

Proverbs 8:22-31

Sunday 8/24/2014

SEC: Introduction to Deep Bible Study

If you have your Bibles this morning, I would like to invite you to turn back to Proverbs chapter 8. I told you last week, if you remember, that there has to come a time in your life as a Christian, if you are ever going to really do anything for God, that you have to start taking the Word of God seriously and start getting into it and studying it. We do not push anybody to do that around here. We just teach the Bible, and it is a natural flow in your life if that is what you want.

Today, we are going to get into the meat of the Word of God. Last week, I purposely gave you an introduction on this chapter so you would have a better handle on it when we got into it this week, because as I told you, this, without a doubt, is probably the deepest passage anywhere in the Scriptures. There will not be a lot of milk here, yet there will be some stuff that you can get out of it.

I am a pretty uncomplicated guy. I am not very smart in things, and I have to work hard at learning things. I think, if I remember correctly, I think I was the only kid in the sixth grade who had a driver's license. I have to work at learning things, and I am no different than you are. I was not gifted with some superior intelligence that makes it easy for me. That was a good thing for me, and I think it is a good thing for anybody, because it forced me then to—the Bible did not come easy for me. It forced me to look for alternatives and avenues of learning the Scripture that made it easier for me to grasp. For 25, 30 years of my life, that is what I did. I tried to learn the Bible, but I had to put it in understandable formats for me.

I am just like you, and the great blessing in that is because you and I are much alike, it helps you learn the Bible because I can use those same basic formats. That is what I want to do today, even though this is a very complicated passage. I will tell you right now, if you are an inspirational kind of person, you probably had to just go to your iPhone and get on an app here and play a game for the next 45 minutes or so. But the Bible says that strong meat belongs to strong Christians. That is what we are here to build, from our little kids growing up to our youth group, to the adults, to the older folks in our church.

SEC: The Deity of Christ and God's Mysteries

Last week, we had an introduction to, as I have already said, probably the deepest passage in the Bible, Proverbs chapter 8, verses 22 through 31. It is one of the most profound places in all of the Bible on the deity of Christ, simply who Christ was and where Christ came from. When you start to talk with people, invariably that is the question you are going to get. People wonder where God came from. They wonder where God—it is hard for them to grasp eternity. I am not saying that this passage explains all that, but I am telling you this, that this passage helps put it into a context for you.

You noticed that last week, one of the things that we did by design was we defined some very important terms that you should know and understand now.

- We defined what it means for Christ to be called the Son of God. We know now from John 5:18 that means that He was very God.
- We also now understand the term "begotten of God." We saw John 1:18, Acts 13:33, and Hebrews 1:5 that the begotten of Christ deals with His first coming of Christ, nowhere back in eternity.
- We also saw that Christ was not a begotten God, but was very God Himself. I showed you the verses in 1 John 5:6-7 and Hebrews 1:8.
- We now probably have a pretty good understanding of the term "the manifestation of God" because we talked about that and how that Christ came forth out of the Godhead.

This is what Proverbs chapter 8, verses 22 and 31, is talking about. It all centered around the seven mysteries given to the church. I do not know if you know this or not, but within the Bible, there is a natural system of sevens. Seven in the Bible is God's perfect number. He does everything by sevens. It is no great mystery that when God wants to lay out the Bible, He does it through a system of sevens.

The Bible talks about that there are seven things that a Christian should not be ignorant of. We went over them many, many times. When you look at those and understand those, those are the exact seven things that most Christians are ignorant of. You could not find most Christians that could lay out for you the seven mysteries. We teach it around here all the time. The Bible says that we are to be stewards of the mysteries of God. But then you go on with that. You will find in the Bible there are seven judgments. You will find in the Bible there are seven resurrections. You will find in the Bible there are seven baptisms. When you put all of it together and it unfolds itself and lays itself out, this is how you learn the Word of God.

SEC: Christ as the Perfect Model and Ambassador

We also saw the manifestation of Christ to the world and how it was many models for us as Christians in a perfect way. In the Bible, there are many men and women who we can learn much from, from studying their lives and their relationship with God. I think of Isaiah, what he went through, and who does not love the story of Ruth and Boaz? You have Mary, you have Martha, you have Abraham, Moses—what a tremendous study that he is. David, Jacob, Enoch—the list is endless. But all of them have one thing in common: we can learn some great things from them, and their lives are great to study, but they all, at the end of the day, were sinners. They all failed. They all were frail in their lives. They were weak, and they were as fallible as you and I are.

So God gave me a perfect model. He wants me to learn from all of that and glean from all of their lives, but they are just like me. God gave me a model who was tempted in all points like we are, yet without sin: the Lord Jesus Christ. When you study that perfect model, He is a perfect model for a perfect fellowship, walking in the light, as the Bible says, "as he in the light having fellowship one with another." He is the perfect model of the will in our lives, wanting God's will,

the Father's will, over our own will. He is the perfect model for obedience in the Bible, obedient as Christ was, even unto death. He is the perfect model for worship in the Bible, and it lays out the real, true concept of worship that we understand that worship is not something that we do. There is no such thing as a worship service. You do not worship God with your tithes and your offerings like you hear so many people say today. Worship is a state of your attitude of heart. You do not do worship; you live in a state of worship. It is your relationship with Christ. These things are all things that are confusing today.

We learn the perfect prayer life from Christ, the perfect walk with Christ, and how to have the perfect relationship with Christ. Yet, as I said last week and have been keying on it a couple of times over the last couple of weeks, Christ was my perfect model for evangelism, penetrating cultures, reaching people, God becoming man.

Paul Harvey, he is dead now. I think he died in 2009, I think it was. But Paul Harvey was a great Christian, and Paul Harvey was a great guy to listen to. I do not know if you know this or not, but there were things that Paul Harvey said 15 years ago about our children and the school system and how it was going to fracture and how everything was going to happen when he took God and the Bible out of schools. It was Paul Harvey 15 years before it happened that said, "If you take the Bibles out of school, the guns will come into school." He was a tremendous guy, great insight into some things.

