

## I. Introduction: Reflecting on Growth and Setting Vision

Every year, at the beginning of the year, we reflect on the past year and set goals for our church and for individuals. It is always good to stop and reevaluate where we are, not only as a church, but also as individual Christians. I think it is absolutely imperative that a child of God knows how to measure their own spiritual growth process. At least once a year, stop and look at it.

Traditionally, New Year's is a time when people make New Year's resolutions. The truth of the matter is, resolutions do not really help people. Most people need a New Year's revolution; they need to truly change some things in their life. But it is a point of reference, and we have always used it that way.

Last week, it worked out well because I walked you through the seven stages of spiritual growth that a Christian goes through. When you get saved, you are likened to a baby Christian, a newborn in Christ. I showed you through the Bible how there is a seven-stage process that you grow through to truly become everything that God wants you to be. I also showed you that along with the seven stages of spiritual growth, you will find that you will grow through five levels of maturity that truly bring you to a place where you are everything that God wants you to be.

I gave you the great verse in 1 Peter 2:2 last week.

*1 Peter 2:2*

*As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:*

All of you who are part of this ministry team here at our church, on whatever spiritual level you are at, you all bring something here, and you all do something that is part of what we do here. You have all come through that process. You may be on different levels, but you are all in that mix somewhere, coming through those seven stages that we talked about last week.

In Hebrews 5, when Paul was talking to that group, he said to them in verses 12 and 13:

*Hebrews 5:12-13*

*For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.*

*For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.*

What he is saying is that in churches, you find people who do not grow, and they get to a point in their life where they simply do not want to grow. Paul was addressing that crowd where he says, "For the time that some of you ought to be teaching the Word of God, we have to go through the basic fundamentals again of what you learned when you first got saved." He talks about the difference between the milk of the Word of God and the meat. Milk represents the basic things of the Bible, while meat represents the doctrinal or deep things of the Word of God for your life. He

talks about having your senses exercised, and I think that is truly the greatest thing that all of this does for us as we grow. We will talk about this as we get on through this today, about exercising your senses.

## II. The Need for a Biblical Plan in Church Growth

When it comes to churches—our church, any church really—the church needs to grow and mature through stages or levels, just like individuals do. Most of you do not get into the church realm on the level that a pastor would, so you do not always see everything that is out there. But I cannot tell you how many books have been written over the decades on how to grow a church. They are endless. Books on church growth. I have looked at all of them, and everybody writes one at some point in their life.

However, there is a biblical pattern that you want to follow. Many of these guys have no clue. They get the newest fad that comes out there, and they try to do it. Where churches traditionally stood in the pulpit and preached the Word of God and followed a protocol that has gone back through centuries of Bible-believing churches, much of that has changed today. Most pastors, I think, struggle today. I talk to many of them, and they struggle today in their churches because, bless their hearts, they have no idea how to get a church up to the different levels of maturity.

You can start a church, and I have watched it. You can float along for five, six, seven years just with the newness of what you are doing. But there comes a point where, if you are the pastor or the leader of the group, you have to have a plan. You run out of ideas after a while. I remember before I got into ministry, I used to listen to my father-in-law, Mel Sobaka, preach, and he would preach great messages every Sunday. When I started to preach, I would take subjects and I would start to preach them, and I really enjoyed it, and people seemed to like it. I thought in my stupidity back then that, "Boy, this would be easy because you can just get up every Sunday and preach a sermon, and that is all there is to it."

I will never forget that he told me, "You know what," he said, "it is one thing to get up on an irregular basis, like once a month or every two months or whenever, and to preach a good sermon and to have all the material together." He said, "When it comes to getting up in the pulpit on a regular basis every week, you are going to find very quickly that topical subjects are not the way to go because you are going to run out of material really quickly. It takes a lot of work." So he explained to me the importance of doing a book study, how that there are times that you do topical things when you want to emphasize maybe something that you are trying to do. But he said, "You are going to have to learn the necessity of being able to take a book of the Bible, break it down, bring the people through it, and help them grasp everything that God wants them to get out of that thing."

Many pastors do not have the direction to be able to give the church that they need to go. People need a clear direction of how they are going to go and how they are going to accomplish what they need to accomplish. You have to have a plan, a biblical plan. You can go out and get every book on building a church and church growth and all of that, but there is no book that was ever

written that simply beats the Bible. You are going to find, and you have heard me talk about it many, many times, that you have to have a pattern.

I think most pastors kind of live in that "Field of Dreams" mentality that "if you build it, they will come." You get some great building with all of the great things of modern 20th, 21st-century technology in it, and people will just gravitate to it. Well, my father in the Lord also told me years and years ago that just because you get a crowd does not mean you have a church. Boy, that was a true statement that he gave me. You are going to find that you have to have a model. You have to have a plan. I believe, and I have told you this before, that there is a plan and a model for everything in the Bible, no matter what we are going to do.

### III. The Church's Health and the Importance of Families

This will be our 11th year in existence. We started with about 12 people. As a church, this last year, I told you when we got to last year that we had really reached what I consider a high watermark. A pastor has to have indicators that he measures and he looks at his church to tell if it is healthy or not, much like your doctor does. He will ask you some four or five simple questions, and he will gauge from that if he needs to check anything any further. Well, in a church, there are four or five indicators that you look at. When you see those indicators, all the green lights on those indicators, you know you are in pretty good shape.

We have grown, and we built a solid foundation of leadership. This last year, it is like every year, God brings in some really solid families and solid singles that truly have a desire to learn the Word of God. Many of the ones that come in, they are already ready to go. They just have worked their way right in very quickly. I think that comes along as the church matures and you grow. God gives you the people that you need to truly get the job done.

I say this all the time: I am in this world, so I see things and talk to people and hobnob with people that you do not ever get to, other pastors and people like that. I am telling you, I have said this before, I would put you guys, most of you guys, up against anybody out there when it comes to understanding the Bible. I think that in this church, there is a depth chart of people who truly understand the Bible that I would put you up against anybody when it comes to being able to preach and being able to hold your own when it comes to understanding the church. I think even greater than that are the women in our church. We have got some women in this church that I think have a handle on the Word of God. I see it all the time where you will go out home or wherever, or here or there, and you will go visit some other church or your friends or that, and immediately you understand what the differences are because you have a strong foundation in the Bible. I am thankful for that. That is one of the things you will want to look for.

At the beginning of last year, we had grown up enough to truly focus on what makes any church really strong, and that is the families of the church. In fact, we called last year "The Year of the Family" as a point of reference. You had grown and matured to the point that now it was time to step up to that next level. The fathers, I must say, really, for the most part, took responsibility for their families. It is the mark of spiritual maturity, not only in your life, but in the church, any church.

