of chapter 2, because you need, as we go through these, you want to have every chapter in 2 Corinthians detailed out with what that chapter is and then break it down from there. But you want to be able to turn in your Bible to 2 Corinthians and see that 2 Corinthians chapter 1, you want to be able to turn there and see right there at the heading where it says chapter 1, you want to have down here that the key to ministry is suffering. Then the verse that it gives you the definition. You want to be able to turn to chapter 2, and you need to want to be able to say the theme of the ministry is the forgiving minister, is the forgiving spirit of the minister. I told you, this is the second principle. I told you where chapter 1 defines the ministry. Chapter 2 defines the minister. You want to put that in there because that is so true. Keep those things. Those are two little sentences that really speak a volume of words. That is the key you want to get to: condensing what you are trying to get down into one or two sentences that say everything you want to say in a hundred words. Because I can take the theme of the chapter, "the forgiving spirit of the minister," and I can take "where chapter 1 defines the ministry, chapter 2 defines the minister." I can talk on that for the next six hours. You have to break it down in that kind of way.
- 2.) God Forgives and Forgets Our Sins. This will be the third principle. That is the great concept of God not only forgiving our sin, but forgetting our sins. That is what He has the ability to do. The reason why He has the ability to do that is because of the fact that He has the grace to realize and understand the real bottom line, and Christ does not take it personal. That is the basis for your forgiving and forgetting.

- 3.) The Three Dimensions of Ministry. This is vital. The three dimensions of ministry will be: Your purpose in ministry. Your perspective of ministry. Your passion in ministry. The purpose is when you get to the place that you understand the reason God saved you. Your perspective is, you begin to understand in time what He saved you for, what He wants you to do. The third one will be your passion, and that is the attitude that you are going to do it with. You get those three, see all these things, and you will see it in time. All of these little outlines that I have given you, what happens is when you start to work with somebody, they all come into play and all interlace in the same process. I am giving them to you individually. You are going to study them individually. But boy, you get down the road someplace, you start dealing with this person here or this couple here, you are going to start to see how these things absolutely mesh together. You folks that have been working with me for four or five years now that I have put you up on a pretty high level and being able to deal with problems, you know that is true. You have seen that work in your own life and how you deal with it in people's lives.
- 4.) Learning Not to Take Things Personal. This is the great principle of learning not to take things personal. There is one verse you want to put with this. This is the defining verse for this, the defining verse for a lot of things. It is Proverbs 25:28. Proverbs 25:28 He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls. One of my favorite verses in the Bible. It says, "He that hath no rule over his own spirit, like a city that is broken down without walls." Your spirit is your emotions. In the Old Testament, the cities that they built had walls around them. The walls kept people out, kept people in. The walls were their protection. You did not have to have very many people on watch at night watching the perimeter. If you could have two on each section of the wall, everybody else could get a good night's sleep. Otherwise, if you did not have a wall, you would have to have your whole army out there stay awake all night. A wall in the Bible around the city is a picture, the protection that any church should have. This church is a city. The wall around it is our Bible doctrine, what we believe. We protect ourselves, and we have watchmen that stand on the wall, and it is what protects this church. But put it into a practical application for your own life. The spirit is your emotions, and your emotions will be what you are. Your emotions will make you or break you. In dealing with people, you have to be able to understand, and I am not saying you need to know this today, but you need to understand in time how to get your emotions involved, but keep your emotions out. That sounds like a contradictory statement, but it is not. You have got to know where to spend the emotions you can spend, and you do not spend the emotions you do not need to spend. That comes back to biblical principles. That comes back to "he that hath no rule," rule of law, rule, ruler, rule, something that you go by, rule, king of your life, rule, the Word of God. "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down without walls." In other words, you are defenseless. Your emotions are the worst thing that we all deal with. Your emotions will change day by day, and you are going to deal with a lot of people just like that. If they get up in the morning and the sun is out, they have a good day. If they get up in the morning and it is cloudy, they are depressed. Their whole world is based on their emotions, and their emotions change second by second. There has to be something that establishes those emotions and holds those emotions not to what they think, but what truth is. That has to be the biblical principles, and that has to start