Many, many, many years ago, I heard him tell a story. I have never forgotten it. It was something that really made the point of penetrating a culture. He told the story of how a family was getting ready to go to church one Christmas morning. Christmas was on Sunday that morning. Mom was a Christian. The three or four kids were Christian, but Dad was not. Dad did not believe in God. So they were all getting ready to go to church, and Dad said he was not going to go. It did not matter if it was Christmas; he did not want anything to do with that. He did not believe anything about God. He was not going to go. So they all went to church, and Dad stayed there. He got himself a cup of coffee, and he was sitting there at the kitchen table. Snow was coming down. It was very cold. He was looking out that window, and it caught his attention that there was a little bird out there that had gotten a broken wing, and it could not fly. It was just kind of shivering up there in the snow, and it was cold, and the frost was starting to form on it, and obviously the bird was going to freeze to death.

For whatever reason, the dad got transfixed on this little bird, and he came to the point where he wanted to help that little bird, and he tried to do everything that he could. He opened the window, but the bird would just flutter and just spin around and get farther away. He came up with the idea of maybe getting some bread crumbs, and he kind of threw out pieces of bread, hoping that the bird would make its way where he could pick it up and bring it in and kind of keep it from freezing to death. But the bird just completely—just completely was afraid of him and just fluttering all over the place. But it could not fly because its wing was broken. He got so frustrated with this little bird. He wanted to help this bird so bad. He was racking his brain how to think, how he could communicate to this little bird that he was not going to hurt him, that he was only going to help him. He was thinking about it and racking his brain, and he tried everything he knew how to do. He turned the lights off so maybe the light was scarier. He tried

the whole process again. That bird was just out there shivering, and it would just flutter a little farther back every time.

After about an hour of that and totally frustrated, he was consumed by this little bird. He thought to himself, "You know what?" He said, "I do not know how to reach this bird." He said, "I do not know what I can do. I have tried everything, and nothing. He is afraid; he does not understand I am trying to help him." He said, "You know what? The only way I could ever really reach that bird was for me to become a bird." At that exact moment, the church bells rang. He thought of the fact that he was that little bird, broken in life. The only way that God could come down and heal his brokenness was for God to become a man. That is what God did. I remember that story like it was just like I heard it yesterday. It has to be 35 years ago. I heard it when I was still living in Ohio years and years and years ago.

When we get saved, we are begotten of God. We now, we talked about this last week, we now become the visible appearance of the invisible God.

2 Corinthians 5:21

Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

The Bible says that now that I am saved, I am an ambassador. An ambassador does not have any ties to the country he is in. He cannot vote. He has diplomatic immunity to many things. He is really, he is sent from another country into a foreign country to represent that country. The day you and I got saved, that is exactly what happened with our lives.

The Bible talks about the seven things—one of the greatest studies, we call it Discipleship Two, the next level you can go to after Discipleship One—the seven things that changed about you the day you got saved. One of them is that you become now an ambassador for Christ. The Bible says that now my passport, my citizenship in the book of Ephesians chapter 2, is up in heaven. The Bible says that now that I am saved, I am seated in heavenly places in Ephesians chapter 2. The Bible says in Colossians chapter 3 that now my affections are set on things above. Matthew 22:37 says that my attitude about things down here has changed. Philippians 3:20 says that my conversation is now a heavenly one because I am the ambassador. You are the ambassador.

I love this verse here in 2 Corinthians 5:20, where he says, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead." You see, it is you and me now instead of Christ. You and I now are fulfilling what Christ started, but God never intended for Him to finish it because He intended for you and me to get saved, be begotten of God, become an ambassador for Christ, and then do the work of God in Christ's stead.

SEC: Proverbs 8:22-26: Christ's Pre-Creation Manifestation

Now today, with what we have learned last week, we now are in a better position to understand this great passage, and we are going to read it again here, Proverbs chapter 8, verse 22.

Proverbs 8:22-31

The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:

When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:

Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;

Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

Now, Father, help us today. This is a very complicated and deep passage, Father, but You have never given us anything in this book that a common man who just loves You and believes the Word of God could not figure and find out, because that is the way You wrote it. You wrote it, Father, to us who just simply trust You by faith, who believe that every word in this Bible is a word from God. We hold it sacred in our lives, in our church, in our teachings, and all that we do. We teach our young people its infallible truths and build our homes and our families on it. We build everything in our life as Christians around this book because this is the only thing that will do it and last forever. So we ask You today, Father, to, Holy Spirit of God, illuminate these things for us. Help us to grow and through this, and help these Christians today, Father, that want to learn Your Word and want to know Your Word. Help them to come away today with some great truths that will help them not only today, but 5, 10, 15, 20 years from now, they will continue to add to what we learn today. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name and in His sake we ask it. Amen.

Now I am going to lay this out section by section. This is the way I did it 30-some years ago. As I told you earlier, I am not the smartest light bulb or the brightest light bulb in the box, and I had to find a way to make that Bible understandable to me. I worked hard at it, I worked long at it, and in many cases, I succeeded at it. I want to show you just by taking the things that I did some 35 years ago, and I want to show you how I learned it and put them in my Bible, and you could almost go down my Bible in Proverbs 8 along here, and you would have it just as I am giving it to you here.

What you have here, and I want you to grasp this, is what you have in this passage is the person of Christ recorded for you and for me through the timeline of the Bible. That is the first thing I want you to get down. If you, in your Bible, at some point, I do not know that I would put it in

now when you are trying to do it, put it in or never know, but this wants to be the fundamental theme of this chapter. What you have here is the person of Christ recorded for you through a timeline of the Bible, and you will want to get these things down as we go through them, and then you will have it.

