

Hebrews 11:1-8

Sunday 11/2/2014

I was talking to a couple of guys earlier, and I think you all probably know this. If you do not, you are unfortunately getting a double shot of me because Bob was already scheduled to be gone next week. He is going up to Greg McClintock's church and going to be preaching for him next weekend. We were talking about when I found out I was going to be preaching for him this morning because he was sick. I think Greg asked me, "Are you just going to preach what you were going to preach next week and then get something else for that?" I thought about that. I could have done that. But the thing is, I already had about fifteen cheap shots at Bob and Donny and Bubba and all these guys built into that message because they are not going to be here next week. So I could not really pull that one out today. I had to do something different. Next week's message is on as is. Please, nobody give them a CD of it. I am just kidding, just joking. There is none of that, I think. I do not know. We will see. The Holy Spirit does what the Holy Spirit does, right? You get up there sometimes, and sometimes you just get led, and stuff comes out of your mouth, and you cannot really control it.

I. The Book of Hebrews and Its Purpose

We are here in the book of Hebrews, and you guys know Hebrews is one of these books you obviously have to be careful with as a Christian. It is one of the books in the New Testament that we call one of the transitional books, along with Matthew and Acts. When you get into all of your different churches and denominations and different variations of people that claim to be Christian and call themselves a part of mainstream Christianity, they get screwed up on different doctrines, and they get screwed up on different teachings. These are the books where they typically do that because they miss the concept, and they do not understand the fact that while all of the Bible is written for us, not all of the Bible is written directly to us.

There are certain things in the Bible that are directed at different people groups besides Christians. Just because it is in the New Testament does not necessarily mean that it is written directly to us. In these books, and especially in Hebrews, there are some places, just some tremendous practical and inspirational truths that you can get out of the book. Hebrews chapter 11 is certainly one of those places. There have probably been about a million devotions and sermons written out of Hebrews chapter 11. Certainly, this would go right in line with all of those. Hebrews 11, of course, as everybody knows, is a great chapter on faith. It is typically called God's Hall of Fame as He goes through a list of all these different men in the Bible and talks about some of the things that they accomplished for God, and the how and the why, and how it typically relates back to their faith in God.

So as we head into this, let us read starting in verse one.

Hebrews 11:1-8

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

For by it the elders obtained a good report.

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

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

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

Let us go, Lord, in prayer.

Heavenly Father, we love You, and we thank You for the Lord Jesus. Thank You, Lord, for this opportunity to be able to stand in this pulpit and open up this tremendous Word of God, this truth that You have given to us, Lord. I just thank You for the opportunity to be able to open it up and share something out of it today, Lord. I pray that Your Holy Spirit will speak through me, Lord. Help us to take the things that we hear today, Lord, and learn the truths that You have for us, Lord. Learn these things, these lessons from these four men that we are going to take a look at this morning, and help all of us to find some things in some areas in our lives where we can do things better, some things that maybe we need to remove out of our lives, some roadblocks, some stumbling blocks that we have placed in there that are preventing us from being able to serve You, Lord. I just pray that You will get honor and glory out of all that is done and said today, Lord, and just speak through me today, Lord. Give me the right words to say, and I love You, and we ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

II. Four Principles from Four Men of Faith

There are four great men here that we just read about in these first eight verses of Hebrews chapter 11, and each one of them teaches us a tremendous principle and a great vital thing that we need to be able to see as Christians and that we need to be able to have in our own lives. It says that Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice. It says that Enoch had this testimony that he pleased God. Noah, it says, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house. And Abraham, it says, he was called to go into a place. We are going to look at each of these four men very quickly. We are not going to spend a ton of time on each one of them, but I want to just learn some things here from these men, some things in their lives, some things that God says about them here that we need to take and apply in our own lives.

III. Abel: Don't Be Afraid to Give God Your Best

The first one we are going to look at is Abel, and from Abel, what we want to learn here is: Don't be afraid to give God the very best that you have.

Hebrews 11:4

By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

What an amazing verse. You break that verse down and you look at that. It says that Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice. I wonder how many things in our lives, how many times that we make, how many times we are even willing to make a sacrifice for God for something in our lives, but that God Himself would call it excellent. We throw words around like that all the time. We throw the words like excellent and great and awesome and amazing at things that really probably do not deserve to have those words. Yet here is God, Almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth, who is talking about Abel, and He uses this phrase, "a more excellent sacrifice." Then as you get on later in the verse, it says, "God testifying of his gifts." I wonder if God ever testifies anything about us. I wonder if someday at the judgment seat of Christ if God is going to have any interest in testifying anything about us, anything about our lives. What an amazing thing that it says that God testified of his gifts, and by it he being dead yet speaketh. Even in Abel's death and what happened to him, it says he still speaks to us today because of what he did, because of the sacrifice that he made.

If you look back at the original story, you guys know where it is, Genesis chapter 4. You can turn there if you would like. If not, I will read it for you.

Genesis 4:1-5

And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.

And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.

And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

God had told them somewhere along the line, probably through Adam, He obviously had taught Adam and Eve that they needed to be able to make a sacrifice and begin to make atonement for sin. Certainly, the law had not been given at this point; they did not have anything written down; they did not have what He gave to Moses. But they obviously knew that they needed to make a

sacrifice to be able to atone for their sin. It says that Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock. For the very first time that we ever see anything show up of any kind of a sacrifice made for the Lord, it says Abel brought of the firstlings. He brought the very best that he had. He did not find some stragglers that were out in the back that were looking like they were a little bit unhealthy and they were not going to be able to make it anyway, so, "Let us go ahead, I will kill them and offer them to the Lord because that is no big deal. They are not the best ones that I have." Abel, it says, he took the very best that he had, the very best of his flock, and he offered it to the Lord. He did it because he loved God, because he had a relationship with God, just like Adam and Eve had a relationship with God walking in the garden.

If you turn over to Deuteronomy chapter 26, we see this concept of giving our first and best to the Lord.

Deuteronomy 26:1-10

And it shall be, when thou art come in unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and possessest it, and dwellest therein;

That thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth, which thou shalt bring of thy land that the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt put it in a basket, and shalt go unto the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name there.

And thou shalt go unto the priest that shall be in those days, and say unto him, I profess this day unto the LORD thy God, that I am come unto the country which the LORD sware unto our fathers for to give us.

And the priest shall take the basket out of thine hand, and set it down before the altar of the LORD thy God.

And thou shalt speak and say before the LORD thy God, A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous:

And the Egyptians evil entreated us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage:

And when we cried unto the LORD God of our fathers, the LORD heard our voice, and looked on our affliction, and our labour, and our oppression:

And the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders:

And he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, even a land that floweth with milk and honey.

