

# Proverbs 11:1

Sunday 1/11/2015

If you have your Bibles, we want to turn to the Book of Proverbs again. Proverbs chapter 11 is where we started last week. Last week we started probably one of the single greatest studies that you are ever going to take in the Bible on the aspect of giving us a complete context of the Christian life. The Christian life can be a very complex concept. It can be something that the average person does not get a right understanding of. It eludes them all of their life. Not that they do not get saved, but they never figure out exactly how Christianity is to work in their life.

We started to talk about last week what it really means to overcome. The Bible talks about overcoming the world. The Bible talks about being an overcomer. The day you got saved, you have the ability to overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil. Last week we began the study that will really show how to accomplish that in your life. We had a great introduction to some great, incredible principles that wherever we are at, whatever level spiritually we are on, we can take it and grow from that point. If you are just a young Christian trying to figure out the Bible, then you have the ability to build on that. If you are someone that has been around for a while and growing in the Word, then you can pick it up and go from there.

We are talking about probably the single greatest aspect of the Christian life, and that is the concept of having a biblical balance in our lives. You remember last week was an introduction to it all, but yet I showed you how that God and the Word of God is a perfect, complete balance. It is very important for us to see that because obviously the rest of the things that we are as Christians and the things that we do have to go back to those two concepts.

You remember I took you all the way back to the beginning of God's creation, all the way back to Genesis 1:1-2. I showed you how that God's original plan was in every way to establish a solid balance in His creation based on the Word of God.

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

You cannot have the beginning of what God is doing in His balance without the Word of God being there.

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

You cannot separate what God is doing in His balance in creation from the balance of the Word of God, and that is why we put it all together. We saw the fall of Satan. We talked about it briefly in Genesis 1:1-2, Ezekiel 28, and Isaiah 14, how that when Satan fell, or Lucifer fell and became Satan, it threw the universe out of balance. Then we talked about Genesis 3, the fall of man, how that God recreated the balance, put a garden, a perfect place, and yet man this time decided to go against God and threw the earth out of balance.

Then we saw after a period of time how that with the crucifixion of Christ and by His death, His resurrection, that God was restoring the ability for man through the Lord Jesus Christ to have that perfect balance that God originally intended. That is really where we were at last week. It

has been said, and it is so true, you have heard me say it many, many times, that all history is a simple formula of God moving down history to establish His plan in a perfect balance, and then the devil moving in opposition to it to disrupt that plan and set up a false balance. That is so true.

I told you last week that the fundamental problem with the world system is the fact that it is out of balance. Yet at the same time, fundamentally the problem with most of God's people today and why they cannot have the overcoming concept in their life and the victory in their life is because they are out of balance. So we started last week to explain it, started last week to lay it out, to explore it, to define a biblical balance in four or five areas of our lives that will impact us in every way of life and everything that we do.

Today I want to continue with Proverbs 11:1, and I want to go into it even a little bit deeper today. I want to look at this biblical balance. Last week we looked at it, as I said, from God and God's Word and saw how that both God and His plan and His Word are balanced. Today I want to look at the ministry. I want to look at our church. I want to look at the concept of the church. I want to show you ten principles about a balance. There are probably a hundred of them, two hundred of them, but we do not have time to go through them all. I picked out the main ones that I think will really help you.

Next week we are going to talk about the balance and show you some concepts in your own personal relationship with Christ, how to get a perfect balance in your life, how to get a perfect balance in your family, in your relationship with someone that you are thinking about getting married with, or your wife or your husband that you are already married to, your children, and all the issues of life. When we are done with it, you are going to have a pretty good idea of what a balance is and we will work on it from there.

*A false balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight.*

Let us pray. Father, help us today to grab the Word of God in our hearts and to hide it and to grab these concepts and to understand them and help me to make it clear and plain to these good people that there is a process that they can go through to establish themselves as a good balance in their life. We love you. We thank you for all you do for us now and we will thank you and praise you in Jesus' name for His sake we ask it. Amen.