I think we have one of the most unique situations here that you will ever have. People and pastors that come through here, they see it all the time. It is the simple fact of how young our church is, all the young couples and all the young singles. Most churches have a really hard time getting young couples to come in today. Most churches are like dinosaur graveyards; they are all over 65 years old. I have a friend of mine that we go to the gym together every morning, and I see him up there. He goes to another church. He is a great guy, and I am a pretty good friend with him. He has been to our church on several occasions, and he marvels at all the couples. He kind of jokes about his church. He says, "You know, they have about 40, 50 people left, and they just cannot get young couples to come, young people to come." Of course, everybody in the church is probably 60 and older. He is a great guy, but he does not understand the concept. Of course, he is not the pastor, so it is not really his responsibility to see that and understand that.

It is an incredible thing. Yet, do not misunderstand me about, and I want to be clear about this, older people are vitally important too. It takes a good balance in your church. We already know from the Bible that older folks, in your 50s and your 60s—and I say older, I do not mean decrepit, but in a place where you are mature—mature couples and individuals, you give stability to things. The Bible talks about that a young man's glory is his strength, but the glory of an old man is his gray head. Some things you have learned. That is true of women too. The Bible makes no apologies about how the elder women teach the younger women. So it is a balance all the way across the board. But you want to keep that balance, and this is what we are going to talk about today, and really what we are going to focus on next year, is now that we have got to this point, tweaking that balance to the place that we get it. Because it is a true fact, young or old, married or single, a church will only be as strong as the families that are in it.

Many of you are single out here, and I know you want to be married someday. Some of you cannot wait to get married, and I understand that. You all will at some point. You will grow into somebody and marry them, and you will come to the point where then you will become part of a family unit that goes on and it just moves on down through that, just the way it works. But in everything in the Bible, whether it is the Old Testament Nation of Israel or the New Testament Church, it was always centered around the family unit. You can never get away from that. That is why the devil's attack today is to destroy the family. In fact, to get even more biblical about it, the first attack the devil did in the Bible was on the family. He divided mom and dad, Adam and Eve, and he got one brother to kill the other brother, and he divided the family. You know as well as I do, especially you folks that have worked with me in marital situations or problems where families break up or they have marital problems because of different reasons, you know that it is the children who always pay the price in it, and the devil has got a plan to all of that.

#### IV. Breaking the Chain of Generational Dysfunction

Throughout this year, as we started the book of Proverbs, we saw how God was giving instructions from my Heavenly Father to me as His son. We made all those applications, and we will be back in Proverbs in a couple of weeks once we kind of set the stage for where we are going to go this year. I have talked about, out of the book of Proverbs, having an unbroken chain of family in your family, generation after generation, that continued to minister. I am going to

show you that today as we look at this. You are going to see something that, and I gave this to the people ministry a couple of months ago, but you are going to see something today that we, and we will even look at it in more depth than we talked about it with them, that is one of the most amazing things I think you have ever seen.

I have watched some of you. I have watched some of you people come in here, and your family basically was a disaster. There was no real spiritual leadership or guidance in your life, and many have made some bad choices in life, and you got into some situations in life. But then there came a point in your life where you really saw the truth of God's Word. There came a point in your life where you said, "You know what, I am tired of this. I have got my own children now, and I do not want what happened to them, or what happened to me, to happen to them." So what you did, without maybe even knowing it, by coming to a church, getting involved, getting disciplined, getting the Word of God in your life, getting all of those things that you need, what you did without ever knowing what you did, is you broke that chain, that chain that was shackled, that you were shackled to, of generation after generation, just raising more generations of people who never do anything with God. You broke that chain. You said in your life, "I do not want in my kids what happened to me, or what happened in my family." You took a stand in your own life, and you said, "You know what, I am going to fix me first, and I am going to make sure that my kids get what I get, and I am not going to let the shackles of that lifestyle that I grew up in affect my kids."

Most parents want a better life for their kids than they have for themselves. That is just part of parenting. But I have never understood why they look at the life of sin and life of the world, and yet think that that is so good for their children, when their own life has been nothing but problematic all through it. Many of you have come to the point where you broke that chain, and now you have got to go in your life an unbroken chain.

Then I have watched others of you that we have met over the years, and many I have known for a long time, that you come from a long good line of families, an unbroken chain of doing ministry, and you are a third, fourth, fifth, sixth generation person in your family. So you see it all different kinds of ways, but it is a thing where at the end of the day it is about families, and it is about people getting and grasping the idea that you have got to have that generation after generation after generation of families. That is what God, that is how God laid it out.

In accordance with that and the family, we focused on our kids last year. It was not just about family. It was the whole concept. We had our first youth camp, which was, in my mind, I do not know how it could have ever gone any better. I have never in all my years of camping, certainly not the first one I ever did anyhow, went off as smooth as that. Joe Christensen and Jack and Jenny and Barb and Phil and Olivia, and so many of you parents got involved with it. You took our kids and you made an investment in them, and it paid off even to this day. Joe sent most of you who were involved in that an email the other day that Sunday, January 26th, which is the end of this month, he is going to have a meeting, a debriefing for all of the people that went to help with camp, all the parents. Yet we are opening that up that if you are, even though we are a long way from camp, it is going to be the same time this year as it was last year. We want to invite anybody that wants to be part of it, a family, a mom or a dad, come in and see that and be part of

that process. It is our kids, it is our investment in them. We are going to try to get Dean Hayes to come up and be the camp speaker this year. I have not had a chance to talk with him yet because he has been down sick, but I am sure he will move heaven and earth to be able to get here. This is why I am pushing for every year for some of you to sign up in the elementary division to help with the kids in there. They are our kids, and it is all part of the family system.

But it is really only the beginning. I told you last year that our job here at the church—Zach's job, my job, Jenny's job, all of our jobs—is to help you as parents. We are not here to take away from your family. We are here to find out what you want to accomplish with your children and then support you in doing that. That is why we want to have such an incredible close working relationship in everything we do with the families, moms and dads. We want to help enforce. We want to help establish the goals that you have for your children, not necessarily the ones that we may have.

I told you last week, the father is the key to the family. The father is the key to the family, not the mom, the father. The mother is vitally important, but at the end of the day, it is the father who is the key to the family. The second thing I told you last week is that families are key to the church. The third thing I told you is the church is key to reaching the world and accomplishing what God has for us through the families.