And now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land, which thou, O LORD, hast given me. And thou shalt set it before the LORD thy God, and worship before the LORD thy God:

Now, before I read on the rest of the passage, I feel like I just need to explain because we just read the passage about Cain and Abel, and the problem everybody knows with Cain and Abel

was that Cain brought the firstlings of his flock, and Abel brought of the fruit of the ground. He brought his own works, and you guys know the story from a doctrinal standpoint of what has happened with Cain and Abel. This is not the same thing where He is telling them here to take of the first of all the fruit of the earth and bring it to the Lord. This is not a sin offering at this point. So this is not God telling Israel to do what He had just told Cain was not okay to do. Just for some of you younger ones that do not understand, I do not want to make sure that you do not get confused with that. But there is a principle we need to get out of here.

So let us read on in verse 3. It says, "And thou shalt go up unto the priest that shall be in those days, and say unto him, I profess this day unto the LORD thy God, that I am come unto the country which the LORD sware unto our fathers for to give us." So again, as I said, do not be confused with what happened with Cain and Abel. This is not the same thing. This is not God telling them to bring the firstfruits of the land as a sin offering. What He has basically done here, and you have got to be able to see this as it applies to us in our own lives, God basically takes them through this whole story, and He reminds them of what He has just done for them. He reminds them of how they went down into Egypt, and they were in bondage. It was basically one family that went down there, and they were persecuted, and they were treated terribly. But through those 400 years of bondage in Egypt, God turned them into a great nation. It says very populous. They had probably one or two million people at the time of the Exodus. Then they were still yet, they were used as slaves. Every single one of them, the women, the children, the men, the old men, all of them were treated horribly by the Egyptians. They cried to God to help them, to help them get out of it. It says that He brought them a deliverer, the man Moses. Moses led them out of Egypt and brought them into this land. He says, "Now look at everything that I have done for you, and look at where you are now. Now as you get into this land that floweth with milk and honey, take the firstfruits of this land, and you bring it back to Me as an offering of thanksgiving."

Is not that basically exactly what God does with us, or what we should be doing, where we are supposed to get in this book every day, and we are supposed to read about what God has done for us? We are supposed to be reminded about what God did for us, about the sacrifice that He made for us, about the bondage of sin that we were under, the lives that we were bound to, the drugs and the alcohol and the sinful lives, and just the dead end that we were heading to. Yet He pulled us out of that. God Himself gave His very best. Jesus Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ, His own Son, who lived a perfect and sinless life. Yet He was willing to go and die on the cross and become sin for us so that we could be saved and that we could have eternal life and we could have forgiveness from our sins. That is what God did for us. That is what Christ did for us. Our job is to spend every day, every minute that we possibly can, pouring through the pages of this book, which says it is God's mind. It is God's truth. It is God's heart. It is God telling us what He has done for us, how much He loves us. Then we come back to Him, and we are to give Him the firstfruits of everything that we have as a thanksgiving back to Him, just like Abel did. He gave His very best for us. The question we have to ask ourselves is, why so often in our lives do we make Him settle for less than our very best?

Psalms 18:3

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

You know He is worthy to be praised. Amen? I tell you what, one of my favorite things when I get to come up here on Sunday mornings, and I am not trying to embarrass anybody, but I am going to call out Zach and William. Not in a bad way. On Sunday mornings, when I get to get up here and lead music, one of my favorite things to do is when Zach and William are up here hollering and shouting, and sometimes they might, Lord, God forbid, sometimes they put their hand up in the air because they are just excited about what God has done for them. They are just excited about how much they love the Lord. I like to look at some of you guys and how uncomfortable you guys look with it. It is just really, really entertaining to me because it is amazing that when you have a child of God who loves God so much that he actually shouts out "Amen" when he is singing a song that is about his Savior and about what He did for him, that there are people that sit and get uncomfortable with that and look and say, "Oh, I do not know why he is doing that."

Now, I am not trying to turn us into a charismatic church, okay? So do not get me wrong. If they start speaking in tongues, I am kicking them out of here. I am sending them out. I am going to call the ushers up, and they are going to drag them out of here. But that is not what is going on. When we were at camp last summer, one of the nights, I think we made some people mad. I know we actually made some people mad because we put on a message that was from one of Ruckman's Bible blowouts down there in Florida, and it was Peacock from, most of you guys have heard of him, he has got a church down in Jacksonville, a great preacher. He preached this message down there, and oh my gosh, it is a great, great message. I mean, we were having a blast watching this thing, but he is basically, I do not even really remember what he started preaching about because about five minutes in, I think the thing went off the tracks, and he just went off on preaching on something. But the message was called, "It is Just Jesus." The whole idea of it was, you have somebody who had something done in their lives that was, you know, that got healed, and they are out shouting about it and getting excited, and everybody around them is like, "Stop, you know, it is just Jesus. It is just Jesus. What are you so excited about? Just calm down. You know, it is just Jesus." You watch this guy preach this thing, and he gets going, and there is this one line in there. He is like, "You know," he says, "Somewhere along the line, Baptists let the Charismatics take away our joy and our excitement from us because we get too afraid to shout out a little bit and tell people about what we think about the Lord because we do not want people to think that we are Pentecostals." He said, and I cannot say it the way he goes, but he is worked up into a lather, and he is like, "I ain't going to let no cotton picking Charismatic out shout me." I am like, "Oh my gosh, I love it." I was ready to jump out of the chair.

But the point is that Psalms 18:3, "I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised." We have got to look at our lives a little bit sometimes and see about how willing we are really to give praise to the Lord for what He has done for us. We talk about giving our best to the Lord, and it covers all aspects, and we will talk about all different aspects. But I will tell you guys, on Sunday mornings, I do not know what else could be going on more important than when we are singing songs to the Lord. You know, you have a whole hymnal that was written by men. It was written during an age where people were spilling their blood for the Lord Jesus Christ. We live in the

cushiest time period, the period of church history that exists. I think our problem is we just do not really have an appreciation for what God did for us. Those Israelites back there in Deuteronomy, God was reminding them. He is saying, "Let Me tell you, just in case you forgot, even though you just lived through it, everything that I did for you to get you out of where you were and put you where you are right now, you have a lot to be thankful for. You better take the first of the firstfruits of this land and give it back to Me to show Me how thankful you are for it."

We do this in every area of our lives. It is funny, God is the one that always gets shortchanged. But guys, everybody that is married out here, and you guys that are not married, you will learn this someday. You will go through this experience. But when there is company coming over to the house, it is like the whole world changes, right? "We have got company coming." Nobody can ever see your house look the way that it just looks. Understand that. The way that your house looks on Monday is not ever, people just are not ever supposed to see that. When you have company coming over, you have got to start like two days ahead of time. You have got to start cleaning. You have got to start cleaning things that you did not even know were dirty. You are going to clean stuff that you do not understand why you are cleaning it because nobody is ever going to see it.