with you. You are the one that has to learn how to keep your own emotions under control, and then at the same time, help somebody else through the same process. I just found out for sure of a major church in our city, and I will not tell you the name of it, that the pastor got up here a while back and sanctioned social drinking for everybody in the church. Basically said, "If you have a problem with our pastors going out for a restaurant, having a beer, having a glass of wine, there is something wrong with you. There is nothing really wrong any more different than having a social drink or social that than playing video games or something like that." He actually said that from the pulpit of a large church, two, three thousand people in our city. I thought to myself when I heard that, and I had heard things like that, but it was confirmed pretty hard. The woman was right there and heard him say that is pretty good, and I thought to myself, "Wow, would not it be really hard to have a ministry of alcoholics in a church like that?" If you are dealing with an alcoholic, you are dealing with somebody who has to abstain from all alcohol. There is no social drinking for an alcoholic. When he is really hooked on it, the smell of it will set him over the top. How in the world in any church do you ever help people with that kind of problem when you condone that as okay? I had another Christian who told us a while back that he went out to California and he got smoking marijuana, and when the guys held him accountable and said, "Well, you do not need to be smoking marijuana, man, that is not good." He said, "Oh, it is okay, it is legal out in California." Okay. I would not care if it was legal all over the planet. The bottom line is, what is sin anymore? What is a problem anymore? You have so many commissions. "I have a drug problem." Okay, we will come to our church, put you in a disciple, and at that time he goes, "Oh, there you go out and get dinner together." He gets high just because he sits around watching him while you are all smoking weed. "You have a guy, I am an alcoholic." "Okay, no problem. I have you in a discipleship group here. We are going to meet down here at Chili's, and we are going to have a discipleship lesson." "Oh, that is great." You are all drinking tall ones, and he is sitting around there saying, "I have a real problem." He said, "It is okay as long as you do not overindulge." This guy says, "I cannot stop overindulging." See what it breaks down? There has to be some line somewhere. My God, I cannot figure out why you cannot figure out what that line is. I mean, there are some lines that I think that are probably hard to figure out, but is that one hard to figure out? You have to learn to handle your own emotions, and you have to learn to hold them in the principles of the Word of God.

- 5.) Learning to Respond Versus React. This is something we will talk about in great detail, and I will show you a lot of key things in this when we get into it, but that is really a great one. In every given situation, especially when you are a leader, all things rise and fall on leadership. You have to be able to respond instead of react. There are things that people say to me, and I will tell you, put it in a good context, there are sometimes on Thursday night, there are people who come in, and I know they are coming in gunning for me just to try to, for whatever reason, I do not know. There was a time in my life when if somebody would have done that, I would have just cut their head off at the beginning and let them bleed all over the floor. I am not saying there are not times you do not do that, but the older I get, the less I care anymore about things like that. It is a thing where it does not justify the expense of energy, because I realize if some idiot comes in the Bible study and they ask the question, and I take a lot of time dealing with it, then I have wasted a lot of quality time for some good

questions, and I have made him feel like or she feel like they are important. So I just deny that. You see, that is the difference between reacting and responding. Reacting is, "Well, I will show you. You are going to challenge me? I will show you who is the king of the hill." Who cares? The bottom line is, when you get my age, you do not care about that anymore. I cannot even climb up the hill anymore. I have to get a dirt bike to get up there. It is a thing where you respond to it; you do not react to it. Your responding means you understand the circumstances around it. The response means you see the perspective. The response is your emotions are in control. The response is that nobody is going to get you off your game. The response is that you learn in any counseling situation, any circumstance that you are going to deal with anybody on planet Earth, rule number one is never lose control. Then the second rule is learn how to make them lose control. I will not get into that this morning, but in time you will see when that is one of the greatest things that you will ever learn: respond versus reacting.