I am going to tell you right now, you will not understand everything I am saying today. I will be very honest with you, I do not understand everything I am saying today, but you will want to get it in your Bible because, as I said, 10, 15, 20 years from now, you will see how this stuff starts to pull together, and you will have a better understanding as you grow and what God is doing here.

Now let us look at verse 22 and 23, and I am going to take these in sectional verses and explain each one so you can put it in your notes now and then get it in your Bible along there if you have a wide margin Bible a little bit later on. Here is what he said:

Proverbs 8:22-23

The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

Now in your Bible, it says in Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." So these two verses here, now we are going to get a context for it, will fit into that time period at the beginning. Verse 22 says, "the beginning of his way." Now I need to just take a minute here, and I do not want to belabor this point too much because we could spend hours on this, but I want to explain to you the differences between Genesis chapter 1, verse 1, and chapter 1, verse 2. If you have been around here for any length of time or you are any kind of Bible student, you will be able to identify, but I am going to make it real simple. It is one of the most controversial places in the Bible.

Now the standard teaching is this, and you get this in seminaries, I guarantee you every Baptist preacher, almost without exception, in Kansas City, if not around the country, would teach it this way, and it is wrong. They will teach you that Genesis chapter 1, verse 1, where it says, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," and then verse 2 says, "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep." They will teach that as all one event moving through time, and they will teach that Genesis chapter 1, verse 1, and Genesis chapter 1, verse 2, and then what follows, is just an order of events happening as God creates it. We do not have time to go into all that today, but that is simply not true.

The Bible teaches that there is a vast period of time between Genesis chapter 1, verse 1, and verse 2. Now the Bible does not tell you what that time period is. There is no indication to it. Well, I do not want to say that. It does not give you clearly what it is. But if you know your Bible and believe your Bible, you know that that is simply not true. In the theological circles, this is called the gap theory. But there is a gap of time between Genesis chapter 1, verse 1, and Genesis chapter 1, verse 2. It is not a gap theory; it is a gap fact. If you know your Bible, that time period between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2 could be a hundred million years. It could be 20 minutes. The time element is not given. No time frame is accurate that you can really deductively put into that.

I will tell you the events that take place in that time period. I would say that first of all, that this is the start of God's plan, Genesis chapter 1, verse 1. During this time, as you are going to see, Christ comes forth. We know that during this period of time that the angels are created and Lucifer is also created. They are created beings. Christ gets His position over the heavenly host. Lucifer gets his position over the kingdom of heaven and everything on the earth. We all know this from—we know now that Lucifer was not satisfied with that, and then he tries to lead a revolt, and this revolt is laid out for you in Ezekiel chapter 28 and Isaiah chapter 14. The Bible says he takes a third of the angels with him, and they try to overthrow God because, as we saw last week, the devil wants to be God. Now those are the events that take place in that time period, but I am not even going to suggest to you a time element here. I do not have a clue of how long that time period could be between those two verses, but I am telling you that what we are about to look at here takes place during that period of time. So you want to be able to put that in a context.

Now look at verse 24, 25, and 26.

Proverbs 8:24-26

When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

So now we have where we talked about it last week, this is a time period before Genesis 1:2, in Genesis 1:1, approximately somewhere in here, and now because he says here there are no deeps. The deep shows up a little bit later on in chapter 1. There are no mountains, there is nothing done, and yet he says, "I was brought forth." I was brought forth to be the express person of God's image. This is God moving, as we said last week, out of Himself to take on a visible image. This is the very beginning of God's plan that God knows is going to go to two different peoples. We saw it last week in John 17:8, where he says:

John 17:8

For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

This is the time period, Genesis chapter 1:1, around that period of time, and He is now—God's plan is in effect. Now He is beginning, and the very, very beginning of it, Christ is manifesting Himself. He is coming out of the Godhead to be the visible appearance of the invisible God. In that little story of Paul Harvey, He is now becoming that visible thing that can identify with the visible man and his need. This is what He is doing.

We know that throughout the Old Testament, God deals with the nation of Israel, and as I told you last week, this is where God manifests Himself to them. He manifests Himself as the Angel of the Lord or the Captain of the Lord's host. He shows up from time to time. This is who Moses

saw on the Mount of God when he said, "Who can see the face of God and die?" Well, you cannot see the face of God the Father, but he saw the face of God in the person of Jesus Christ, and that is who he saw. That is all how that thing works. When we get into the New Testament, then Christ has to reveal Himself to the church, you and for me.

I think I want you to see again here that the Bible makes it clear that He was brought forth. Nowhere in the history of this time period does the Bible ever say He was begotten. We know now from last week that He was begotten when He came into the world through Mary. Now all of this, verses 22 through 26, will take place around, as I said, Genesis chapter 1:1, but before Genesis chapter 1:2. So it is all taking place so far in that time period based on the context of what we have, that great unknown time period in the Bible. But you are going to remember now, if you went through our dispensations and you went through our seven pillars, you now know that there is a vast period of unknown time at the beginning of your Bible, and there is a vast period of time at the end of your Bible. We now have laid that out. So it is very consistent, even though we do not exactly know what the time element may be. We learned that in our classes on dispensations.

SEC: Proverbs 8:27-29: God's Reconstruction and Design

Now look at verses 27, 28, and 29. Now we are going to get into some little bit of solid ground here.

Proverbs 8:27-29

When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:

When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:

Now we have come to a place where in these verses we can get a little bit of solid ground, for they refer to the first chapter of Genesis after Genesis chapter 1, verse 2. Everything I have given you up to this point has been Genesis chapter 1, verse 1, or around that time period. Now we are clearly moved into Genesis chapter 1, verse 2, and beyond. He says in verse 27, "When he prepared the heavens, I was there." I want you to notice that he says "prepared," not "created." This is the restructuring of everything after the original creation in verse 1. Notice he says in verse 3, "Let there be light." This will be a reference to the first two days of God's six days of reconstruction of the heavens of the earth.