## I. The Rule of Emphasis: God's Priorities in Scripture

I have a fundamental rule that I always follow when it comes to God and the Bible. I use this rule all the time. It is something that has been with me for probably 40 years and I learned it very early in life and I thank God for it. It really helps me to keep my balance. It really helps me to keep my doctrine straight. It is a very simple rule, but as we all know, most things that are profound in our lives are usually very simple things in the Bible. It is man who makes it complicated.

Simply it is this: Never put more emphasis on something in the Bible than God does. That sounds like a simple thing. That is one of the most profound things that you will ever grasp and understand if you ever get it. Never put more emphasis on something in the Bible more than God

does. In other words, always let the Bible set its own priority with itself. Let the Bible tell you what the important things are. Do not get in there and decide that you want to believe this so you are going to orchestrate all of these different things that are going to lead you to believe that this is really important. There is a balance that you have got to have when it comes to the Word of God and when you let the Bible set its own priorities, you are well on your way to establishing that kind of a balance.

I am going to give you a couple examples this morning. We know that the theme of the Bible is the second coming of Christ. How do I know that? It is called the day of the Lord in the Bible. It is called "that day" or "the day" in the Word of God. I have had people argue with me with that. I have had people think that salvation was the theme of the Bible. I am not putting salvation as not a very important doctrine in the Bible, but it is not the theme of the Bible. I have had people say, "Well, I believe that Christ is the theme of the Bible." Well, He is one of the pre-eminent figures in the Word of God, but He is not the theme of the Bible. The theme of the Bible is the second coming of Christ. The theme of the Bible is the day of the Lord.

You say, "How do you know that?" Because you are going to find in the Word of God over 1,200 times you find that term. If I found a term in the Bible 1,200 times in the Old Testament, I am not even talking about the New Testament. If I found one phrase over 1,200 times in 39 books of the Bible, you know what it would lead me to believe? That is a pretty important thing He is trying to emphasize to me. That is exactly what it is. The day of the Lord is the key and the theme of the Bible, that day. God is trying to emphasize something.

I will show you another example. Every book that I ever read on the book of 1 John, and 1 John is that little book in the back, not the Gospel, but written by the same author, but it is in the back of your Bible, 1, 2, and 3 John. It has only got five chapters in it. Every book you are going to read, every commentary you are going to get on it, every preacher I ever heard will tell you that the theme of that book is love. They all do. They are going to tell you, every book you read, every preacher you hear, they are going to say, "Now, the theme of this book is love." You know that is not true. You go through those five little chapters, and 27 times in five short chapters, you find the word "to know." You find the word "knowing." You find the word "to know God." The theme of that book is not love. The theme of that book is getting to know God.

But you see, that is 21st century Christianity, is it not? We always try to love God without knowing God. That is the problem with God's people today. You know why you go along with God for a short time and then you do not go with Him anymore? You get saved and you love Him, and then six weeks later you get a better deal and you do not love Him anymore? You know why? Because you fell in love with Him. When you fall in love with somebody, then it is easy to fall out of love with that person when you get a better deal. The key to any relationship, certainly the key to a relationship with God, is not just loving that person, but getting to know God. When you get to know God, you cannot help but love God. That is how it works. 27 times in that little book, never take something that God does not emphasize and make it your chief doctrine in the Bible. Never do that.

I will show you another one. You take the concept of tongues. We have brethren and good people who believe in speaking in tongues. When you talk with them, I have talked with them all my life. Some of my best friends believe in speaking in tongues. I am not criticizing them at all in any way, shape, or form, but what I am telling you is this: They will give you the illusion. I have asked them this before. They have no answer. They give you the impression that everybody in the Bible is speaking in tongues. You realize when you put my rule to it, you only find somebody speaking in tongues in the Bible three times and they are all in the book of Acts. Three times. You see how not following that little rule will get you out of balance every time? Three times in the book of Acts, somebody speaks in tongues.

Paul writes seven books to the churches. He writes four books to pastors. He tells them how to pray. He tells them how to read the Bible. He tells them they should preach the Bible. He tells them they should win souls. He tells them they should work for God. He tells them they should help others. But when it comes to tongues, he never says a word to them. All this concept of tongues is speaking in tongues three times in your Bible, in the book of Acts. Never one time does he write it to the church other than 2 Corinthians where he is not instructing them to do that. He is telling them, "You guys are screwed up when you are doing this wrong." That little rule is one of the greatest little things to help you keep the balance. Do not ever build your whole belief system on something that is so minute in the Bible. Make sure you never emphasize something more than God does.