I remember one time we had company coming over to actually stay at the house. That is a whole different, it is one thing when you have people, folks coming over for dinner, but when you have people coming over to stay at your house for three days, oh my gosh, you might as well just build a new house. You would be better off. I think it would be easier. Just build a new house when you have company coming, move the furniture in, and everything is set because everything is clean. The towels have to be folded and put just the right way in the linen closet. I am thinking I have been a house guest, I do not know how many times, and I have never looked in the linen closet at these people's houses. If I did, I certainly did not pour over it and say, "Oh my gosh, look. Those towels are not even lined up. The stacks are crooked, and the colors are not coordinated. I mean, there is like a white towel and a brown, oh my gosh, this is terrible." But no, you have to do these things. You have to prepare, you have to get things ready. You spend all of this time. You put the best dishes out on the dinner table. I do not know if this is as popular now, but when I grew up, we had a China cabinet. I do not know, like we do not, I guess we have one now, but we do not put, we do not have fine China. We do not own it. When I was a kid, you always had that, but you never used it. There was this one cabinet with these really fancy dishes that never really got used, except for super fancy occasions, I guess, when people come over. So you put the best dishes out. You put the best towels in the bathroom. You give them the best seat in the living room. You have somebody over to your house, you give up your chair. You say, "Please sit in this chair." Any other day of the week, the kids are sitting in the chair. You are yelling at them before you come in. They are like, "Well, what are you doing? What are you doing in my chair?" I kick the girls out of my spot all the time. I do not even feel bad about it. Even when they are sick, I am like, "I am sorry you do not feel good, but that is my spot. Just scoot yourself on down the other end of the couch and put your feet on my lap if you want to, but that is my spot."

So this is what we do. Yet when it comes to our relationship with God, He never gets, He never gets our best. We never, we never spend that kind of time worrying about cleaning ourselves up. It is interesting, we use the analogy talking about cleaning our house up when we have company over. God Himself uses that when He talks about how we should be thoroughly furnished unto good works. He talks about how as we build a relationship with the Lord and you get Bible principles into your life and into your world, that is the furnishings that you are putting in your house, which is the temple of God, the temple of the Holy Spirit living inside of you. A lot of us, even though we are Christians, we have Jesus living in an eight by eight concrete room. He is down in the corner of the basement because we have not put any furnishings in our house for Him to live in. We have no principles that we live by. We have no standard of holiness in our lives that we live our lives and that we operate by and to give God the Holy Spirit a comfortable place to live in, somewhere that He is actually going to enjoy being in. We drag Him into places that God would never want to be. We make Him watch things on TV that He would never want to watch. We make Him listen to music He would never want to listen to. We make Him hear jokes that come out of our own mouths that He would never want to hear. I throw myself in there with all of you guys. I am preaching to myself as much as I am anybody else. God deserves our very best. He gives us His very best. He gave us His very best.

I think of another thing, "left overnight." That is another thing I am very thankful we do not really have "left overnight" at our house. Jamie is kind of, she is a little bit of a germaphobe. So leftovers do not survive in our refrigerator very long. They get thrown away rather quickly. I am good with that because I grew up with like "left overnight." Usually, it seems like we had "left overnight" more often than we had "non-left overnight." I do not know how that is possible. But it seemed like every night during the week, it is like, "What is for dinner?" "Well, we have got, there is like three slices of meatloaf and there is like two salmon patties. And you know, there is like a little dish of spaghetti that was, you know, that was from Saturday. You can have that." I am like, "Gosh, really? Obviously, it was not very good the first time around. If it is left over now, nobody wanted it then. Why do you think I want it reheated?" I mean, thank the Lord for microwaves because at least you had a better way to heat stuff up. But it is amazing. Nobody says, "Praise the Lord, it is left overnight!" Right? But that is exactly what we do. That is exactly what we do to God when it comes to giving to Him of our time, when it comes to giving to God of our finances, when it comes to giving to God of our energy. He gets the leftovers. He gets, He literally gets what is left. We do everything that we want to do first. We buy everything that we want to buy first. We go everywhere that we want to go first. We do all the things that we want to do.

I mean, God, I am going to be on my knees for like two months trying to get right with God after this World Series run that the Royals made. My goodness. I have not watched two hours of baseball in the month of October in, you know, like twenty-nine years, I guess. I have watched so much baseball. My poor girls are like, you know, they do not even remember what channel the Disney Channel is on anymore, you know, because they have not been able to watch any of it. Look, I do not think God really cares if we watch the World Series, even though I think that might be why they lost game seven is because probably some of us watched a little bit too much of it. So I will take my share of the blame on that. But look, guys, the bottom line is this: God

requires our best. God deserves our best. You have heard it a million times before when it comes to your time, when it comes to your finances, when it comes to the things that you give to the Lord, do you give God what is right, or do you just give Him what is left? Because I was taught, and it does not mean that I always do it, but I was taught as a very young Christian, you give to God first, and then you do everything else after that. You give God what is right of your time, of your energy, of your finances, and then you figure out how to make everything else work after that. But so many times we turn it around, and we justify it in our minds. I have been there. I have done it. I am not trying to pretend like I am the perfect Christian. Far, far, far from it. I justify the things that I do just like you guys do. All of us do it.

2 Corinthians 9:6-7

But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

He wants us to give not grudgingly or of necessity. It says, "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart." When we give to the Lord, and again, it always sounds, I mean, I am saying finances because you cannot get around it when you talk about giving. That is one of the aspects of it. But it is a bigger concept than just that. It is our energy. It is our time. It is our devotion. It is all of those things. You have to purpose in your heart that you are going to give God what He deserves. You have to purpose in your heart every single day when you wake up in the morning, "I am going to give God today what He deserves today. I am going to give Him of my time and my energy what He wants and what He needs." Not just what I want to give Him, not just what I have left over at the end of the day. Because the thing is, even at that, how many times do you get to the end of the day, and He does not even get anything? Sometimes it is worse than just giving Him the leftovers. Sometimes it is nothing. Sometimes we go through the whole day, and we have not given God a second thought. We are lying in bed at night, and the only time that we think about Him is when we think about something that happened at work, and we need God to help us with it. So then we pray and we ask God to help us with this problem at work or with that. What a travesty that is. I mean, it just amazes me to think how often we do it, and what God must think when He is up there in heaven, and He hears those prayers come up to Him after what He did for us, after the sacrifice that He made for us. Then we come back with that, and all we ever do is come back with these selfish prayers. It is just tragic. So let us move on. We will move on from Abel. But learn the lesson from Abel, which is, "Don't be afraid to give God the very best that you have." God absolutely deserves it. He absolutely deserves the very best.

IV. Enoch: Don't Be Afraid to Walk with God

Now, let us move on to our second point. Our second man that we come across here in Hebrews 11, verse 5, is Enoch. From Enoch, we learn: Don't be afraid to walk with God when nobody else will. So Abel teaches us, "Don't be afraid to give God the very best you have." Enoch says, "Don't be afraid to walk with God when no one else will."

Hebrews 11:5

By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

Now, back in Genesis 5:24, where you see a mention and the verse where God actually took him, it says,

Genesis 5:24

And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.