Notice he says there in verse 27, "set a compass upon the face of the deep." Now a lot of people, when you read things like that, they just think that God is speaking in a figurative way, kind of like in a flowery way, kind of like in a way that gives some kind of character along with what he is saying, that God really did not set a compass on it. But you know He did, because the Bible tells us, and this is why I keep telling you, almost everything in the Bible you read is literal. When it is not literal, He usually tells you it is not literal. When He says He set a compass upon the face of the deep, He did, because every compass on this planet points to where heaven is.

Because the Bible says in Psalm 75:6 and Job 26:7 that heaven is north. When He set the compass on that deep, He set that compass to the north, and that is where the Lord is, on the sides of the north, Psalms talks about. The Bible says He stretches out the north over the empty place in Job 26. The Bible says in Psalm 75 that promotion comes not from the south and the east or the west, but from the Lord. He put Himself in that place.

Now if I was getting in a rocket ship, you could not do this, but in a practical sense, if I got in a rocket ship someplace and I wanted to get home to heaven, of course you could not do this, but I am just saying theoretically, I would head north. I would not head south, head north. I would not head west to get to California, do not want to go there. You want to head north because heaven is north in the Bible. Of course, we talk about the glory of the Lord and all those things, and yet when you see a little glimpse of that, what do they call it? The northern what? Lights. It is north. Everything is north when it comes to God.

I do not know if you know this or not, but it fits right along with the Bible. You know there are two norths. There is a true north and there is a magnetic north. Magnetic north is not true north. Magnetic north is just a couple degrees off of true north. Do you know in going to heaven and trusting the Lord as your own personal Savior and in religion today, you know there is a true north and there is a magnetic north? There is a way that you can say you are saved, but you are just a couple degrees off. Somebody says, "Well, I joined a church, I am saved." That is magnetic north. Somebody says, "Well, I have been baptized, I am saved." No, you are two degrees off. Somebody says, "Well, you know what, I do good works and I do all this and all that, and I give money to the church, I am going to heaven." No, you are about three degrees off on that one. You see, just as there is a way that seems right unto men, but the end thereof are the ways of death, the Bible says. There is a true north and there is a magnetic north. There is a north that looks good, but it is not going to get you there. If you want the right north, you have got to get true north, and that is up over Alpha Draconis, heading north in the shoulder system. So He set a compass. When He says "a compass," I do not know if God said, "Hey, Michael, throw me a compass." I do not know what He did, but it is north, and you want to find that place. Theoretically, if you could, you would head north, and you would guide on the north.

Now, look at verse 28. "When he established the clouds above, when he strengthened the fountains of the deep." Now this is tremendously deep stuff here. I am not going to kid you. But now I want you to notice that you have a deep here. So this is after Genesis 1:2. This will be the dividing of the waters of the great deep, which you find in Genesis chapter 1, verses 6, 7, and 8. Now look there, it says He established the clouds above. You get most commentators on this, and most commentaries you will read, and most guys with—they will not have a clue what they are reading. They are going to think that that means the puffy white clouds, you know, the nimbus clouds and all the clouds that you see up there and the cirrus clouds and all that. That is not talking about those kinds of clouds. He has not even made the earth yet. The clouds He is talking about here are not up in the sky as we know them, but they are a reference to something up there in God's second heaven, talked about throughout the book of Job and the book of Psalms.

Job 37:14-16

Hearken unto this, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God.

Dost thou know when God disposed them, and caused the light of his cloud to shine?

Dost thou know the balancing of the clouds, the wondrous works of him which is perfect in knowledge?

The Bible says in Psalm 68:34 that God's strength is in the clouds.

Psalm 68:34

Ascribe ye strength unto God: his excellency is over Israel, and his strength is in the clouds.

Psalm 104:4 says that the clouds are His chariot.

Psalm 104:4

Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire:

Those clouds are something up there someplace else than what you see out there in your sky today. Now, have you ever seen them, and I am not saying this is it, but I am just telling you, have you ever been out in a—I remember one time I used to take those pictures. We used to get out, way out in western Kansas a couple of times. I mean, the skies are so dark you can see stars down to the sixth, seventh magnitude. I mean, it is unbelievable. I mean, there are just stars everywhere. It is pitch black night, there is no moon. I am down there, and we are doing a bunch of stuff, and I look over on the horizon, and I start seeing a big cloud bank come rolling in. I am thinking to myself, "Oh, that is going to mess everything up." So I said, "Well, guys, we better, you better hurry up here. It looks like we got clouds rolling in." One of the guys said, "Clouds, where are clouds?" And I said, "Look over there." And he said, "That is not clouds, that is the Milky Way." The Milky Way was so bright and so predominant in that dark night sky with the clear skies that it looked like a rolling bank of clouds. Those clouds He is talking about are not out there in the sky you see today. It is something up there that is likened to God's chariot that His strength is in.

I will tell you, that is what you got here. Look at verse 28. "When he strengthened the fountains of the deep." Now the Bible says in Psalm 36:6 that God's judgments are a great deep.

Psalm 36:6

Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast.

See how this starts all connected together? The Bible says in Genesis 8:2, when God brought the flood on Noah's day, that it was these fountains that broke up in the deep and brought the water. Now that was God's judgment on this earth through God's strength. So in Psalm 36, God's judgments are a great deep. See how it all works together? Those things mean something in the Bible. I am not telling you I know what they all mean, but I am telling you what they do not mean. I am telling you that is something up there that is in God's second heaven.

Verse 29, "When he gave to the sea his decree that the water should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth."

Psalm 33:6-9

By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses.

Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.