I will give you another good example. We have in Christianity today a heresy called Calvinism. Calvinism is a teaching. Sometimes you hear it called today. It has been kind of resurrected in the last 30 years. Now they call it Reformation theology. We know it for those of us who know a little bit about the Bible as the aspect of predestination. It simply comes down to basically, and I am not going to get into it in a great way today, I am just going to show you these examples. It basically is the sovereignty of God. What does that mean? It means that God is sovereign. It means that God is supreme. It is basically the sovereignty of God versus the free will of man.

Basically what it teaches is the fact that God in His sovereignty looked down into history or in the future long before you and I were born and in His sovereignty, God picked you to be saved, picked you to be lost. He picked you to be saved and you to be lost. He picked some people to go to heaven and some people to die and go to hell. If you are one of the ones He picked, there is nothing you can do to keep from going to heaven. If you are one of the ones He did not pick, nothing you can do to get to heaven. That is Calvinism in its basic form. That is Reformation theology. That is predestination. It is basically, as I said, the sovereignty of God, God's sovereignty willing some of you to go to heaven and some of you to go to hell versus the Bible teaching of the free will of man.

The Bible teaches that every man, every woman that ever walked this planet has a free will. God's spirit reaches down and touches them and then based on your free will, you decide whether you are going to go to heaven or not. God never has no choice in it. God allows you to decide. That is free will. It is basically the sovereignty of God versus the free will of man. The idea that God chose some of you to go to heaven and some to go to hell, it is ridiculous.

Now, why do I say that? Because I follow my little rule. That little rule has never failed me in over 40 years of study in the Bible. In the Bible, I find free will 17 times. I never find the sovereignty of God one place. Now, why would you build a whole system of your beliefs on a term that is never found in the Bible and then still claim to be a Christian based organization that believes the Bible? You do not believe the Bible. If you did, you would believe in free will 17 times. When it comes to sovereignty of God, you could not find it in there with a laser beam and a flashlight. That is better than that.

In fact, the heresy of Calvinism is built on five points. Point one is limited atonement. That means that God limited His salvation to some, not everybody gets it. Irresistible grace. If you are one of the ones chosen, you are irresistibly drawn to God. If you are not, you are never going to be drawn to God. Unconditional election. God chose you before the foundation of the world. Total depravity and the perseverance of the saints. Here is a whole religion that has built itself on five terms. I dare you anyplace, anytime, anywhere, I will pay you a hundred million dollars for each of these if you can find them in the Bible. They are not in there. I am telling you, learn this little rule: Never emphasize something more than God does. Never do. That little rule will help you in keeping you the right balance, giving you a just weight.

## II. Our Church's Foundational Beliefs

Our church is built on seven absolute Bible teachings. Basically, this is going to be a message to you today that is going to tell you if this church is the right church or not. I do not want you to believe it because I tell you it is. If this church, if any church cannot stand the scrutiny of going to the Bible to find out if it really believes the Bible, then you better, it is suspect. You better check it out and look deeper.

Our church is built on seven absolute Bible teachings and they are clearly found in the scriptures hundreds of times. They have been part of our belief system for over 1900 years.

1. We believe the deity of Christ.
2. We believe the eternal security of the believer.
3. We believe that baptism does not save you, it just gets you wet. Only the blood of Christ can wash away your sins and only adults, and we never baptize or sprinkle babies.
4. We believe in the pre-millennial return of Christ.
5. We believe in the local church and the priesthood of the believers.
6. We believe within the church, there are two offices that the church holds, a pastor and a deacon. They are both run by men.
7. We believe that the Word of God is absolutely God's final authority. When I say the Word of God, I am talking about a King James 1611 Authorized Version.