What again, you talk about what God said about Abel. What an amazing and incredible testimony here about Enoch. I mean, if there is anything in the world, if I ever pass away and I have a tombstone somewhere, and I actually, I do not think that I will. Jamie is going to cremate me, I think. That is a story for another day. It is a funny one, though. But if I did, if I had a tombstone, I know it would not say this, but what I would want it to say would just to say, "He walked with God." I mean, that is basically what I mean, you know, he does not have a tombstone either because he just got to go. He is a picture of the church. He got raptured out before he died, just like we are all going to hopefully someday soon. But his epitaph, what was written about him after the fact, was, "Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him." Simple a sentence in the world. Yet I wonder how many of us will get to the end of our lives, and that could be a true statement that would be written about us. I wonder if God at the judgment seat of Christ will be able to say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." "That guy walked with Me his whole life. Yeah, he stumbled. Yeah, he made mistakes. Yeah, he had times where he is a little bit out of fellowship. But generally for his whole life, he walked with Me. He walked in the principles of My Word, and he served Me faithfully every single day of his life." That is all I want at the end. That is, I do not, I do not want, I do not want crowns and rewards. I mean, I want him just to the extent that I know that we get to give him back to him, you know, and I do not want to, I do not want to go in empty handed like the old hymn says. I just want to hear him say that, that, that, that he is proud of me, and that I did what I was supposed to do while I was down here, and that I was faithful.

I want to look at seven things here under this point, under this heading, about walking with God. Seven different principles, seven different aspects about our walk, about our walk with the Lord, and what it should be.

1. Walk by Faith 2 Corinthians 5:7

(For we walk by faith, not by sight:) It is funny that it says it this way. It says, "We walk by faith and not by sight." I think God is making a terrible assumption there. Because He says we do. Unfortunately, typically we do not. What that should say, and I am not that I am, please understand where I am coming from, I am not trying to correct the Word of God. But if it is going to be an accurate statement about us, it should say, "We should walk by faith and not by sight," because the reality is that most of us, and most times in our lives, do just the opposite. We walk by sight and not by faith. We only deal with what we can see. We only deal with what is right in front of us. We fret and we worry and we struggle. Every single day

is a fight because we just do not have faith that God is going to take care of us. The problem is, if you want to learn what the problem is with that, you have got to go back and you look at Israel, and you look at what Israel did because they have the same problem. I mean, you look at Israel when they, as you study through the passage of the Exodus, and they are out in the wilderness, and you look at all the things that God did for them in Egypt and departing the Red Sea to get them over and to be able to get them to the Promised Land. Even when they ultimately got there and they sent the spies over to spy the land, they freak out because, you know, the devil did his work while they were in Egypt, and he put all these nations in their way, and he put these giants in the land, and they are like, "What in the world? I mean, I think I would rather go back to Egypt, you know, I mean, at least we had food there, and there are giants here. And how are we going to, how are we going to do this?" They completely lost sight of what God had done for them just a few years before, just a handful of years before, to get them out of Egypt in the first place. That is where our problem is. When we face a problem today, the biggest struggle, and I struggle with this, my biggest struggle when I face an obstacle that is in my way is that I forget what God did for me five years ago when I faced the exact same thing. I forget that God brought me through that, and I sit and I fret, and I am doing all this hand wringing, and I am worried, and I am stressed. It is like, "It is right there in front of you, moron, you know, look at what I did for you when you did, when you went through this last time. Look at what I did for you ten years ago when you had this struggle in your life. Look what I did for you last week. Look what I did for you on the cross to save you from your sins in the first place. Do not forget." We know that that is one of the, that is one of our infirmities is that we forget. But He tells us about that. He puts that in there for us to remind us that we have got to operate by faith. The only way you can operate by faith is by two things: one, reading the principles in this book and putting them in your lives and believing what God said. But number two, looking at the past things in your life, looking at the struggles that you have been through, looking at the trials and the tribulations that you have gone through, and how God brought you through that, and saying, "God, I believe if You did it back then, as long as I am still alive, You have still got something that You want to do for me and through me." So I believe that You are going to help me with this, and then just get out of the way and let God do what He wants to do. But we try to manipulate our lives. We try to manipulate our circumstances, and we just cannot learn how to walk by faith the way that Enoch did. Right there in Hebrews 11:6, the very next verse from where we had been, it says, Hebrews 11:6

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. You know, we talk about the study of the things that please God. If you have never been through that study, you certainly should because so many Christians are walking around. We talk about wanting to get to the judgment seat of Christ and have Him say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." Yet we never got into the book and find out what actually pleases Him. We did not come into church on Sundays, pleases God. Not to say that He is not up there upset that we are at church. He certainly is glad we are here. But the Bible says nothing about that pleasing God. The Bible says that is the basic thing that we are expected to do as Christians. God is not impressed when we get up in the morning and go to church. That is not going above and

beyond the call of duty. That is something we are supposed to do. He says, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together." We are supposed to do that every day. But you have got to study those things out. You have got to learn those things. He says, "Without faith, it is impossible to please Him." So you can get every single one of those things down. You can learn every one of them that it says that will please God. But if you do not operate by faith, you cannot please Him. It does not, it does not matter. You have to learn to operate by faith.

2. Walk in the Light¹ 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. So not only do we walk by faith, we need to walk in the light. As Christians, we are way too comfortable in the darkness, I think sometimes, if we are honest with ourselves. We know that in the church age that it is compared to the nighttime, and the second coming of Christ, which is right around the corner, is the dawn of the sun coming up, the rising in the east. That is the Lord coming back at the second coming. So we know we are living in the darkness. All right. So what is that light? That light that we walk in is the light of the Word of God that we are supposed to walk in every day. But we get too comfortable just walking around in the darkness of this world. Then we get surprised when we run into problems. Friday night, I have got to tell you, I have got to tell you guys this story. Friday night was Halloween. So everybody is out trick-or-treating with the kids. We had a little group, and we had our girls, and they had some friends with them. We are out around our neighborhood. Well, we get, of course, clear other side of the neighborhood, and Macy is cold. So Macy is done, and somebody needs to take her home. It is like, "All right, that is cool. I will walk her back home, and I will catch up with you guys." So I take her back to the house so she can warm up, and then I am going to rush back out and go catch up with everybody. Well, I come up with the brilliant idea, instead of walking all the way up the street and going around, I am going to cut through the neighbor's yard, and I will get to them that way. So this will work out well. Right as I get, I am like halfway between these two houses, and I have, it is pitch black. There are no lights around anywhere. I stepped in some, it was like they had turned their hose on three days beforehand and never shut it off. I stepped in like some muddy sinkhole that literally they probably have a footprint that is like six inches deep in their yard. They are right now trying to figure out where it came from. I am like, "What?" I mean, I have got like my pant leg is wet. My sock is, literally, I stepped in a puddle of water. But it was grass, like I stepped through the yard into the water table. Anyway, so I am like, I did not cuss, all right, just so you know. But I was not, I was not happy. So I go back home, and I am walking barefoot. I take my shoe and sock off. I have got to change. Now I still have got to do all this so I can go try to catch up with everybody. I thought to myself as I reached into my pocket, I had a flashlight that had been sitting there the whole time that I put in there before we went out trick-or-treating. I was like, "It might be, you know, it might be a good idea to have a flashlight at some point tonight. So I am going to put one in there." Yeah. Then right then it hit me. You know, that is how we walk through our lives. We have got a flashlight. That word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. We have got it. We have got it. It should be in our pocket. If we have hidden it in our heart like we should, we have got every principle that God ever wants us to have to be able to serve Him, to be able to get through our problems in life. It is right