For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

Now this is where—maybe do not do that. This is where these things drive me crazy. How in the—why did He—He is not figurative here. If there are storehouses up there where that water is in, I guarantee you there are storehouses up there. Now I am not saying it looked like a Safeway warehouse. I do not know what they look like, but He has got that water stored up there, and in His mind, it is a storehouse, and it is in store for something. I know what it is in store for because if you look at the end of that chart, when God renovates the earth by fire, water is going to be connected with that. The Bible talks about things being in reserve, in store for God's coming judgment. So I am sure it has got something connected with that. "Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him." Now this is a reference again to Genesis 1:6-8 of God dividing those waters. We have talked about it many, many times. God setting their bounds. Verse 9, when He comes down here, says, "For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood still." What He is talking about in the context is the water. It says, "When he gave to the sea his decree that the water should not pass his commandments; when he appointed the foundations of the earth."

This is God looking up there in that second heaven, seeing that deep, that great vast bottle of water that makes the Atlantic and the Pacific and all the oceans on the planet look like a mud puddle. He says, "Okay, boys, that is all the farther you go." Most people do not know why you have to have water up there. But the reason why you have to have water up there is because that water, if you did not have that great deep up there, that great expanse of water that He is talking about, you know we would all be crispy critters and fried to death. You know the light of the glory of God permeates everything down through a universe. So God—have you ever been down to see the Titanic? I know you did not go down, but I mean, have you ever seen the videos of the Titanic when they are down through there? It is pitch black. They are five miles down. The sun is up here, and you can see 20 feet, 30 feet, 100 feet, you can see light. You get down 200, 300, 400, 500 feet, it is pitch black. You get down one mile, two mile, three mile, the water filters out the light. Right now that deep is up there filtering out the light of God's throne and the glory so we can have some kind of normal life. That is why at the end, when God recreates everything and shuts down a new Jerusalem that sees God. When that sees God, you know what? The light and the glory of God permeates everything in this universe. Not ready yet. Not time yet. He is filtering it out. Here He is telling you, when He is doing all this, He is saying, "Okay, I got My throne up here, the glory of God up here. Boy, that is bright. God is light. I got to make sure

these little guys down here do not get French fried. So I am going to put a nose on there, but that will not last very long because those women with the hairspray will eat that up. So here is what I will do. I will just put about 16 billion, trillion, billion, quadrillion, octillion, million miles of water up there." And they will think that they are the most important thing down here, and they are going to get into a little rocket ship and fly up there and go to the moon and send a little probe to Mars and out there. Send little pictures back. "Oh, look how great we are." "When he gave to the sea his decree that the water should not pass his commandments; when he appointed the foundations of the earth."

Now then He talks about the foundations of the earth. What is that all about? Well, let me tell you a little bit about it. I do not fully understand it, but here again, we will go to the oldest book in the Bible, the book of Job, where most of this stuff is.

Job 38:1-6

Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.

Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.

Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?

Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof;

Now I just do not want to get away from this for a second, but you see the problem you got if you are an unsaved evolutionist or scientist and you wind up with a great white throne judgment, that is a question you are going to have to answer. You thought you were so smart. You thought you came from a monkey. You thought you evolved up through time. You thought you were a monkey in a banyan tree, then you were a cognitive professor with a PhD. You got all that stuff together, so you thought. Now you have got to stand before God, and He is going to ask you the questions. "Where were you when I laid the foundation?" Boy, you are going to have a tough time coming up with that answer. Now if He asked me that, I am just going to go to Job 38.

"Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof?"

Now whatever those foundations are, and I do not know how to put it all together, I will be the first one to tell you, but I will guarantee you this: they will fit somehow into those seven foundational pillars I gave you a while back on Thursday night when we come through Proverbs chapter 9.

Proverbs 2:8

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

I cannot even imagine God having a foundation for the earth. I cannot imagine Him fastening it up there. But this whole thing is like—this whole universe, this whole second heaven is like something that God built, a structure. He says, "Who hath laid the corner stone thereof?" I know from Matthew 21:42 and the book of Ephesians 2, I know that Christ is the cornerstone. So whatever He is building out here, whatever this universe structure is, whatever His plan is and all that He is doing, Christ is the head chief cornerstone of it. All this stuff is designed by God, put together by God, and the fact that you and I cannot understand it or NASA cannot understand it or a rocket scientist cannot understand it or Wernher von Braun cannot understand it does not change a thing. God is doing it.

I will tell you, He talks about the fountains, fountains of the deep. That is a hard thing for me to grasp, but yet I put it in a context because this Bible is the deep, this Bible is God's mind, this Bible is the depth of God's mind. But you know there are fountains in here? You know what the fountains are? They are the individual verses that God gives you when you need, like a cold drink of water. If this Bible is the mind of God and the depth of God, and yet there are fountains in it, of little verses that God lifts out and gives to you and gives to me and shows us things, a little something that we need or shows us how this thing works. But figuratively, it is the same way up there. But I do not get it all.

SEC: Proverbs 8:30: The Trinity's Delight

Look at verse 30.

Proverbs 8:30

Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;

Now this is a reference to what you find in Genesis chapter 1, verse 26, and Genesis 3, and then again in Genesis chapter 11. This is the Trinity talking amongst themselves. This is always a Bible question that I get at some point with young questions, and it is a great question. But in Genesis chapter 1, verse 26, God speaking about the creation of man, you know what He says? He does not say, "I am going to make man in My image." You know what He says? He says, "Let us make man in our image." Who is the "us"? Him and Christ and the Holy Spirit. In Genesis 3:22, after man fell, the Trinity came back down and took a look at the situation again, and now they said:

Genesis 3:22

And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:

Christ rejoicing always before Him. In the Tower of Babel, Genesis chapter 11, verse 7, it says:

Genesis 11:7

Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.