Those are the seven Baptist distinctives that are found throughout the Bible. The Bible-based doctrines go back through the true line, all through the church, all the way back to Antioch. I did not invent them. Somebody that I knew down in history did not invent them. We just know who we are, what our heritage is as God's people and what we believe and why. It is just that simple.

Today, as I said a minute ago, we are going to use our church and our ministry here, this work of God, and we are going to see if it passes the biblical test. I get criticized many, many times for talking about other churches. I am preaching on this one this morning. I am even playing a playing field. I have said it to them now, if this church cannot stand that test of the Bible, then you guys better find someplace else to go next week. No, I do not even wait till next week. Self-examination, self-scrutiny is always good. Somebody ought to try it sometime. But if this church cannot face that biblical test and scrutiny, then we better look at it.

You have heard me say many, many times, my job as pastor here understanding the time that I live in and understanding a little bit about the Bible, understanding the history of the church and how the book of Revelation lays out the seven periods of church history, how each one of them lays itself out down through, actually through history. You have heard me say it many, many times. The greatest church period of history was the Philadelphian church age. It was about 1600 to 1900. The most despicable church history period is the one we are living in right now called the Laodicean. I have told you many, many times, we are stuck here. I wish we could have been born someplace else. It would have been a great deal. But we are stuck here. God allowed us to be born where He did and put us together where He did.

So my goal is simply this: to build in this sickening Laodicean church period, build a Philadelphian church. Build a church that still stands on the truth, still preaches the truth, still believes the truth and takes people in and let the Word of God transform them and then put them back out to set the world on fire. With that idea, there are certain characteristics that a New Testament Bible-believing church has to have. So do follow and see if we are on track or not, based on the Bible.

### III. The Church's Mandate: Work for God

In the New Testament church, there has to be a base of works for God, a base of operation that does the work of God. He called us to do and allow me to just briefly define that for you. There is another heresy in the world of Christianity, and that is that you can work your way to heaven. It is the teaching that your good works will get you to heaven, that if you give money or you do this or do a lot of social work or help people and all that stuff and all that is good and all that is certainly part of Christianity, but that does not get you to heaven. Works will never get you to heaven in any way, shape, or form.

*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

I want you to know this, you do not work your way to heaven. You clearly understand that, amen? I do not want any confusion here. You understand. You do not work your way to heaven. But after salvation, brother, you do work your way to and through the judgment of the seat of Christ. There is a work to be done. There is a work to be done.

*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

Now, let us look at that. "Needeth not to be ashamed." Do you know where that ashamed shows up? It shows up in the Laodicean church in Revelation 3:18. When God talks about that church and how despicable it is, He says, "You better get some eyesalve and put it on your eyes so you can see that the shame of your nakedness do not appear."

*I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.*

Do you know where it appears? Moving right on through it.

*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

He is telling us very clearly that you better be a workman. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 3, the greatest chapter in the Bible of the judgment of the seat of Christ, that every man's work shall be made manifest for the day shall declare it, of what sort it is. You are going to sort it out. You are going to sort it out. You say, "Well, your church is built on work." You bet it is, brother, the work of Christ. After you get saved by grace, there is a work that needs to be done.

*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

There is a job to get done. You see, you get to heaven by grace, not by works, but brother, after salvation, you have got to work your way through the judgment seat of Christ by what you did, the work for Him. In that respect, this church is based on the work of God in your life. My goal is to get you to work. That is my goal. My goal is to get you saved, get you disciplined, build some things into your life, help you work through and overcome some things. But I have an ulterior motive. An ulterior motive is to get you to do the work that God saved you for, that He died for you for. That is my job.

Somebody said, "Well, I just do not know about that." Then you need to go to Matthew 20 and you will find there in that chapter, a great study on the five shifts of going to work in the sense from Christ came right up to the time we live in. Five periods of history where the workers go into the vineyard. The problem with most of God's people, they do not even know where their shift started. You will find thousands of God's people saved and on their way to heaven who have absolutely no work in their life for God. They will resent any church or anybody who does.

Do you know what happens when you, in a physical sense, you quit your job, you do not want to work anymore? You just want to be a bum and you move off others every once in a while. You know what that ultimately happens when you do not have a work in your life that you go to every week? You become destitute, broken, and you become in deep trouble. In a spiritual sense, it is the same way. Do you know what happens as a Christian when you will not work for God? You become spiritually destitute and broken. It is the same thing.