- 6.) Keep in Mind Whose Ministry This Is. This is part of not taking it personal. You realize that we are doing this for the Lord. When somebody gets mad at me because they do not like a sermon I preach, I know they are really, really deep down inside, it is not about me, it is about God and the Word of God that I said. I understand that that is just the way it is. But that is reacting versus responding. That is being smarter than a problem. That is not taking things. See how all these principles start to come in here, and you are going to learn to use multiple ones at the same situation. This situation will be nine other ones, but three other vast ones thrown back in again. You just have at your disposal at any problem you face, anything you come up against, that before you just open your mouth, all these principles start flooding in, and you just start following that process that I gave you in Proverbs chapter 2. It is just simply being smarter than the problem, and you always keep in mind whose ministry this is.
- 7.) The Motive Behind Our Ministry: Loving People. You have to love people. You have to love people to be in the ministry, because otherwise you will wind up hating the world. You have to have a love for people. It is so true. Sean gave his devotion last night, and I hope I quote this right. He said, "You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving." That is so true, because you have to always look at the motive behind what you do in ministry, and it has to be, "I love these people." "But after what they say about you?" Yes, absolutely. They are not talking about me; they are talking about God. They just do not know any better. In a great example, down the line, some places to study the life and the ministry of Moses, because there is a guy that if everybody had the right motive, and he struggled with it, but that is it. The very fact that you struggle with it suggests you have the right motive, or you would not struggle. He came through that thing, but he had some times, boy, there are times he wanted to kill them. There are times that God wanted to kill them. There are times he is consoling God and saying, "You do not want to do this." There are times where God is saying to Moses, "You do not want to have me kill them." If Moses and God would ever have gotten off track on the same day, they would have wiped out the population of the planet Earth.
- 8.) Understanding the Concept of Reproof and Correction. You have to learn that people sometimes need to be reprovved. They need to be corrected. You will find within any church, in those three kinds of people groups, you will find people who will take rebuke or

correction, and they will love you for it. I have several of you here that always remind me, and every time I preach a hard message, you will come up to me and say, "You know what, I did not like that, but thank you very much. I really like that. I understand what you are saying." There are fine people who like that. They will take reproof. You can go up to them and say, "You know what, you have a lot of the ball, and God really wants to use you, but I think you got in this situation here, you better look at it." He will say, "Well, you are right, man, you need to help me." Boy, anytime you, any God, others, you come up, that first thing you get is defensive. The little radar things are going around. The rockets come out of the back. Hebrews 12:5-10 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. That is the principle you want.

- 9.) Nine Things of a Wise Man and Eight Things of a Fool. This is in Proverbs 1. You are going to have to get this one off tape because I do not have time to give it to you this morning. That will all fit into "know yourself," "take heed to yourself," and all that stuff. You need to know what those are. You need to have those listed out back there: the nine things that a wise man is with the references, the nine things or the eight things that a fool is with the references. If you cannot get the tape, you ask me Thursday night, I will give them to you Thursday night.
- 10.) Never Want Somebody to Do Right More Than They Want to Do Right. This is a great one, and this is something again that you will live and die by. The moment you want somebody to do right more than they do, you will shortcut the system, and they will get taken advantage of. It is just that simple.
- 11.) Wisdom is the Principal Thing. This contains two other ones here. This is the great principle found in Proverbs 4:7-9. Proverbs 4:7 Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding. Last Thursday night, somebody asked a question about Jethro in Exodus 18, and we saw how that in Moses was a bad deal. It is the difference between getting God's wisdom and man's wisdom. "Wisdom is the principal thing" tells you right there that you get wisdom by getting principles. "Therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding." Knowledge is the facts. Wisdom is facts applied. Understanding is how God fits into the equation. We talked about it many, many times.
- 12.) Exalt Her (Wisdom) and She Shall Promote Thee. Proverbs 4:8. Proverbs 4:8 Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her. That is the great aspect of Proverbs chapter 31 when it talks about the end result, the virtuous woman. The Bible says that her friends and her family give honor unto her. There will always

be people in ministries that people will seek out because they know that they give wise counsel. That is a good reputation to have. In time, as you grow and build in these things and you work with people, there are people that I have in my church that I feel 100% confident that if just about any circumstances I could get, if I am overloaded, I could give it to that person. I know that they would do well with it. That is a great thing. That is a great honor to have bestowed upon a child of God, not by just people that you are with. You see it at work many times. You live a good testimony, and you just maybe do not make a fool out of yourself, but you just do what is right, and people know who you are. They have a problem, they search you out, and that is a great thing. That is what happens when you grow and God starts to use you. People start to see the results in your life, and based on that, they want you to help them, and they will come to you.