Christ is with Him. In Isaiah chapter 6, verse 8, boy, this is a great one, He says:

Isaiah 6:8

Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

See that thing? "Then said I, Here am I; send me." See, Christ is now by God's side through all the rest of the Bible. Now I want you to note, He is not seated yet at the right hand of God the Father. You want to make that note? He is not seated yet because the work is not completed. He is not seated by the heavenly Father until the crucifixion when the work is finished. On the cross, He says, "It is finished." When He resurrected, the Bible says in the book of Hebrews that He went up and He is standing in heaven, and He sat down on the right hand of God the Father. You know why? The work is finished. He is not sitting here. He is by His side here, but the work is not done yet. His Son, one brought up with Him, never a created God.

Now I have got to stay here for a minute. That is a great verse and passage on talking about evangelism. God saw the need of man without hope, you and me, without Christ, without any chance whatsoever, and then God looked around in the Trinity and said, "Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?" You know what Christ said? Christ said, "Here am I, send me." Is not that a great thing? You know what the downside of that is today? Because we now have taken the place of Christ. We now are in the begotten of God. He went back to heaven. We now are in Christ's stead. The sad thing about that is, oh, you can hallelujah on the one side. But the downside of that is God today looks down at the earth and sees His creation in a fallen state and men and women lost in the dredges of sin, and He reaches in our hearts to save people. He says the same thing, "Who will go for us?" The call of God for man's sin was answered by God Himself through Christ, God's Son. But the call of evangelism in the New Testament church needs to be answered by us. "Who am I? And who would I send? Who can go for us?" And we should stand up and say, "Here we are, Lord, send me." But we do not. We do not. We do not.

SEC: Proverbs 8:31: God's Plan and Fellowship with Man

Look at verse 31.

Proverbs 8:31

Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

Now here is where we get into the plan of God. We are pretty sure footing here. Up to this point, the first part is a little, you know, to get the context and you know where you are at. Do not have all of the pertinent details. But you have got enough to know what God is doing. The second phase where you get into the deep, that is pretty well established. Now here we are on solid ground, really good. Now here is where we get into the plan of God.

You know, in the Bible, God has three distinct plans, and they are all connected together.

1. The first thing God has a plan for is the universe. He created the second heaven for a purpose.

2. The second thing that God has a plan in the Bible is for the earth. Isaiah 45 says that the earth was created to be inhabited. God had a plan. Now the earth is in the second heaven.
3. The third plan that God has, which is distinct from the other two but they are all connected, is God has a plan for you and He has a plan for me.

You and I live on earth. God has a plan for you on this earth. He has a plan for the earth, and the earth is in the second heaven. They are all tied together. God has something He wants you and I to do. Now we have the fellowship of God with man here. The habitable part of the earth.

If you have been around here for any length of time, and I know some of you are fairly new, but you will pick it up. There are always ways we can get you to get it. But if you have been around here for any length of time and you have taken advantage of the teaching, the specialized stuff that we do, you now know that the Bible has a plan, or the Bible is a plan of God coming to man through the two identities in the Bible and the history of man.

The Old Testament, God came through the nation of Israel. That was God's plan. You could not get to God any other way in the Old Testament. You had to come through the nation of Israel. Everything that God did, He put in Israel as a nation. If you were a Gentile back in the Old Testament, you had to find God through the nation of Israel. In the New Testament, it is the church. If you want to find Christ today, you have to find Christ through the church. I do not mean necessarily a building. I am talking about the true church, which is the body of believers. That is the only way you can get salvation. It is in Christ's church.

Now you will remember a while back, I told you how that Israel in the Old Testament is basically laid out in four segments. It basically covers your Old Testament.

4. You have what we call the formulation of the nation of Israel. This will be Genesis chapter 2 up to Exodus chapter 12.
5. Then you have the second one, which is the calling out of Israel. This will be Exodus chapter 12, when they come out of Egypt, all the way up to the book of Joshua, right before they go into the land.
6. Then you will have the establishment of the nation of Israel. That is when they get in the land. That will be Judges and up through Chronicles and Kings.
7. Then you will have the decline of the nation of Israel, and that will be 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles, and all the prophets come in on that one.

During this time, God is rejoicing. During this time of Israel, when they get into the land, God is rejoicing and delighting Himself with the sons of men, and the habitable part of His earth is Jerusalem. You have to understand that. It is not Independence where the Mormons think it is. It is not where all the cults believe it is. In the Old Testament, God's inhabitable part of the earth was Jerusalem. It is the most controversial holy place on planet earth. God absolutely established His literal kingdom of heaven with His people and built and had His fellowship with them in the city. In the Old Testament, you cannot take the city of Jerusalem and the Jews and make them separate. They are one. He says, "My delight was with the sons of men," and it took place in Jerusalem.

David was the first king that they had after Saul that was God's choice. You know what David did. David destroyed all the enemies of the nation of Israel. He wiped out the last ones that were left over from Joshua. Then for the next 40 years, there are no wars and peace. Then Solomon built the temple. Now their fellowship is complete. David made Jerusalem his capital, I think like 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel 5. He brings an ark in there, and now he makes that his capital, which he kicked the Philistines out. Now it is his capital. Solomon built the temple. Now the temple, the tabernacle, the ark, and all the holy things of God, they reside in Jerusalem. God's habitation is there in Jerusalem with the Jews, the city of peace in the temple.