there. The flashlight is right there. Then we go walking between the two dark houses and step in a mud puddle and think, "Well, how in the world did that happen?" Turn on your flashlight, dummy. It is right there. If I was looking, I am pretty sure I would have seen the swamp that was between the two houses. If I might have gone around to the other house or something, I had to jump over it or something. But either way, I would not be sitting at home with a wet sock and a wet shoe trying to figure out how I am going to get all this cleaned up later on when I get back home. Walk in the light. He gives it to you. But you have got to dig it out. You have got to get the principles out of this book, and you have got to get them into your world.

3. Walk in Truth³ John 1:4

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth. What a great verse that is. Now, I do not think he is talking about his physical children, their spiritual children, certainly. But that is something that would be a true statement about my kids is, you know, when I get older, I hope to be able to say that, that I would have no greater joy in my life than to hear that my children walk in truth. Hopefully, I will see them walk in truth every single day. But that is the testimony. That is what you want. That is what the people that you work with, the people that you disciple, your kids that you raise, is you want them to walk in truth, that everything that they do, every decision that they make, is governed not by what I told them, but it is governed by a biblical principle that says, "This is what I do in those situations." Now, hopefully, I have taught them those biblical principles if I am doing what I am supposed to do. But ultimately, they have got to get to the point where they are standing on their own two feet, because when they are out and facing the fire, these young kids that are in junior high and they are in high school, we are not with them every day. So we have to lay that groundwork, put those principles into their lives. So when they face those things that they can make those right decisions. It is not just about saying, "Oh, well, yeah, here is this now. Okay, what am I supposed to do here?" No, it has to get to the point where you know the book so well, and you know the principle so well that you operate on those biblical principles without even thinking about it, that your life is literally governed by those principles. It is not that you have got to call and look when you are young. Yeah, of course, you face a problem. You have got to call somebody up and say, "I do not know what to do with this." And somebody gives you a verse, and somebody gives you something to help you get through it. But you have got to grow to the point where you do not need to do that anymore, where the Holy Spirit is the one that you call up, and He brings it to your remembrance, and He says, "Here is what you do. This is the verse. This is the principle that governs this situation." Then boom, you go and you do it. That is how you walk in truth. Your walk is the things that you are doing, the places that you are going, who you are. Truth has to be at the very fabric of what we are and who we are.

4. Walk in Wisdom Colossians 4:5

Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. We have people in our lives all around us every day that are without wisdom, that are just, they are just without, they are without everything. Our job is to walk in wisdom towards them, redeeming the time. We do not have very much time left. We do not know how many more days that we have left. We do not know how many more hours, how many more minutes we have left until God

takes us home. Our job is to walk in wisdom, the wisdom of that Word of God, and have that be something that other people see and that they are drawn to so that they can come to us and ask us questions about why we have the approach that we have, why do we have the joy in our life that we have when the whole world is literally crumbling around us? I mean, society is a disaster right now. The Middle East is a mess and is never getting any better. Everything, the Ebola scare. I mean, you have all these different crises going on around the world. Yet we have the ability to walk around with a smile on our face and with joy in our heart because we know that we are not long for this world. Someday soon, we are going to go home to be with the Lord. But if we are not walking in wisdom, people do not know that about us. They do not know that we are somebody that they can come to to get an answer from because we are too busy walking in the darkness of the world. You have got to have that light shine in it.

5. Walk Circumspectly Ephesians 5:15

See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise: Circumspectly simply means to walk cautiously, looking around in all directions for danger. This is where we get the principle, "Look ahead, look around, look behind." You have heard Bob say it a million times before. This is something that comes with maturity. I laugh about this all the time with my girls. It is at the grocery store more than anything else because there are a million people around, and everybody is grumpy at the grocery store for some reason. I do not know why. Everybody, I mean, you like, I like, I walk past the grocery store, and I am like, "Excuse me," and I get out of their way, and they give me a dirty look like I was. I am like, "I am the one that is getting out of the way. I am saying, 'Excuse me,' and you are being." I still understand it. So anyway, so I am always telling the girls, "Girls, you have got to watch around. Like, look around your surroundings, okay?" Because they get, and they are just goofy. They are bouncing off the, around pulling stuff off of this and throwing in the cart while we are not looking and all this different kind of stuff. They are constantly getting in people's way. I am like, "Girls, you have got to look where you are going. You have got to pay attention." Little kids just do not do that. Kids see what is right in front of them, and that is all they see. They do not see what is to the side. That is why, as parents, when you have really little ones, you are constantly watching them. I think about Zack and Jenny with Brady, when they are at that age, we actually, I was dumb enough to take our kids to Disney World when Mackenzie was that age. Oh my gosh, I just like, I should have shot myself in the face about two minutes into it. One year old, one. I do not ever take a one-year-old to Disney World. It is not, it is like you are going to kill yourself because all, I mean, she is walking, and all she wants to do is just walk around, and there are a thousand people. So you are just like following her around like this because she says she does not run into things, does not get knocked over, and does not get trampled. That is what you do because they all they can see is what is right in front. They do not have the ability to look around. But as you grow and you mature, you begin to sense things around you. A teenager struggles with this when they first learn how to drive. You have to sort of broaden the view. You have to use your peripheral vision, and you have to anticipate other cars that are maybe going to come over into your lane so you do not cause accidents or have accidents and things like that. That is the way, that is the way it goes. As you become an adult, hopefully, you learn how to do that. Spiritually, it is the same thing. But there is danger all around us in our walk. There are snares, there are mud holes that you are

going to step in if you do not have your flashlight. We have to walk with our head on a swivel because you do not know where the danger is coming from. We have to be looking around not only for ourselves but for the protection of others. We have got to watch out for each other. We cannot afford to get into this silo mentality where it is like I am worried about me and what I have got going on, and everybody else is on their own. No, my job is to look around and look ahead and look behind and see what is going on and see what is happening around us.