## IV. Biblical Balance in the Christian Life: Core Principles

I want to talk to you about 10 principles of balance today in our church and our ministry. We are going to put it to the test today. We are going to find out, we are going to line this thing right up with the Bible. Who knows? I may become a Papiscopalian right after we are done today.

1.) A church, a Christian life should be three things:

- It should be a walk with God.
- It should be a worship for God.
- It should be a work of God.

*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.*

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

*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

You will find people with a walk, but no worship or work. You will find people with a work, but no walk. Some people do not have any of these things, but to be complete and have a balance for a church who is producing Christians, you need to teach them that they need to have a walk with God, a worship for God, and then a work of God. That is a New Testament Bible-based church. It will have a balance to it. The job of the pastor is to keep that balance as best he can by preaching and teaching. Not everybody will be happy with that. Some people will not want to have a work and they are going to get upset about it. But as long as God delights Himself in it, as He says in Proverbs 11:1, get over it.

2.) Churches today, as Christians in those churches, they need to have three things that will give them a balance:

- You need to know what you believe.
- You need to know why you believe it.
- You need to know where that belief came from.

We have a lot of Christians that run around just parroting what they hear. They read some book or they get on some website or they hear their preacher or somebody say something and they never investigate it. They never go down to it. More like the Calvinist people. They never stop and consider, "Wow, what I believe is great. It just is not in the Bible." Now that may not bother some people, that would bother me. So you need to know what you believe and then you need to know why you believe it. That is not enough to make the complete balance. You have got to know what you believe, why you believe it, but then you have got to know where did that belief come from? You get those three things down in your life and everything that you do, what you believe about the Bible, you are going to get a balance.

## V. The Importance of Church History and Its Balance

The importance of history in the Bible. Somebody says, "Why is that so important in my life?" Because the Bible is a history book. That is why. Bibles are many things and the Bible lays itself

out in many ways. But one of the premier things that the Bible does is give you a complete accurate understanding of history, not from CNN or Fox News or Bill O'Reilly, but from God's standpoint. That is important because if you are going to get a balance in history, you are going to have to realize that time has three parts to it. It has a past, it has a present, it has a future. I say it all the time, if you do not know where you have come from, you have no idea where you are going. Do not kid me. If you do not know where you come from, you do not know where you are going. If you do not know where you come from, you do not know where you are going, please do not tell me you know where you are at. You are caught in that maze of life.

In church history, it will be balanced around three groups of men when you begin to study it. I am not getting into it deep. I am just wanting to make my point today. From the time of Christ up to about 500 AD, they are called Apostolic Church Fathers, Anti-Nicene Church Fathers, Post-Nicene Church Fathers. The last two built around the Council of Nicaea, 325 AD. All of church history, all of history around man will be built around those three. Once you get past 500 AD, these three men will produce three more groups of people that are larger now. From 500 AD up to where we live today in 2015, you are going to find three more groups of people. You are going to find biblical men, you are going to find non-biblical men, and you are going to find compromising men. These men are groups that will form for you a balance in history.

I mean, come on, did you ever wonder there are a thousand churches out there today, and there are a thousand denominations out there, and there are 10,000 beliefs out there, and you can find a different church in every church corner in America or around the world, but up to, up from the time you come through the Bible when you come through it, and you get up from 33 AD to 1500, first 1500 years, there are only two churches. Only two. There are not three, there are not four, there are not six or seven, there are only two. Now, why do you not know that? Here we are today with 10,000 churches, 50,000 beliefs, everybody has got a denomination, "I got this, I got that, I am this, I am that," but for 1500 years, there were only two denominations, there were only two churches, there were only two Bibles, and there were only two fundamental beliefs. How did it get so screwed up from there to here? Well, you better find out at some point in your life. Not today.

You are going to find that these three groups will always be associated with three cities found in the Bible. Charles Dickens, many, many years ago, wrote a book called \*A Tale of Two Cities\*. Most of you probably read it in school. When God wrote His book, in the book of Acts, it was \*A Tale of Three Cities\*.