Now you go to Jerusalem today, and it is all changed. You see, the Muslims have the temple spot today, called the Dome of the Rock. If you look at any picture of Jerusalem, you see that golden dome that is over the rock where they built the original temple. There is nothing left of the original temple now. The original temple has been gone. In fact, if you Google it on Google or look it in a book someplace, they will tell you that in history there is absolutely no record or no evidence of anywhere that there ever was a Solomon temple. You know where they are going with that. The only evidence of it is found in the Bible, they will tell you. That is good enough for me. Right now, the Muslims have the temple spot. Over there, there is what they call the Wailing Wall. The Wailing Wall was not the original temple. The Wailing Wall runs about 168 feet high and about 1,600 feet long. It is kind of built up against it, but it is where the Jews go and they pray, and it was prophesied in Jeremiah that they would go to the wall and pray there, and they are praying there. But that is Herod's temple that was built in Herod's time. It is right to the northeast or to the west, I guess, west side of the Temple Mount where the old temple was in Jerusalem. But that is all about to change because when the Lord comes back, that temple is going to get built right on that spot. In the Old Testament, the thing that I want you to know is that that temple was where His habitat was, and when the Bible talks about He delighted with the sons of men, that is where He did, in Jerusalem.

Now when we get into the New Testament, God's rejoicing and His habitat will be in the body of Christ, you and I. The church also goes through four segments.

8. It goes through a formulation. That would be the early book of Acts.
9. It goes through a calling out under Paul.
10. It goes through an establishment through mid-Acts up through the seven periods of church history.
11. It also goes through a demise in Laodicea.

Colossians 1:27

To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

Where in the Old Testament He dwelt in the literal temple, now He dwells in temples not made with hands, your body. 1 Corinthians 5:1 talks about that they have a body made without hands, eternal in the heavens.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

We saw last week at 1 Peter 1:3 and 1 Corinthians 4:15 and Philippians 1:10, once we have been saved, now we are the sons of God. We are begotten through the gospel. Now we do for God what He started in Christ's stead. When Christ came at the first coming of Christ, He never finished what He did. He never moved outside the 40, 50 miles of where He was born. But now He tells you and I to go to the world.

You have heard me say it many, many times, and it always bears repeating. One of the most profound concepts you will ever grasp or ever not grasp. In the Old Testament, God's habitat and rejoicing was the sons of men in Jerusalem, in the literal temple. You know from your Bible that that was a fixed spot on this earth, and all of the world had to come to that temple. You did not put the temple on an 18-wheeler and drive it to here or drive it to there. No, no, no, no. It was not that at all. It was not like taking Lady Fatima and putting her on a horse cart and running her down from North Korea to South Korea so everybody could worship. If you wanted to find God, and you see examples with the Queen of Sheba and the King of Ophir, all of those guys, they are making pilgrimages coming to Jerusalem to the temple. Because that temple is a fixed spot, and all the world has to come to Jerusalem where God's habitat is and where He rejoices His men to find God. But in the New Testament, God now inhabits and dwells in you and me. Where in the Old Testament everybody went to the temple, now in the New Testament, we are to take our temple to everybody in the world. It is just that simple. He now sends us to the world. The difference is some of us will not go. "Who will go for us?" Not me.

Could you imagine up in heaven when that question was asked, when God says, "Look down there, all those lost people, look at Bob Alexander, look at Zach, look at Jenny, look at this person, look at that person, look at all these people down here. Who will go for us?" Not a word. That is not the way it was up in heaven, was it? Jesus, who was God, knew the whole plan of God and the purpose of God, and He stepped up and said, "Here am I, send me." But you know the purpose of God too, and so do I, but yet God puts that call in our lives, and we are just mum. We are not going nowhere. Imagine, imagine a son of God, a child of God saying no to the call of God.

SEC: The Contrast: Christ's Delight vs. Man's Delight

Now look at the last part of verse 31. "And my delights were with the sons of men." Now here is where we get into the plan of God. When God's plan is completely laid out, and I know we did not do a very good job of it today, but enough to give you an understanding of it. When God's plan is completely laid out, and when God has finished that plan, then this is a practical application for you and me. When it is all fulfilled, when every prophecy is done and everything is said and done, at the center and the heart of all God has done from Genesis 1 to Revelation chapter 22 is simply going to be fundamentally God's wanting to have fellowship with you and me. Forget about everything else. Forget about who made the touchdown last night and then

pointed toward God. It was not important. Forget it when somebody makes a great play and bows down and gives God the credit at the goal post. It is not about that. God's whole plan from a practical application for me and for you and everything that He did, everything that He did, putting all of the other things aside, at the end of the day, God did it fundamentally in a practical way for one thing: He wants to have the rejoicing and the fellowship with you and me. That is it. It will be God's fellowship with you and me. In God's mind, that is all that matters, and of course, I have taught you the book of Song of Solomon four or five New Year's ago, and it is back there in the book, and it lays it out completely. He wants to rejoice and delight Himself with us as His Son, just as He did with His only begotten Son. There is no difference in His mind.

I want in closing here, I want to compare two verses. I saw this as I was coming through it, and I thought, "Man, that is pretty amazing." The first one is going to be verse 30. He says:

Proverbs 8:30

Then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;

Now that is Christ right there. That is Christ saying, "I was by Him as one brought up with Him, and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him." There you have God's delight in His Son and His Son rejoicing always before His Father. Now look at verse 31.

Proverbs 8:31

Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

You see that? You see the difference between the two? Because verse 31 is you and me. See the difference between me and Christ? See, God wants to rejoice and delight Himself in the fellowship of His Word with me. In verse 30, Christ returned that love, so it says that Christ was daily His delight and rejoiced always before Him. But it does not say that in verse 31, talking about me and you. It says that God's delight is with the sons of men, but it does not say that our delight is always with Him and that we are rejoicing always before Him. You know why? Because most of the time we simply do not do it. That is why. Some of us, unfortunately, we have many times too many other things that get in the way. Too many other delights that take our fellowship away. Too many other things that we are willing to rejoice over instead of what God has done for us, giving and rejoicing and giving to God based on the biblical love that is generated by understanding what He has given to us.