6. Walk Honestly Romans 13:13-14

Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. So walk honestly. This is something that you think will come natural for Christians. But it is amazing how some Christians can be the most dishonest people around. What a terrible testimony that we have sometimes where in other aspects of our lives, we are just, we are just not honest. We just do not have a good report about us. That not only hurts our own testimony, but that hurts the cause of Christ. It hurts the Lord. We should be, we should be honest. People should know that what we say is the truth, and that not only do we mean what we say, but we say what we mean, and we are going to do what we say. As Christians, you have to have that aspect of your walk. We have to have, we have to have honesty about the things that we do. In verse 14, He tells us how you do it. He says, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh." What causes us to get into this area where this gray area where we become dishonest about things is we make, we make provision for the flesh. We do not put on the Lord Jesus Christ. We get up and we begin to justify things that we do. Bob was talking about it in people ministry not long ago, or maybe, maybe not even mentioned it yesterday. It is situational ethics. The ends justify the means as long as ultimately we get done what we need to get done, we can do it however we want to get there. No, no, the Bible says, "Walk honestly." "Walk honestly" is, that is simple. That is straightforward. The ends do not justify the means. You have got to do it, and you have got to do it the right way.

7. Walk Worthy Ephesians 4:1

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, Colossians 1:10

That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; That is kind of the culmination of all of the other ones. You get all these things in your lives, and you are going to walk worthy of that vocation wherewith you have been called. But we have to view it that way. You have to have the right attitude about it. Too many times church is just something that we do. We get saved, and then we just go to church, and it is cool. We do not look at it as a vocation that we have been called to. God has called us to do something. He has called us to do work. Actually, we are going to get into that on our next point. But we have got to walk worthy of that. There is a certain way that we need, that we need to carry ourselves. We expect that we never really get it, but we expect that out of our leaders in society, police officers and politicians and things like that, they hold, they hold places of high esteem. Professional athletes are put up

on a pedestal, and you like those guys to do the right thing and not set a bad example for people. As Christians, we should be smart enough to make sure our kids are not looking at those kinds of people for role models and examples. But you hear your society complain about it all the time that, "Oh, this athlete went and did this, and he beat his wife, and that is just, it is horrible," and it is horrible, but those guys are role models, and everybody, and everybody looks at them. But they do not, there are so many people they do not walk worthy of that. There is a responsibility that comes with being put up in a higher place where people look at you, and as Christians, that is what God wants to be able to do with us, not put us on a pedestal from a standpoint of we are better than everybody else, and people should, you know, reverence us somehow. That is not that at all. But God wants to be able to put us in a place where people are looking at us, and they view our lives, and there should be something about our lives that they see that is different than other people. If we do not have these different things about our walk in place, then it is not going to be different. We are going to be just like everybody else. We are going to look just like everybody in the world. We are going to look like all of these other people. There is going to be nothing that stands out about us that is going to glorify God in any way. So from Enoch, we learn, "Don't be afraid to walk with God when nobody else will."

V. Noah: Don't Be Afraid to Work for God

Now, let us quickly move along to our third one. Our third one here is Noah. From Noah, we learn: Don't be afraid to work for God when nobody else will.

Hebrews 11:7

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

God not only has something He wants us to be, but He has something that He wants us to do. See, our walk is really about what God wants us to be. Our walk is about over there in Romans chapter 8, being conformed to the image of Christ. It is that we should be Christlike in everything that we do, everywhere that we go, every day of our lives. But it is not just that God has something that He wants us to do. He has got a work that He has called us to.

1 Corinthians 15:58

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

He says that work of the Lord that we are to be in, He says, "always abounding." That means there is more than you know what to do with. If something is abounding, it is, you know, it is coming out of your ears. Our work that we do for the Lord should be always abounding. There should be no end to what we do for the Lord. Noah back here prepared an ark. You guys know the story of Noah. He spent, he spent 100 years. God told him it was going to rain. Nobody knew what rain was. Tells him he has got to build a boat because He is going to flood the earth. It is

like, "What in the world is that? What are you talking about?" He spent years and years and years and years building this ark.

If you look over at 2 Timothy chapter 2, verses 20-21, it says,

2 Timothy 2:20-21

But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

Notice how it said that Noah prepared an ark. Over here, it says that we are to be prepared unto every good work.

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.

There is some preparation that goes into what we need to do for God. The work that Noah did to build that ark was in preparation for something that was coming. There was a flood that was coming that was going to ultimately save his family, but he had to do some prep, some preparing to get to that point. Our job is the same thing. We have got to get into this book, be a workman, and do some preparation for what God has for us, what God wants us to do. We have got to have a handle on that book if we are going to do a work for the Lord.

If you go back to Nehemiah, there is a great verse back here where they are, you know, they are rebuilding back here in Nehemiah. They are working on the wall of the city. In Nehemiah 4:17, it says,

Nehemiah 4:17

They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon.

If that is a picture and an example right there of what every one of us should be today as a Christian, that one of our hands should have a hold of the work, one of our hands should be wrought in the work, doing whatever it is that God is doing at that moment in time, and the other hand holding a weapon. That is how we get through life every day. That is how we are to be. That is how they were back there in Nehemiah because they could have been attacked at any moment. So they are working with one hand while they have got their sword in the other hand. That is where we are. That is where we are from a spiritual standpoint. We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers. We know that we fight in a spiritual warfare, but we still have a job that God has for us to do. We cannot allow ourselves to be distracted with the fight that is going on and not get the work done that needs to be done. So you have got to do both at the same time. You have got to have that sword in your hand while you are doing the work with the other hand. But if you have not spent the time preparing, if you have not

been a workman, like it says over there in Timothy, "Study to shew thyself approved, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," then you do not have the ability to get the work done the way that God wants you to do.

Now, notice something else. It said back there in Hebrews, by doing the work, it said, "Noah condemned the world" by doing the work that he did.

Romans 14:7

For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

You have got to understand the world was watching Noah throughout this whole time. It says over in, I might be getting ahead of myself here, it is probably later on. Yeah, I am getting ahead of myself. We will get to that point in just a second. But the world was watching. Maybe, you know, this terrible movie about Noah that came out, what was that, last year or whatever? I do not know if you guys saw it. I mean, it is all right. It is worth seeing. It was nonsense. But it was still, you know, it was okay. But all the stupid rock people and all that kind of stuff. I mean, throw that stuff out the window. But the other thing that they, you know, that they had wrong that I think is important for us to understand what was really going on in Noah's day and age. I mean, Noah was basically in that movie. He is like out in the middle of nowhere. There is nobody around him, and he is just building this ark in the middle, in the middle of the woods, and that is not really what it was like. The Bible says, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be at the coming of the Son of Man." Okay, well, what that basically says is you look at the way the world is today. How many people there are on the earth today? That is about what it was like in Noah's time. I guarantee you, he was not off in some remote location building the ark, and nobody saw it, and nobody knew what was going on. He was on the local news at six o'clock and six thirty. Fox News is reporting on old Noah. He is building his ark. It has never rained before, but he says it is going to rain. I mean, I promise you the whole world was laughing at him. It says that he took about one hundred years building this ark for the work. The world was watching what Noah was doing. Now, the tragedy is, from the world's standpoint, there are only eight people that ended up getting on the ark, but it did not dissuade Noah from doing the job that God had called him to do. He still did what he was supposed to do.