I will be honest with you today. I have absolutely nothing but the greatest respect for you men and for you women who have tried to do. Maybe you all did not get there, but you are trying to do what you need to do. I have the greatest respect for you. You may not have all the answers. You may still have some issues you have to deal with, but you are here this morning, and you want to put those things in your life. In time, you will get there.

*Proverbs 29:18*

*Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.*

When you actually look at the context of that passage, it is dealing with families, your children. I have told you many, many times how, as a family, you have to put a vision in front of your kids and keep that vision fresh of where you want them to go. But also, it is the job of any church, certainly this one, but any church. It is my job. It is the job of any pastor. It is the job of every elder, every deacon, every leader in any church to keep the vision before the people that God brings to us. That is why we want to have things like today. Yet we want to talk about things throughout the year. Last year, we focused and learned much about the family and how important they are. Now this year, we want to take what we learned last year and we want to further develop that concept. We want to add some more dimensions to it. I want to show you some things today that I think will help you in a way that you have never seen it before.

## V. The Anatomy of the New Testament Local Church

I want you to understand today the concept of what the New Testament local church is to your family. When you say that, somebody says, "I know what a church is. Here is the church, there is the steeple, open the door and there are all the people." It is more than that. It is understanding

the structure spiritually of what the church is. I want to talk to you about that today, and I want you to be able to grasp it.

What I am about to give you, I have taught for 150 years. Back in the 80s and the 90s, I was associated with a lot of seminars where you taught young pastors how to develop churches and all the ins and outs. My job most of the time was just what I am talking about today: the two structures of the church and how do you get your church from one level to another, bring them up through those lines of spiritual maturity.

A good doctor, if you go to a doctor and you have a good doctor, to be a good doctor, you need a very good understanding of human anatomy. You need to know about the human body. In fact, in every doctor's office you ever went to, you are sitting there waiting for him to come in looking around, you know what you have on the wall? You have charts of human anatomy. There will be a little skeleton over here, hopefully not his last patient. There is a skeleton over here in the corner. Whatever his specialty is, if he is a heart doctor, there will be a heart. He can take all the parts out and show you how it works. If he is a regular doctor, then he will have a chart up there that shows all the human anatomy. When you are sitting there and he is trying to explain to you what is wrong with your digestive system, or what is wrong with this, or what is wrong with that, he will actually go to that chart and he will illustrate, he will show you what he is talking about. That is what a good doctor does. He has to understand anatomy, but he also has to be able to explain the human anatomy in the same token.

For me to be a functional pastor and to be a pastor that understands what he is trying to do, and for you to be a Christian and a father to your family, or just a Christian that really understands the ministry of what God wants you to do, we need to have a good understanding of the anatomy of the church, the body of Christ, and how it supposedly should grow.

In the Bible, there are two models on the anatomy. These two models are pretty well established in the Bible. One, the first one we all know about, the second one not too many people know about, but everybody knows the first one. The first one is in the book of Acts, in Acts 13, and that will be the church of Antioch. The church of Antioch, from a physical structure standpoint, is a model church. That is the church that, in a physical sense, you set it up. That was the first church mentioned in the New Testament where they are called Christians. It serves for me and for you in our church as a model of what the physical structure should be.

*Acts 13:1-2*

*Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.*

*As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.*

This is the structure of the church. When you would come down through this chapter and then go back to chapter 11, which talks about it again, you would find that there are seven physical

characteristics of this church. I am not going to labor on this because this is not the one I want to focus on, but you will find out that it was:

- A preaching church
- A witnessing church
- A teaching church
- A church that had paid the price for what they believe
- A giving church
- A praying church
- A missionary-minded church

It is an incredible study when you lay that out in a practical application.

Our second model is where I want to focus today. I want to show you by this one the spiritual internal structure of the church. This is vital. This is where we have now come to the place that this will help us understand better who we are, why we are here, and why God has put us where He is putting us. This is the one that is found in the Old Testament in a model form based on the internal structure of the nation of Israel. It is a great model for us.

Let me say this: every church follows this pattern. I am here today laying out about where our church is going. I want to show you this for our church. But also, I want you to know this is the pattern for every church, good or bad. This is not just about what our church follows. This is every church follows this, either voluntarily or involuntarily, whether a good church or a bad church. It is what they follow. It is the structure. You cannot get out of it. It is what it is. I am not just talking about, as I said, our church. I am here showing you the pattern of all churches and what they fall into. But it is vital in seeing it and accomplishing the vision for the church and the family that God has put us here. It is absolutely true of any church.

This study that we are about to look at will form the most important aspect of anything in our Christian life. One word is the word balance. Balance is the most vital word for everything in Christianity. The Bible says, "A false balance is an abomination in the sight of the Lord." Balance is crucial. You are going to find that your whole life is about finding the balance. When you find a balance, you know what you have to do then? You have to find a balance of the balance you just found. Life is a continual balancing out the balance that you got so you stay in balance and do not get out of balance. When people get out of fellowship with God, that is the technical term. The internal term is you are out of balance. Out of balance or in balance is the key. You and I will go through it. Churches go through it. As an individual Christian, it is your job to make sure you stay in balance in everything you do in your life. You have to balance it all out. You have to balance work with church. You have to balance church work with your kids. You have to balance work, church, your kids with their time in the Bible. It is a balance.

A church has to have a balance too. Most pastors, they understand the physical structure of it. They understand that a church is made up of a pastor, a congregation, and deacons. That is the physical structure. They understand that. But where they get out of balance is not understanding the internal structure. That is what I want to talk to you about today and show you that. This is

the exact model that I learned years ago and I follow in building and maintaining our church. It is based on those two biblical models.

## VI. The Camping Structure of Israel: A Model for the Church

Let us go back to the book of Numbers. We want to turn to Numbers 2. I am not going to take the time to lay out all of chapter 2 because it is, I will just tell you what it is, but I suggest you go back at some point and do it for yourself. In Numbers 2, 3, and 4, what you basically have, especially in Numbers 2, you have the detailed layout that when the children of Israel camped—remember they wandered for 40 years?—when they camped, this is the structure by which they camped around the ark and the tabernacle. Historically, when you look at that and you see it in there, it probably does not ring much with you or mean much to you, but this is one of the most incredible things that you are ever going to see when it comes to understanding the detailed layout of how a church internally, spiritually lays itself out. As they moved through the 40 years of wilderness, every time they camped, they camped just like this.

When you lay this out, you see that the nation of Israel breaks down into five sections that I want to explain to you here, five sections that are absolutely vital in understanding how this thing works. We will lay these out and we will see how this affects not only the church, but it affects you and your family in getting the right balance.