Somebody asked a question the other night, thinking with Delano on Thursday night back there in the Bible, about strange fire. I explained how that God killed the two sons of Levi for giving strange fire. The strange fire had to do with the fact that they were supposed to use the fire off the brazen altar to light everything in the tabernacle, and they were so indifferent to the things of God, they got the fire someplace else, when a little cigarette lighter is probably—and God killed them. That is exactly what we are talking about here. God desires to have delight with you and delight with the sons of men, but we have a desire to rejoice in Him always. I have seen people, Christians, claim to be Christians all my life, live Him right up to the point where they get a better deal. I am not kidding you. Your tenure with God may go six months, a year, two years,

three or four years, simply until something else better comes along. Trading the gold, silver, and precious stones simply for the wood, hay, and stubble. But that is where we are at.

Those two verses are profound. It says that Christ was always rejoicing before Him. God wanted to be His delight and was, and He wants to be your delight and my delight, but it does not say we are always rejoicing before Him because sadly, we always do not do it. Some of God's people never do it. Some people, God's people, go through their whole life and never thank God one time for all that He has done. They never stop and consider one time all that they go through in life, how God could have just, you know, put them anywhere in this world, it could go through some terrible things. I remember a couple of weeks ago, hearing about all that was going on over there in Iraq and Iran with ISIS and all that crowd over there, and I get at the same time—this has been about a month ago—at the same time I was talking with some Christians who were part of our church, and they were whining and complaining about this and that and what they did not like about this and did not like about that, and I am thinking to myself, "You are absolutely the most pettiest people on this planet. You are whining and complaining about what you do not have or what you did not have or something did not go your way when tonight as we sit here and speak over in Iraq and Iran there were mothers who had their children's heads cut off today." Now that is a real problem. We get so caught up in this stupid stuff.

But you can see the depth of this passage and how you have it, and now you have it outlined for you in segments. That will give you an idea of what is going on here and yet give you a lot of context of things, but know this, we have only scratched the surface of this deep well of truth. But put it in your Bible, formulate it down like I had to do it where you got it and get it in, make it make sense, condense it down, get it in so when you are reading it down the line someplace or somebody is asking you a question, you have the key things in there. As you grow over the next 20 or 30 years or 10 years, you will add to it and come to understand it better.

I used myself for an example. I did this probably 30 years ago. I probably have taught it a hundred times. But going through it this last week, I got a key that I had never seen before. It was laying right there in front of me. I had never seen it in 30 years and a hundred times going through it. I had never seen it, and when I saw it, it changed, and it made me reshape my whole thinking on Genesis chapter 1, verse 1, and 1, verse 2. One little phrase, one little verse. Now that is what the Bible does. It is eternal. It is everlasting. It is a living book.

I have told you before, way back when, and I was in Ohio a couple of weeks ago, and I would drive by when I am going places, I drive by the places we used to street preach when I was doing it. We used to do some stupid stuff. I go up there in North Canton, right across the street. There is a little square still painted on the sidewalk where we used to stand and we used to preach when they were coming out of mass. It was not a good deal to do. I drove downtown Canton, and there was the square right by the courthouse. Not much of a courthouse in Canton, but it is where we used to preach. I remember a time when one of our guys, he was a crazy guy, we would always try to get a crowd. One time he took a big Mexican sombrero out there. One of those big ones that Pancho Villa wears or whatever that other thing, and he put it right on the ground, and he was going to preach. People are walking by, and he is saying, "Ma'am, I am stuck out, it is alive under that hat. You want to stay away from it." People are looking around there, and he is saying,

"It is alive! It is alive! Stuck back, man, it is alive! It is alive!" He must have had 30, 40 people up there. He says, "It is alive!" Everybody is staring at you. Finally, a cop comes up, and he says, "What is going on here?" He says, "Sir, officer, stand back. It is alive." "What is alive? What is alive? What is alive?" He is going to shoot it. "There is a rattlesnake under there." He picks it up, and he says, "There is a Bible," and he says, "The Word of God. The Word of God." Then he preached to him.

That book is alive. The key about that Bible that most people never get is why you want to keep on reading it and keep on studying it for the next 100 years of your life is because as you grow, it will keep revealing itself to you, new truth, new concepts that God reveals because that is what the book does. The more you invest yourself in the book, the more it invests itself in you, and He will reveal to you on an ongoing revelation, the truth of that book that is down in the depths. That is why I am saying, get it in there now. Put it in there now, and down the line as you grow, if you grow, when you grow, it will come to the point where it will keep revealing itself. Just like with me, 30 years ago, a hundred times through it, and it took last week for God to reshape my thinking on one concept, which affects just about every other thing I have ever thought of. That is what the book does. That is what it does. It is eternal. It keeps revealing truth to us as we grow and unfolding itself to us on a regular daily basis throughout the years.

I think Paul said it best, and I close with this in Ephesians chapter 3, verse 8, where he says:

Ephesians 3:8

Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

They are unsearchable, folks. It is an infinite book given into finite people. It is a book that is holy and eternal and the very words of God given to us who do not deserve it, and it takes the Holy Spirit of God and a contrite heart to get out of it. But when you do, and when you sell your whole soul to it, and you invest your life in it, God will reveal to you the very truths on an ongoing basis. That is why the Word of God is the number one thing in our church that we teach, we stand on, we preach on, we make no apologies for it, and we hold the Word of God up as what it is, the absolute infallible truth of the Word of God by the living God to you and to me.

Let us pray. Father, thank You and praise You for all You do for us. Thank You for today and this great passage. May it now make a little bit more sense to them if they can have a foothold here to grow and grasp the great truths. We love You. Pray, Father, throughout the day as You will continue the blessings and throughout this next week. Pray for our little high school kids, Lord, as we put together this great evangelism movement that is going to put them right in the center of everything that they do and let them have their own, grow to their own ministry and be part of that. I just pray, Father, that in everything that You do, You will get the honor and glory and the praise. In Jesus' name, in His holy name, we ask it. Amen.