- 13.) An Ornament of Grace and a Crown of Glory. Proverbs 4:9. Proverbs 4:9 She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee. Notice the ornament of grace. Ornaments in the Bible are always dealing with, in the right biblical sense, they are dealing with the spiritual man on the inside. The Bible talks about for a woman the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, of great inside of God. It is the inside dressings that we put on, the ornaments that we adorn ourselves with from the Holy Spirit of God, and those are the things that bring about the ornament of grace. If there is anything that you need to have in dealing in the ministry and dealing with people, and certainly to the level of some of you are going to go, it is going to be grace. Grace to be able to take people where they are at. Grace not to be judgmental. You have heard me say it many, many times. I do not care where a person has come from. I do not care what their problems are. I do not care what they have done in the past. That means nothing to me. We all have bad backgrounds. We all have skeletons in our closet, and we all have things that we have done that have been stupid. It is immaterial to me. All I care about is where you are at right now, where you want to go from here. That is grace. Grace is taking somebody with where they are at under no penalty of where they have been, and then helping them get to where God wants them to be. Then it talks about the fact that a crown of glory, that is the judgment seat of Christ, and there are five crowns of the judgment seat of Christ that you can get, and there is no reason why you and I should not have all of them.
- 14.) If It Starts Wrong, It Will End Wrong. This is one that I use all the time, and this is a very great principle. This is something that I say a lot to you. You are going to find that you will not say it as nearly as much as you think. I do not say it as nearly as much, even though I say it a lot, and telling you this, I think it all the time. In just about every scenario, I follow this rule, and that is simply this, and you heard me say it many, many times: it is as true as the sun coming up. There is a reason why you have to do it by the Bible, and you have to give people a chance, and you have to try to help people and get them back on the right path. It is simply this: in people's lives, it is a rule of thumb. I guarantee you, it is just like the sun coming up tomorrow, if it starts wrong, it will end wrong. I do not care what it is. It does not matter what it is. Whatever God said, "This is the way it is supposed to go," whether it is your life, whether it is your marriage, whether it is your kids, whatever it is, however the Bible says, "This is the way it is supposed to go," if you started out the wrong way, you have a great, great chance of it beginning wrong, it is going to end wrong unless something gets in the

middle to change it around. That is a fundamental principle. I have had, I do not know how many, in the last couple of months, I do not know how many couples have come in that are on the borderline of getting a divorce, and some of them have only been married a short time, and they look at me and they ask me why. They look at me and they will say, "Well, she is this or he is that," and I will look at both of them and I will simply say this: "The problem you have got here is one basic fundamental problem that you have to quit blaming everybody else for and deal with yourself. Whether you deal with it or whether you do not deal with it is going to determine where you go from here. You want to know what your fundamental problem is in this marriage? It is simply this: it got started wrong, and now it is probably going to end wrong unless you do what you have to do." These things are designed to get to the problem quickly. You are going off to a regular Christian counselor, and he will see you. He will prolong your problem right up to your insurance runs out. If you have got 10 years worth of insurance, you are going to have 10 years worth of problems. My job is to get you fixed as quickly as I can because we do not have a lot of time, and I need you to do what God has called us to do. So I am going to go right to the quick. Most people want to treat the symptoms, not me. I want to solve the problems. That is the way we have to approach this.

## VI. Concluding Exhortation: Building Your Biblical Library

You need to begin to build a library of biblical principles. You need to get the principles that I have given you today in the back of your Bible under chapter 1, under chapter 2. You need to continue with that and put a short definition with that. You need to begin then to put the definition of each book if we break it down and lay it out, and you need to come to the place where what you are doing is you are building your own operations manual, your own handbook. You are going to have things you are putting in there now that you may say, "Well, I am not sure what three years from now, two years from now, you are going to see how invaluable it is." You have to have a base to get the material that I am going to give you next year on.

If you never do that, if you just keep coming, we will be back in 2 Corinthians next week. We are going to talk about one of the greatest concepts. I will help you to understand forgiveness that you are ever going to find in the Bible. I am just saying if you never do this, if you just take these principles that I give you today and apply them to your life, it will change your life because learn as you go. Do not just think I am giving this for you so you can give it to somebody else. Put them in your own life first. If you never crack a day where you disciple or work with anybody, they will give you the joy in your life that you are so desperately looking for. It is just that simple.