The first thing I want you to see is this. This is not on your chart, but I want to make this point that the 12 tribes. We know that the 12 tribes in the Old Testament are the key to what God does to the world in the Old Testament. I have said it many, many times: the 12 tribes are to the Old Testament what the church is to the New Testament. That is nothing new to you. You know that. But the thing that many times you do not think about is the fact that the nation of Israel, those 12 tribes, are broken down into families. In Genesis 49, you have the 12 boys that came from Jacob, 12 fathers who in time produced the 12 nations or 12 tribes that became the nation of Israel. The 12 tribes are the families from those 12 boys. The Levites that we talk about so much are from a family. They had a father, Levi. Everything is based on the family unit. The Bible tells us that these 12 boys who produced 12 families who became the 12 tribes, it tells us when you come through the Old Testament in Genesis 12:3 that all the families, families, families of the earth will be blessed in these families. It is all about families. That is the first thing I want to drill into you. It is all based on family units, making up the nation, just like the church is made up in the New Testament of families.

In Israel, going back to their camping scenario here, they had five things we want to identify.

1. The Ark of God. That is a type of Jesus Christ and also a type of the Word of God. It was central to everything that Israel did. When they marched, that ark went before them. It was at the head of the column. You know why? Because it is a picture of you and me following Christ wherever we go. They just did not strike out on their own. They followed the ark. When they followed that ark, God gave them a pillar of fire by night and a cloud by day that they followed. That is all spiritually symbolic of what is in our life that we follow, but we do

not have time to get into that. What I want you to see is the fact that that ark represents the Word of God in Christ. It was central to everything that they did. They could not do a thing without that ark. That ark was a non-negotiable item. Along with that, this is not one of the five, this goes along with that, there was the tabernacle. The tabernacle is where they housed the ark. It was the structure that housed the ark. That is a picture of the church. The true church of Jesus Christ, which is made up of a spiritual body. We just happen to be in a building, but the true church is not this structure, it is you. But in this church, we now have a housing for the Word of God and the Lord Jesus Christ. That of course is the concept of the church.

2. The Levites. You will find those in Numbers 3:38. They were the leadership of Israel. That would represent the pastors and the teachers and the deacons in the church. The Levites were the spiritual base that were the custodians of the Word of God. They handled all of the upper-level spiritual stuff that dealt with the leadership that Israel had.
3. The three inner families. They will represent the families, and we will talk about them in detail in a moment. I am defining them right now. They will represent the families in any church that are directly involved in the day-to-day ministry. These will be your core people. Last week I showed you the seven stages of spiritual growth. This would be levels five, six, and seven: the fathers, the elders, and the aged.
4. The 12 tribes. The 12 tribes were the body of people who constituted, and will make up the body of any church. They are the new people, the people who come on a regular basis. They are in a growing process on one of these levels, one, two, three, or four, that we talked about last week.
5. The mixed multitude. These are the people who came out of Egypt with the Jews, but were never happy about it. They never were really happy with, and they always wanted to go back to Egypt. We know in the Bible that Egypt is a type of the world, and the mixed multitude, their spiritual level was minus zero. They had no spiritual level whatsoever. They cared nothing about the real things that God was doing. They were along for the ride, but they never really accomplished anything, and they never really did anything. Obviously, they were the source of, if you study it out, they were the source of all Israel's spiritual issues.

Now, look at your chart. I did it this way because at some point, I would say in Numbers 2, where this is at, you need to put this in your Bible, not as big as it is there, but put it in. You can get it in. I have got it in mine because this is something that you want to have in your Bible, and it is an incredible little thing. I made a simple little chart so you could take one home with you. I have got one up here so I could illustrate it, but this is the order of how they do it.

We have been talking about anatomy. Just as your physical body has three parts to it physically—you have a nervous system, you have a skeletal system, you have a circulatory system—your spiritual body has three parts to it also: a body, soul, and spirit. See how it works? Just as the church has three physical parts to it—you have the pastor, the deacons, and the members—it also has three internal spiritual parts. This is represented by the three family groups that we found: the inner group, the inner camp, the middle camp, and the outer camp. In these three, we see the family, the balance that is what a church should be. This is what we are going to work on next year.

## VII. The Three Family Groups and Their Spiritual Significance

Let us look at the internal parts here, the three family groups, and let us see this, and how it affects the church. Remember, I am going to say it again, the key to Israel's success was families ministering together. The key to success to any church, not just our church—this fits into any church—will be the balance of families ministering together.

We know that the Ark and the Tabernacle was the center of ministry for the nation of Israel, and it is right here in the middle. This is it right here. We know that the priests now are the leadership of it. They are right there with it. But the thing that I want you to see is that originally, this thing breaks down to a study of three fathers: Koath, Gershom, and Merari. In time, when you study it, you will find that these three fathers developed into three families that were the closest to the Ark and to the Tabernacle, which again was the central main thing concerning the nation of Israel, much like the Word of God and Christ is to us today. Their whole lives revolved around the Ark and the Tabernacle.

- The KoathitesThe Koathites, his family down the line, are found in Numbers 3:27 and 32. Their job was to take care of the furniture. We know that there are seven pieces of furniture that were in that Ark, including, or in that Tabernacle, including the Ark of the Covenant.
- The GershomitesThe second group that you had was Gershom. They are the Gershomites. They are found in Numbers 3:21-26. Their job dealt with the tents and the coverings. That was the tent that went over the Tabernacle and the tent that went over all of the things that kept it out. When you study it, it is one of the most tremendous studies that you ever found. When you look at that Tabernacle, when they put these, when the Gershomites put the coverings and their coverings are animal skins, when they put the coverings on that framework of that tent, when they were done, you absolutely saw no light from the outside. You walked into that Tabernacle, it was pitch black. No light from the outside ever got in. These people were so dedicated with what they did. Keep in mind, they did not do this just one time. They did this for 40 years. It had to be exact every time. They did not walk in there one time and see a little crack of light up there and say, "Well, it is mostly dark. It is okay." It had to be totally dark because of what it represented. They understood the spiritual significance of that.The only light that was in there when you understand the Tabernacle was the, if this was the Tabernacle and you had, I walked in this way, on one side you have seven-pronged candlesticks that were always lit. On this side you had a table, it was called the table of showbread. It had 12 loaves of bread. One, two, three, four, five, six. One, two, three, four, five, six. When the priest came in, the only light he had was the light off that seven-pronged candlestick. That seven-pronged candlestick is a type of the Holy Spirit of God. Those 12 pieces of bread over there, that is a picture of the Word of God. There are 12, but they are laid out one, two, three, four, five, six. One, two, three, four, five, six, because there are 66 books in your Bible.When the priest came out from the outside where it was a bright, sunny day and he stepped into that tent, how many ever went to a movie theater and you come in from the outside and you are late and the movie has not started yet and you walk in and the first thing you better do is stand there. You are going to trip over the four ladies sitting on the