- The first one is Antioch of Syria. That is where they are first called Christians in Antioch. The first New Testament church is found in Antioch. The first Bible teachers and preachers are found in Antioch. The first ministry trained, people trained for the ministry is in Antioch. The first missionary trips come out of Antioch. Antioch is the model church for the New Testament. The true biblical line of the New Testament, Christianity starts in Antioch, and you can trace it all the way up to the 21st century, if you understand the balance. Antioch is good.
- The second city is Alexandria, Egypt, founded by Alexander the Great in 323 BC, but later under the Egyptian rule became the cultural center of the world by the first century, and the

seat of all worldly novels. The library at Alexandria was unparalleled in its knowledge in a worldly sense. It is here where the first Bible corruption takes place. It is here where men like Philo, Pantanaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen took the manuscripts out of Antioch and corrupted them over 60,000 places. It is defined in the Bible as not a good place. Egypt in the Bible is a type of the world. Pharaoh is one of the types of the Antichrist. Joseph said, "When you guys come out, do not leave my bones in Egypt." He did not want to stay there.

- The third city defined there for you is Rome. You have got to get a balance of these three. The date of the founding of Rome is unknown. Four, 500 years before Christ, Rome had come to power in the Roman Empire, and she ruled the world by the time that Christ shows up, and she was responsible for millions and millions of Christians being put to death for their faith in Christ. Rome has always been and always will be the greatest enemy that Christianity ever had on this earth. It was Rome that killed John the Baptist. It was Rome that tried to kill the baby Jesus. It was Rome that crucified Christ. It was Rome that had Him beaten, had Him whipped. They put a Roman robe on Him. It was Rome that crucified Him. Rome killed millions of Christians down through the 19th centuries afterwards. Rome killed and converted the corrupt of the New Testament Word of God and set up a false religion to help keep the true church from ever getting the job that God wanted to do. Why in the world would anybody today following a Bible balance think that there is anything going to come out of good of Rome? Because they do not know the balance.

Now, what are you all so quiet for? Do not get mad at me. I did not write that. I said we were going to find out if we are a Bible-based church or not. Maybe you do not want to be, but I do. I want what is right. I want to know in history where it is right and where maybe you do not care. I care.

To understand the history of the Bible, they get a balance between these three cities. They represent three groups of manuscripts that all Bibles come from. Your King James Bible you have got in your lap comes out of Antioch. It is called the Byzantine text down in history. We do not have time to get into all of it today. We could spend months on it. The text out of Egyptian is called the Hesychian and it is bad. The one out of the Roman Catholic Church came out of Egypt a little bit later on and corrupted everything that was around it.

The true Bible-believing church of Jesus Christ has always been here. This is my point. You have to know where it has been. You have to know not just what you believe. You need to know why you believe it, but that is not enough either today. You better know where that belief came from. If you do not know it, you are vulnerable. The real Bible-believing church and real Bible-believing Christians of Jesus Christ has always been down through history. Sometimes it is hard to see. Sometimes it has been overshadowed by all the stuff that goes on.

About four or five months ago, I was talking to a guy I met and I can tell very quickly, he did not like me and I could not understand that. I am the most likable guy on the planet. But he knew I was a pastor. We were talking back and forth. I could feel his rough edges. He had some rough edges. He said to me, "So I hear you are a Baptist." I said, "Yes, I am." He says, "Huh." He says, "I got a question for you." I said, "What is that?" He says, "Where was your church before the Reformation?" I said, "Oh, that is easy." "Well, where was it?" Let me ask you a question. Where

was your face before you washed it? Behind the dirt. You know where my church was before the Reformation? It was behind the dirt of all the other false stuff that was coming out. They were there. They were down in the Albigenses and the Waldensians. They were there in the Huguenots and the Paulicians. They were there in the Cathari. They are all down through there. But you see, we get the idea because we do not want to find out where we came from. We do not care about our roots. We do not get a balance in those things.