Romans 14:7, I read a second ago, "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." People are watching what you do. God has placed people in your lives around you at work, your friends, your neighbors, family members that are looking at you and are watching your lives and are seeing what God is doing in your life. They take notice of it. Maybe they make fun of you for it. Like I said, I guarantee you the world was making fun of Noah for what he was doing. They thought he was a complete fool idiot for building this giant boat. But the laughing subsided, I bet, just a little bit when they started noticing all these animals just heading that way for some unknown reason without anybody guiding and directing them. I guarantee you when that first raindrop fell, there was a whole lot of people trying to, you know, trying to find Noah's address, you know, trying to look it up. Obviously, at that point, it was too late. But we have to put ourselves out there and live a righteous life like Noah did so the world can see it and so they can be drawn to it and so they can be convicted by it. It said back there that Noah condemned the

world by building that ark. You know, our job is to preach, is to preach the truth. But God uses us in our testimony if it is correct and if it is biblical to condemn the world at the same time. God is going to use us in our lives at the Great White Throne judgment when He stands before people and He is getting ready to cast them into the lake of fire and say, "You had this person, this person, this person, and this person that I put into your life that lived a righteous life. They obeyed My Word. They told you about Me. They told you about My Son. They told you what He did for you. And you chose to reject it. Based on that, that is how I can very easily cast you into the lake of fire because you had the opportunity." Everybody in the world knew what Noah was doing. Everybody in the world knew he was building an ark, and everybody in the world knew that they could have come and gotten on it if they wanted to. But they chose to mock, and they chose to scoff, and they chose to laugh, just like people in the world do today based on what we do and based on the truth that we preach. But our job is just to preach it. Our job is just to give it to them.

Titus 2:12

Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

We have to have a sober, righteous, and godly life in this present world because this world is going to be looking at us every single day. But we have to be around them and living that way to be able to reach them. Noah did not participate in the world's sins, I guarantee you, but he was around it every day. He was, he was around the filth and the muck, but he did not get involved in it. That is the way that we are supposed to live our lives. We are going to be around it every day, but we do not live it. We do not get into it with the world.

In 2 Peter 2:5, it says that Moses was a preacher of righteousness. So we know not only was he building this ark this whole time, he was preaching righteousness to the world. He was, he was laying it down and preaching it. It is just that they all chose to reject it. That is what we are supposed to be doing. Our job is to live a righteous life, but without becoming self-righteous like the Pharisees are. Noah had this down perfectly. Noah was in the world, but not of the world. He did not live like them. He was, he was separated, and he was doing a work for God, and he was preaching the book to them the whole time. God used him in that way. He used him to condemn the world based on the righteousness that he preached.

VI. Abraham: Don't Be Afraid to Wander for God

Now, let us go on to our last point here. We will talk about Abraham, and Abraham. We are going to wrap up here in a few minutes. From Abraham, we learn: Don't be afraid to wander for God when nobody else will.

Hebrews 11:8

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

Notice that word "after." It says, "When he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance." So God says there he was called to go to a place that basically after he went there, he was going to receive it for an inheritance. Now, you talk about going out on faith, and it says, "And he went out, not knowing whither he went." So how many of us would do that? God says, "All right, I have a place I want you to go to. I will tell you, you know, I will tell you how to get there when I, when you need to know. But I just want you to go. And you know, when you get there, I will give you an inheritance. You are going to inherit that land." I am not so sure. That does not sound like a really great deal to me. I mean, usually we like things a little bit more in concrete, which goes back to we talked about earlier about living by faith. But that is what Abraham, that is what Abraham had to do. God basically called Abraham to go wander and to go to a place, and Abraham did it. He did it on faith. He did it simply because God told him to do it and because God wanted him to do it.

When you do not know where you are going, that is a difficult place to be in. But you have to understand that God does know where you are going. God does know what He has in store for you. When we get saved, we are called to go somewhere. We are called to do something. Abraham was called to go somewhere, but he did not necessarily know where he was called to go. When we get saved, the Bible says God calls us to do a work. God calls us to go someplace. God calls us to wander for Him. But He does not tell us right away where exactly we are going to wander to, where exactly we are going to end up. He just says, "Go." He says, "Get out, get on your two feet, start walking, and go wander. Go do something for Me."

When you study the lives of great men and great Christians, down through the Philadelphia Church period, probably one of the men that embodies this principle as well as anybody is David Livingstone. You guys know the story about him. You have heard Bob talk about him before, and you probably read about him yourselves. But he had a tremendous burden for the continent of Africa. It is written about him and his life and his ministry that in his ministry and in his life, he traveled twenty-nine thousand miles, putting out the gospel and preaching the Word of God, wandering for God, basically doing a work for the Lord. You guys know how the story ends. He says that when he died, they sent his body back to his homeland to be buried. But before they did it, they cut out his heart, and they buried it in Africa because that is where his heart truly was. That is where he was dedicated and committed to. So they buried his heart in Africa. I wonder, do we have that kind of burden for people that God has put into our lives, the kind of burden that he had? Think about that twenty-nine thousand miles. I mean, you probably log twenty-nine thousand miles like flying in about like a month or so. So it is a little bit different day and age from back then. But you think about when he was living, basically, virtually going on foot. Twenty-nine thousand miles over the course of your life. It is an incredible and it is amazing thing.

I got thinking about it. I was talking to Woody last night, and he has got one of those bracelets. I do not know what it, I do not know what that thing is called. "Bracelet." Thanks. What is it called? Nike FuelBand. All right. It is pretty cool. It is like an electronic thing. It probably does a lot of different things. But we were talking about how it keeps track of your steps. So at the end of the day or any time you want to look, you look, because we should walk more than we do.

You guys can tell that by looking at me. I do not walk as much as I should. But I was joking about it. I said, "If I wore that thing, I would probably be depressed. I would get to the end of the day and look at it. It is like twenty-nine steps. That is really not, that is not very good. I went to the bathroom two times today, and that is it." So you get those things, and it is a health thing, right? You can keep track of how many steps you take every day and, you know, remind yourself to walk more. But I got thinking about that. You know, we know that the Bible says that God has a bottle for our tears that He collects, you know, and that, and I have heard Bob preach before that, you know, we may get to the judgment seat of Christ someday and get to see the tears that God collected and what they were cried over. What a kind of scary concept and a scary thought that is of all this nonsensical and stupid things that we cry over over the course of our lives versus things that really matter. Things that, things that God gives us out of this book, you know, people that God gives to us in our lives, things that people do for us, people that, you know, family members that, you know, that get saved and the things that are really, you know, really worth crying about.