front row. You have to stop for a few moments to get your eyes to adjust from coming to the light out there to the dim light in the theater. That is a picture of what many of you have done in your Christian life. You came out of the light of the world, but you see when you get into the tabernacle, which is a picture of what real Christianity is, that is the light of God, and it is different than the light of the world. So sometimes you have to just stand for a few minutes, get disciplined, learn the seven things that changed about the day you got saved, and that your eyes adjust from coming to the world to coming to the light of God off the seven-pronged candlestick. When that priest went in there, he did the work in there, but he had to move around this way, and he could, if he stood here to do the bread, he could not see what he was doing because he was blocking the light. So he had to go upon the backside of it, and he had to work it this way, and he worked off the light that God gave him off that seven-pronged candlestick, which is a picture of the Holy Spirit of God. When you and I do the work of God, we do the ministry, we do not ever get in front of God's Word. We do not ever get in front of the light of God. We get behind it and let God's light illuminate what the Word of God is for us. That is how it works. That is exactly how it works. These guys here, they had to be exact. Everything in that ark had the right place to be at the right spot. No variation in it. You could not say, "Well, you know, we have done this for 15 years now. Let us change it up a little bit. Let us put the bread over here and a candlestick over here." No. God wants it done the same way every time when you do the ministry. There is no room for variations with it.

- The Merarites Then you had Merari, whose family was called the Merarites, and their job was dealing with the boards, the bars, and the pillars. Oh my goodness. I cannot even imagine this one because when you get into the book of Exodus, the minute detail of the bars and the sockets and the pillars and the boards, it was absolutely unbelievable. These people had to have tremendous dedication. These people had to have paid tremendous attention to detail. They had to know every facet of every piece, where it went, tremendous dedication, tremendous structure. They could not take any shortcuts for 40 years. How many thousands of times they must have put it up and taken it down, and they had to do it the exact same way. That tabernacle is a picture of our Christianity right now. They were wandering for 40 years. When they got into the land and they finally built the temple, then it came to a fixed point. That is a picture of the millennium. Right now, you and I are the tabernacle of God, and we are to wander for God. We are to go wherever God wants us to go. We follow the leading of the Holy Spirit of God, but in the Old Testament, everybody came to the temple. In the New Testament, we take our temple to everybody in the world. That is what we do now. It is an incredible picture, absolutely incredible picture of what we got for 40 years.

I want you to see this. When you go to Numbers 4 and you start looking at these three families, he starts to give you the numbers of the families. When you total them all up to save time, you will find that from these three fathers came a total of 8,580 descendants. These 8,580 descendants, they did the job that the fathers did for over 40 years and beyond. There is your picture of families ministering together. It started with three fathers and then developed over 8,000 people through the generations that followed for over 40 years and beyond. That is an exact picture of what I am trying to tell you that our job is, and the church is built around

families. They made sure that those families never broke the chain. They were there faithfully, consistently for over 40 years doing that work of God.

- The 12 Tribes (Middle Group)Our second group will be the 12 tribes. The 12 tribes make up the bulk of the nation of Israel. We know that. As you can guess, they will picture what is in most Christians where you find in most churches that three families do all the work and the bulk of the people just float along, go along for the ride. That is true in most churches, not true in our church, but it is true in most churches. You find many examples of that in the Bible. God's faithful few is always the minority. Look at Gideon, started out with 31,000 plus, wound up with 300. It is a principle all the way through the Bible. You will see this a lot in big churches, large churches, because the burden is carried by a few and the rest are just along for the ride. I never look, I understand that concept, but I look at it a little differently, at least in my church anyhow. I do not see it completely that way because I look at it that along with that maybe, but these 12 tribes or this middle band of people to me represent the potential that is in every church. Most pastors, when you hear this, they look at it and it just, they write everybody off that is in this. I would never do that because I am smart enough to know or dumb enough to know, however you want to coin it, to understand that they represent the great potential in any church. The people that God brings into your world, into your ministry, working with them through the issues and develop them into the families that really are doing the work. This is where most churches break down. Pastors in leadership, they do not know what to do with that middle band. They see them, they recognize that, "Boy, I have a few people over here really doing it, but I have a bunch of people here that are not doing anything. How do I get that group into this group?" That is the problem. That is the problem. What to do with that second group. If you do not understand this biblical model and format and how to bring this along, this is where churches struggle. We will talk more about it a little bit later.
- The Mixed Multitude (Outer Camp)Our third group will be called by two names in the Bible, both in Numbers 11. The first name that it is called is the mixed multitude. The second name that they are given is the outer camp. As I said, these will be the people who came out of Egypt with Israel, but never really bought into anything that God wanted to do with the nation of Israel. They cared nothing about the promised land. They really did not. They cared nothing about the Word of God or the law. They really cared nothing about God. It is this group that gave Moses and then the middle group problems all the time. A good example of this is in Numbers 11:1. I want you to look at it. This is the definitive verse on the mixed multitude here. If you do not have this marked in your Bible, look at Numbers 11:1. Numbers 11:1-6

And when the people complained, it displeased the LORD: and the LORD heard it; and his anger was kindled; and the fire of the LORD burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp.

And the people cried unto Moses; and when Moses prayed unto the LORD, the fire was quenched.

And he called the name of the place Taberah: because the fire of the LORD burnt among them.

And the mixt 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. Now, this is why I preach so hard on association. You are who you hang out with. The mixed multitude always affected these 12 tribes. They are out here at the uttermost parts of the camp. The 12 tribes are around here, and they are not happy. They are complaining. Their complaining festers into the 12 tribes; the children of Israel also begin to complain. I cannot stress it enough. You need to be careful who you hang out with because you are, or you will become, who you hang out with. The mixed multitude never learned anything from coming out of Egypt. They never understood the importance of the great deliverance that God gave the nation of Israel. They came out for the ride, maybe for the new adventure. They came out for whatever reason it was, but they did not come out for what God wanted to do with Israel because now here they are. They missed the whole point, and they have lost their perspective. Now they are talking about, "We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely." There was not anything free in Egypt. You were a slave in Egypt. They worked 18 hours a day. They killed your grandpa down in a brick mill. They killed your mother. They killed your brother when he got crushed under the big rocks that you were told. There was nothing free about Israel. I will tell you right now, there is nothing free about the world that God saved you from. But when you become the mixed multitude, you do not see that. Their cry is, "Give us flesh to eat. We want to go back to Egypt," a type of the world. That is the mixed multitude. Most of all, look at Numbers 11:6: "But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes." That manna in Exodus 16 is a type of the Word of God. It was a supernatural gift that God brought down from heaven to sustain the nation of Israel in their wilderness journey. Just like the Word of God is a supernatural gift that God brought down to heaven to sustain you and I in our wilderness journey. But they did not see it as that. They saw the Bible as just a boring, old, dry book. They did not love it. They did not care about it. They could not wait to open it. They did not want to come to Bible study on Thursday night. They did not want to go to hear what anybody preached the Word of God. They just were along for the ride. When they came to the Bible, it was the most boring book on the planet to them. But, "Oh yeah. Boy, we remember the fish, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onion, and the garlicks," but you forgot the gas that it gave you. That is all the stuff of the world.

These three parts are the anatomy of the internal structure of any New Testament church and show us a great concept. It is very simple. Most of you have fireplaces in your home. Most of you in the last couple of weeks, you probably have those fireplaces going. You know how it works. You have got a hearth down here that gets the fire in it. It is overlaid with brick all the way up through here and comes all the way up to the top there, and your chimney goes up, and it is bricks laid in there in an arc flashing, and you have got a mantle here, but it is all around brick because brick is something that will not catch on fire. Yet if you next time you start a fire, illustrate my point. You get down here with the fire burning and you feel these bricks right around here. They are just as hot as the fire, but the farther bricks you go out and the farther you get away from the fire, the colder those bricks become. You finally get up there where the mixed

multitude bricks are, it is not hot at all. That is how it works. The closer you are to the fire of this church, the closer you are when the rubber meets the road and the work gets done.

That is the problem with the Laodicean church. Revelation 3 talks about the fact that in verse 16, it was a lukewarm church.

*Revelation 3:16*

*So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.*

It was not either cold nor hot. It was not dead into apostasy, but it was not on fire either. That church makes God sick.

*Revelation 3:20*

*Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*

In this church, God is kicked all the way out. There is no fire. I am telling you in any church, this church, any church, that the Bible preaching church that has things going for God, it is simple. You get to choose: the farther you get away from the fire, the colder you get. It is just that simple.

## VIII. Accountability and the Pastor's Role

Smaller churches will have fewer mixed multitude people. It is just a simple thing. If it is a Bible preaching church, because in small churches, you cannot hide. It is just a fact. It is all like a family. That is why the Bible in the New Testament, or Bible in the Old Testament, shows you the model that most churches probably should never get above five, 600 people. It is a model. It is a pattern in the Bible. Big churches provide a safe haven for mixed multitude. I am not suggesting by any stretch of the imagination, they are not good people in big churches. Certainly there are. There are some great people who love the Lord, love the Bible. There certainly are. But in a small church, you have accountability. In a large church, you do not.

Let me give you an example. You have kids. Your kids grow up. They come through the teenage years. They are not the best kids in the world. You try to do the best job you can with them. Suddenly, when they are 18, they want to go off to college someplace across the country. You say to them, "Well, why don't you go to a community college? That way we can save some money." "No, no, no, no. I want to go to there. I want to go here. I want to go here. I want to go there." Fundamentally, they really care nothing about getting an education. They want to get out from under your accountability. Now, colleges have rules. I think they say they have rules, but what colleges do not have is accountability. You see, when they live in your house, you have got to be home by 11 o'clock or 12. But you go there, nobody is accountable for when you come home. They have rules, but they have no accountability. Just like children want to get out from under their parents' accountability, "You have got to do this, be here, be that." They will say, "I want to go to school to get education." But at the end of the day, many of them, not maybe most of them, but many of them want to get out from the accountability so they can do whatever they want to

do. It is the same way in churches. There is accountability in smaller groups. Why we have our prayer group, we have broken it down even smaller. There are accountability groups, and they are groups that will help you and will give you what you need.

I know you probably do not like this. I am not talking about the majority of it. I am just talking in a sense here, maybe with no sense, but I am talking to you. In our lives as Christians, and we may not like this, but it is a true fact, we all need accountability. The moment we do not have accountability, we are in trouble. The moment your children do not have any accountability to you, you are in trouble. Accountability is the key. When somebody gets their nose bent at a joint or somebody does not like something that goes on, the first thing you can, I do not care what they do. I do not care what anybody says. I do not care what the sin involved is. The root source of the problem is, "I do not want to be held accountable." When you do not want to be held accountable, it is all going to fall apart.

I have seen many businessmen join large churches. They have 25,000, 3,000 people because their business, they are either a car salesman, insurance salesman, or they are some kind of salesman. They look at that as a breeding ground for prospects of their business. I have even known churches where the pastor has given them the names of the people in the church for a small fee, that they could fleece that flock, so to speak, and use them for business profits and try to get out of there. If they are an insurance salesman or investment people are big on that and all those things. But I am telling you, accountability is the key.

The job of a pastor and the operational internal structure of any church is very simple. You have got to have your balance. Here comes the balance:

6. Keep that inner group growing. These three families here, these right here, keep them growing. Keep them growing. Do not be satisfied with the status quo. Do not get to the place in your church or your mind where you look at this group and you say, "This is the way it is. It is not ever going to change. It has always been this way. It will never change." No, no, no. It is because you do not know what you are doing. You want to, number one, keep that inner three families developing. You want to add as many to that as you can. You want to develop them. You want to bring them along. You want to properly give them everything that they need, and you want to help them make, this is where you want to make the main investment of your life to help these people who have committed themselves to helping you.
7. Keep that middle group always moving toward the inner group. Always. You always do. You never look at them as people who are never going to do anything. We forget sometimes. I know in my own life, I did not really get serious with God until I was 20 years old. I wasted 20 years of my life. There were people in my life that were willing to help me. If they would have looked at me and said, "Well, he has wasted the first 20 years of his life. Why should I invest any time in him?" I never would have made it. You cannot ever look at that middle group and write them off. You look at that middle group as the potential for what you can do with them, but you have got to know how to move them. You have got to know how to help them. You have got to know what to give them. The leadership, the inner families, the pastor, the deacons, the inner families, they help you do that through discipleship and one-on-one and working with them and counseling, edifying them, helping them grow, making sure they

get whatever time of yours they need to help them get what they want to get done. Give them whatever it takes. Encourage them. Help develop them. If you see they have a need, be there to help them with it. Let them know you care about them. Let them know you want to help them.