But I got thinking after talking to Woody about this bracelet, and I wonder, you know, what if God has one, you know, one of those bracelets? It is a spiritual one. We cannot see it, but we all have it on. We have had it on since the day we got saved. We are going to get up there someday at the judgment seat of Christ, and we are going to hit a button, and we are going to find out. We are going to see all the steps that we took in our life. We are going to see everywhere we went, all the different, all the different places that we went, and He is going to categorize them. How many steps we took doing something for ourselves, and how many steps we took where we were out wandering for God doing what we should be doing. How many, how many different steps of our lives every day are for our own self-serving purposes versus how many steps we go out walking for the Lord and wandering for the Lord and letting Him lead us where He wants us to go.

There is a tremendous freedom in wandering for God. You know, think about, I think about guys. You see them out on the highway, you know, on their Harleys out in their packs or even just, I think about it more when I see somebody by themselves just out on their bike, and they are just riding, and I know, and I know there are guys they go out and they just go riding, and they just go who knows where, and just get on their bike. I guess I wish I had the time and the money to do that and a wife that let me get a motorcycle. But that is one that is never really going to happen. But you know, that is what they love about that. That is just the freedom of it, right? They are out. They go anywhere they want to. They have got the wind at their back, and it is, and they are, and they are just out, right? But spiritually, that is the way that we should be with. That is the way we should be with the Lord. You know, we should just be out on the road going wherever it is that God wants us, wherever He leads us with the wind at our back. The Holy Spirit.

John 3:8

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

Every single one of us should be that way. Every single one of us should be like that guy that just gets out on his bike and just, and just rides and just feels the wind because not necessarily knowing where he is going that day. He is just going to end up wherever he ends up spiritually. God should have that much control over our lives that we just go out in the wind. The Holy Spirit, the wind is at our back, blowing us where He wants us to blow, sending us wherever He wants us to send us, and then being faithful to do what He wants us to do when we get there. But see, there is a counterpart to this verse when we talk about wandering for God.

Proverbs 14:12

There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

Now, the problem is we think that we know the way. We think that we have our own way that we can go, and that we are going to, we are going to be just fine. Now you say, "Well, okay, that is all well and good. But Proverbs 14:12, that is talking about an unsaved man." And I agree that that is talking about an unsaved man. But look two verses later,

Proverbs 14:14

The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways: and a good man shall be satisfied from himself.

So there is your verse about the way as applying to you as a Christian. There is, I have never met a lost person that was a backslider. It is impossible to backslide as a lost person because you are already, you are in the, you know, you are already in the gutter. But as a Christian, Christians are the ones that backslide. We are the ones that we get the truth. We get saved. We get freed from our sin. Yet then we slide back into the end of that old world. We slide back into our old ways. It says, "The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways." What happens when we start to backslide? We get filled with our own ways. We start thinking that we know where we should go. We know what we should do. We know where we should be. We know how to do things better than God does. We are going to start manipulating, controlling our own circumstances in our own lives instead of just letting God take us wherever He wants to take us. When we try to take the reins and we try to take hold of our lives and where we are, that is when we start to backslide. That is when we start to run into problems because we become filled with our own ways. You see, God wants us to go some places. He wants us to do some things, but we have got to trust Him to be able to get there. Like we said earlier, we have got to live by faith.

I mentioned it before, Hebrews 11:6, "Without faith, it is impossible to please him."

Romans 14:23

And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

This is, you know, there are some verses that you just wish you could sort of take out of the Bible. This is one of those. Romans 14:23 says, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." We all have interesting definitions of sin today. When we first got saved, I think we had a pretty realistic concept of it. Pretty much I knew when I got saved, everything that I did was sinful before I got

saved. But then once we get saved, and then you start to serve the Lord for a while, and you get in the book a little bit, and you start to get some Bible under your belt, you start to learn some things. It is funny how our definition of sin changes from God's definition. All of a sudden, sin becomes all that stuff that all those other people do. "I do not really do any of that anymore. I do not really commit sin. I mean, I am a Christian. I am at church every Sunday, and I am in every Thursday night. I would not miss anything. And I have got to restart, and I do all of these things, and I read my Bible, and I understand, you know, all lots of Bible doctrine and lots of Bible truth." So, you know, that, you know, Romans 14:23 says, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." So you can be doing all of those things that I just mentioned. You can be teaching the Word of God. You can be preaching in front of church someday. If you are not doing it by faith, then you are sinning just as much as the guy that got drunk and spent the night before throwing up in his toilet all night long. Because the Bible says that whatsoever is not of faith is sin. As Christians, we love to change the definitions of things to suit ourselves so that we can justify our lives and go about doing things the way that we want to go about doing them. But God has a way of taking those things and bringing those back around and saying, "No, look, here is what the book says. If you are going to be serious about serving Me, then here is what it says. You better learn how to operate by faith. You better do the things that you do by faith, not by sight, because whatsoever is not of faith is sin." It is just as simple as that.

So Abraham teaches us a great principle that we need to wander for God when nobody else will. He went out when God said, "You are going to go to a place, and when you get there, after you get there, you are going to inherit something." He did not even know where he was going. But just because his relationship with God was enough to go out on faith and to go and do what God told him to do. So give God the very best that you have. Give God what He deserves. Give Him what is right. Give Him what He deserves, not what is left, like Abel did. Walk with God when nobody else will walk with God like Enoch did. We live in a world where nobody wants to walk with God today. So be like Enoch and walk with Him when nobody else will. We live in a world when nobody wants to work for God today. So work for God while you have the time to do it when nobody else will like Noah did. Then finally, wander for God when nobody else will like Abraham did. Learn how to operate by faith. Learn how to go out there. Do what God has asked you to do. No questions asked. Just say, "Lord, if that is where You want me to go, I am going to go there. And if I need to change directions mid-course, then the wind is going to blow the right direction, and it is going to send me in the direction that I need to go." But you have got to let go of the reins to be able to get to that point. You have got to quit trying to manipulate the circumstances, and you have got to go out on faith.

All right, let us pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, we love You, and we thank You for the Lord Jesus again. Lord, just thank You for the opportunity to be able to come and preach this message today. I pray that and I hope that it was a blessing. Lord, I know it certainly was for me in being able to go through it for myself. So many different aspects of it, Lord, where if I am honest with myself that I am not always faithful the way that I should, Lord. I do not always have the walk that I should have. I do not always work for You the way that I should work, Lord. And I do not always give You my best

the way that Abel does, Lord. I certainly do not always wander the way that I should and let go of the reins and really just operate by faith the way that You taught us through Abraham. Lord, so I just pray that You will help all of us to be able to take this message today and look within ourselves, look within our lives, Lord, and really just be honest about things. If we have got to change some things about our lives, help us to do that. Help us so each of us individually can have the relationship with You that we need to have, Lord. And that as a church body, that we can function together and serve You and accomplish the work that You set before us as a church and that we can be found faithful that day that You come and bring us home to be with You. We love You. We ask all these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

All right. Take a few minutes, maybe five minutes or so. Come on up here for everybody that is going on to restart.