8. Keep that mixed multitude to the smallest percentage you can. I would say 5% or less. You are always willing to help them. You are always willing to do whatever it needs to be done, but if you have any experience at all, you know that mixed multitude of people, for the most part, do not want anything to do with God or the Bible based on Numbers 11, but you try to do what you can do. In small churches, it will usually take care of itself. If it is a Bible preaching, Bible teaching church, and they follow in the seven concepts of the Antiochian church, you know what? It just gets too hot.

When you lay all this out, you find that these three inner families, and this is vital, these three inner families here were never affected by the mixed multitude, not one time in the Bible. You cannot find one time in 40 years where anything the mixed multitude did ever affected those inner families that were in there where the fire was hot doing the ministry. This is a vital point. I cannot stress this enough. In fact, I would have just got up here and yelled this this morning and sent you home, but it would not have made any difference without explaining it. The reason why the uttermost part of the camp and the mixed multitude never affected these people here is because these people here had made an investment. They bought into what God was doing. They made an investment of their own lives first, and then they invested the lives of their children and their families. They wanted to make sure that their families never got part of the mixed multitude, and over 8,000 of them in 40 years, not one time, not one place anywhere in the scriptures, did the uttermost part of the camp ever, ever penetrate into those inner families because those inner families, they bought into what God was doing and they made an investment in it.

Now, we can reverse the process. The uttermost part of the camp, the mixed multitude, there is one place in the Bible in 40 years where they ever did anything good. There is one place where they ever saw anything spiritual, ever added to anything spiritual, not one record, any way, shape, or form where they ever did one single thing that attributed to anything good for the nation of Israel. Do you know why? Because they had no investment. It is just that simple. People who have an investment in any church will understand what this is. People who have no investment in any church, that is what you got. It is so simple, and it is so basic. It is just that simple. The mixed multitude, absolutely no investment in anything that God was doing. All they cared about was themselves, their flesh. They wanted to go back to the world. They had one foot in with the world and one foot in the camp. They camped at the uttermost part of the camp as far as they could from what was really going on.

The middle group was affected, but never the inner three families. That is why as a pastor, a church, or a deacon, or a leadership in a church, you work hard and preach hard to protect that middle level and bring them along in spite of the mixed multitude. This is why I am going to say it again. This is why we got into the book of Proverbs, and it just kept coming up over and over and over again about who you associate with is who you become. These people here would

associate with these people here, but these people here never associated with here. These people would here try to associate with them, but they also associate with them, and they would have a source of all their problems. In 40 years, every problem that Israel had and every problem that Moses had came from the mixed multitude infecting that inner crowd, never from the three families that were on the inside.

Understanding this gives you great insight into why we do the things that we do here. I make no apology for it. I am not interested in running a popularity contest. I am not interested in running a church that makes you feel comfortable all the time. I just have my preferences. I would rather have you not be comfortable. Some of you better look on your face. You are very uncomfortable this morning. I wear that as a badge of honor. My goal for all of you is to move you into that inner circle of the three families and keep it growing and keep you going because I am going to tell you folks, when you stop growing spiritually, you die spiritually.

I know that will not happen, and I know there is not any church on this planet where you are going to get everybody in, but you know what? I will preach every message. I will teach every Bible study. I will deal with every counseling session. I will deal with every one-on-one like it will happen. You take these people that God gives you and you get them the vision and you help develop them and their families.

I have to say this too. It goes without saying, and I am trying to eliminate all your arguments this morning because I know your arguments, but it goes without saying there is no such thing as a perfect church. This church is not perfect. No church is perfect, but I will also tell you there is no such thing as perfect people. It always bothers me when imperfect people want to point out what imperfections are in a church. There are no perfect churches, but there are no perfect people. We are just a bunch of imperfect people trying to do the best job we can in an imperfect scenario. So I learned a long time ago, you do not look for a perfect church. You look for a real one.

When I deal with people and I want people and I want to develop people, I do not look at what you have done in the past. I do not even look at where you are at right now. I look at the potential that is inside of you. I look at what is there. I look at what you have. I look at where you can do the potential that is inside of you. I am telling you, people who truly and really want to do God's work and get close to the hotbed of ministry. That is what I am looking for. Those are the real ones. You are going to have issues. You are going to have problems. You are going to go along great for a while and do something stupid. I may hold you accountable to it, but it is not because you are a bad person. You do not look, take one incident in a person's life and then judge them all through their life by that. But that is what we do. Somebody will make one mistake in their life and it does not matter what they do before that mistake or after that mistake, their whole life is based on that mistake. That is so unfair because if somebody would do that with you, you would not like it. No, what you have to do is you look at the whole thing. All things work together for good. In preaching, building a church, I have learned never minimize what God maximizes and never maximize what God minimizes. You preach the book just the way it is. Leave your personal opinions out of it. It is that simple.

## IX. The Champion Within: Developing God's DNA

That does not mean that you all preach. We are not talking about getting into the inner three families and getting closer to the fire. It does not mean you all preach. Somebody walks around here and sees the guys that preach and we talk about the guys preaching and all that. You think because you do not preach too, that you are a fan. No, not everybody is going to preach. Not everybody is going to go down to the mission. Not everybody is going to disciple somebody. It simply means you take where you are at with what you have and you simply do what you can do for God. God will figure the rest of it out.

We buy our Bibles, our wide margin Bibles from Bearing Precious Seed. I have been associated with Bearing Precious Seed for probably 35, 40 years. I knew Dr. Keene real well. He is retired now, but he was the pastor there. Years ago, they had a guy that was their front man who went around and he set up churches to help do Bibles and he raised money, and his name was Rick. I cannot remember his last name, probably good that I do not. His name was Rick. I liked Rick, but Rick was a shyster. Rick was the kind of guy who always had a million projects that he wanted to do and no money to do them with and wanted you to pay for them. I never forget he would come into Kansas City and come into my office. I was always glad to see him. I would take him out to eat. I liked Rick. I did. I liked him. He would say, "I am probably going to talk to you," and I say, "Sure, go ahead." He said, "Man," he says, "I have got this great project, and I need \$25,000." I am not going to fall for that. I mean, last week it was something else. I said, "Rick, I do not have \$25,000, but I want you to know if I had \$25,000, I would give it to you." He would say, "Okay, but how much do you have?" He never missed an opportunity, but I like that. I like that. I do the same thing just in a different way.

I have had people say to me, "Bob, I cannot do everything in the church. I cannot do this. I cannot do all of that. I cannot do all of this." I say, "Okay, but what can you do?" Just start with what you can do. God is not going to ask you to go down and preach at the mission. God is not going to, you do not have to worry if I have got the flu some Sunday morning, I am not going to call you to come and preach. You are okay. I have plenty of guys that I can draw off of, but you are okay. I am not going to put you on the spot. People get nervous because of the fact they think if you are in this inner crowd here, you have got to be preaching and you have got to be out there on the street corner, passing out tracts, and you have got to, no, no, no, no, no, no, you just, it is all in here. It is all in your attitude of heart. It is just simply taking what you have that God has given you and be willing to use that. God will take care of the rest. He will take care of the rest, but that is where you have to start for Him to develop it.

This is where we want to go this next year. This is what we want to try to accomplish. I watch some of you young couples adopt other young couples. I watch some of you families, when new families come in, you take them out to lunch or go out and spend time with them. I watch some of you singles do what you did. I will tell you, the thing that blew my mind, and I watched this, never said a word, is when God brought us that little Chinese guy, Wong Wu or whatever his name was. Let me tell you a story. He was technically very good at working with certain kinds of machines. There was a city in Kansas City that had machines that he was the only one to work on. They brought him all the way over here. They put him down there to keep those machines running. The boss let him stay in that factory. He had no bed to sleep on. He had to figure out his

own food. They paid him. But they just left him down there. Some of our people, one of our ladies was working down there and saw him, started brought him to church. A couple other couples got in it and started bringing him to church. He did not speak one lick of English. We got, one of the families got him a Bible, and I think it was Mandarin Chinese that he spoke, got him a Bible. Somebody got him a little app for his phone that he could listen to something in English and it would translate it into a deal like that. Now here is a guy who did not speak a lick of English. He came to church every Sunday. Did not understand a word I was saying. But, by the time he was left, by just the Holy Spirit of God working through him without ever speaking a language, he came to the conclusion that Buddhism was not the answer to life. It was all because families in this church took him in and loved him. When he had a going away party, half the church, if not all the church, showed up. We took him in, and I have seen you do that in so many different areas, but that is a great example where you brought him in and you invested in him.

You know what? Watch the pattern. When those three or four families who did what you did with him, may I just say this without anybody knowing who you are? When you came into this church, your families were a wreck. Your life was in a shambles. But you see how the process works? I invested my life into you. We worked together to get you through some things, and then you take it and you invest your life in that little guy. Now he did not get saved. But we loaded him down with everything he could take when he got back there. But we do know this, do we not? God's Word never returns void. What you may have done, maybe not today, maybe not tomorrow, but in God's timing, what you may have done by your loving and your act of kindness and your giving to him and your going out of your way to drive down there to pick him up when you did not have gas in your car and you had to shift off this and that to do it. What you may have done may have set the platform for a great missionary in China someday. See how it works? The uttermost never got into this group. As long as you still hang out with the uttermost and you are in that middle group, you will never get to the inner group. You just never will.

I am going to close by telling you a story here. This is not a confession. This is a story. I love horse racing. Never bet on them. But I love horse racing. I love the Kentucky Derby. I watch them try. I love putting those horses in those stalls. A racehorse to me is the sleekest thing on this planet. We watch them get into those things and we watch them go down through there and we watch them race. Nobody stops and thinks about how that racehorse came into being. You do not go into the racehorse store and buy a racehorse. There is an absolute incredible scientific process to the bloodline going back through champion horses. There are people who study DNA of great horses that are in a line with a great bloodline. They selectively breed those horses and they come to the point where they bring them to a point where they become the fastest thing on this planet. It just did not happen by accident. Somebody was involved in a plan to take that racehorse and genetically through the DNA and the bloodline produce a horse that will be a champion.

When that little horse is just first born, it has a coat. It does not look much like a champion, does it? It is wobbly on its legs. It has to get up by getting on its knees. It kind of walks sideways a little bit. It is shaky. But when a trainer takes that horse and brings him to the point where he gives him the right food, he gives them the right supplement, the right ingredients, he trains that

horse in discipline and structure. He takes that horse that did not look like a champion, but because of the DNA that is in him and the bloodline that he came from, he grows into a champion.

Let me say something to you. Some of you do not look like a champion here today. Kind of wobbly on your legs in your walk with God, kind of shaky in some things. Fall down and have a tough time getting up sometimes. But if you are truly saved, spiritually speaking, you have God's DNA in you and you come from a bloodline of a royal king. Most people look at you and just see you as worthless because you are shaky. I never look at you that way. I see you with a royal bloodline flowing through your veins spiritually and the DNA of the Holy Spirit of God the day you became a new creature in Christ Jesus by the incorruptible seed. All you need, you are a champion. You have it in your veins. You have it inside you. You are a champion. But just like that little colt when they came out and was born, did not look like a champion. You need a trainer. You need somebody to give you the right ingredients of the Word of God, give you the right things in the Word of God, get you disciplined, train you, help you through your problems, give you the accountability and the structure that you need to have. You know what? There is no reason why every one of you who are truly saved today cannot grow up to be that champion racehorse because you have God's DNA inside you spiritually and you come from a long line of champions and you have royal blood in your veins. You just need to be trained. You just need to be helped along. You just need somebody to sit down and put their arms around you and work you through the Bible, give you the right portions of everything that you need and turn you into the champion that God knows you can be. It is just that simple. That is what our church does. That is what I do. That is our job.

Last year we came to the point of families. Now you understand the anatomy not only physically but spiritually of what a church is. You know now that every church, not just this one, every church falls into those three inner families, spiritually speaking. You are going to have the ones that are the closest to the fire of what God is doing. You are going to have the ones out here that are a little farther out and you are going to have the mixed multitude. Let me just say this about the mixed multitude. When they camped at night there was no sign put up that said, "Oh you people got to camp way out here." They chose where they camped. Everybody chooses whether you are here, you are here, or you are here. But it is your choice.

The job of this church last year was to take families. God did a tremendous thing, brought in some great strong families and singles last year. We will continue to do so. We are getting ready to start volleyball. Volleyball is always a time where we get the people who come in that you can adopt and you can work with new couples and singles and everything. It is the way it is around here. It is part of the lifeblood of what we do. But you now understand that there is a structure to the church. The job of this church is to keep this group growing and moving. Keep this group moving into this one and keeping this group to a minimum. Because every problem that they have, every problem that the middle group had, every problem that Moses had, never came from that inner group. It never really came from the second group until they got messing with the mixed multitude. The mixed multitude will kill any church and it will certainly kill you as a Christian if you hang out with them. Life is choices.

This is where we are going. We are going to work on the balance next year. I am going to take every young man and every couple that has a gleaming in their eye to be a leader and comb this church from one end to the other and help develop them. Take every couple that comes in. Every mom and dad that comes in. Everybody who wants to make a difference in their life and put them with the people and get them to that place where they become the champion that God knows that they are. It is inside you already. We have got to develop it.