We make no apology for it. We are a Bible-believing, Bible-teaching church. We do a work for God to the best of our ability as God gives us the light to do it. Emphasizing salvation with God without emphasizing a work for God is heresy. You know why? Because, here again, the model of the New Testament church. Every man in the New Testament in the book of Acts from on who got saved got in the New Testament church and did a work for God. Now I know some of your friends will not like that and give you a tough time with that. They do not have any work for God. They are out of balance completely and they are going to knock you down to make themselves feel better. But that is just the way it is.

## VI. The Church's Ministry and Its Impact

3.) Do you want to do a work for God? Make no apology for it. In the Bible, the balance for you and me is to get some things down the day we get saved in three aspects. I want to talk about this church and three-fold aspects of a church and a Christian from getting saved and getting the Word of God in your life. The day you got saved, this church preaches it. The day you got saved, salvation affects you in three things and it balances you out.

- The first thing it affects you in is your head.
- The second thing it affects you in is your heart.
- The third thing it affects you in is your feet.

*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

There is your head and there is your heart. The first time you heard the salvation, it went into your head. When you decided to do something about it, you know where it went from your head? It went into your heart. When it goes into your heart, you know where it is supposed to go next? Into your feet. Do something for God. Where did you ever get the idea that you just got saved and then instead of standing on a promise you just sit on the premises? Where did you ever get the idea that once you got saved you did not work? You are out of balance. Salvation affected your head, it affected your heart, and it affects your feet.

That is why in Exodus 12 at the Passover, all the way back there in the book of Exodus, what a great study that is on the crucifixion. They eat the Passover lamb. After they eat the Passover lamb, you know what God tells them to do? He says after you eat that lamb, picture receiving Christ, He says, "Get your staff on your hands, get your shoes on your feet." You know why? You are going to move out. You are going to do something.

*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*

You are going someplace after you are saved.

*And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!*

Your feet, you are supposed to go someplace. In Ephesians 6:15, talking about the whole armor of God, it says that you and I have our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

*And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;*

The preparation. When you get saved, it gets in your head, it gets in your heart, and it gets in your feet. If it is not in your feet this morning, you are out of balance. Nothing personal. You are out of balance. See how simple that is? You want to work for God in your life. This church is going to teach you how to work for God and get the Word of God in three things in your life. Get it into your head, get it into your heart, get it into your feet. How easy could that be? The problem is God's people are out of balance. I will tell you again, there are a lot of people who get it in their head who never get it in their heart. A lot of people who get it in their head and in their heart never get it in their feet. You want to be balanced? Do you? You want to be balanced? Head, heart, and feet. God has got a job for you to do. That is the job of this church.

4.) We take and follow models in the Bible. Because we know from 1 Corinthians 10:11 that we are told that the things that happen in the Old Testament to the nation of Israel are for us.

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

The Bible says that they are our ensamples. An example is something that you do, an example is something that you are. So we go back to Joshua 1, that great book on the battle of Christian life in the Old Testament. We find a balance of my attitude toward the Word of God. The attitude of this church will produce the attitude that is the right attitude in you if this church is doing its job.

*Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them.*

The first thing he says there is that you and I are to believe the Word of God. God made you some promises. Do you know that? The day you got saved God made you some promises. He gave you a book of promises. The question is, did He or did He not? The question is, how many of those promises have you cashed in on since you have been saved? The first thing he says there is you need to believe the book.

*Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.*

The next thing he says is, do not just believe the book, then you obey the book. You do what it tells you to do. Over there in Luke, my favorite verse, I think it is Luke 6, dealing with Christians. He says, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and not do the things which I say?" There is

modern 20th century Christianity. How do people get around that? They get around that because they have no balance and most churches they go to do not teach a balance. We teach it here. Some of you do not like it but you are going to get it anyhow.

*Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.*

So he says believe the book, obey the book, and then you want to rest in the book. You want to come to the place in your life that the promises God gave you, you know they are going to get you through so whatever comes in life is going to get you to the point where you know the book is going to get you through. You know that will get you through anything in life. I do not care what problem you have. I do not care what heartache comes into your life. If you believe that book is for you and you have learned to rest in that book because you obey it, because you believe it, I do not know one thing in this life is ever going to get you down. That is a balance for any Christian. That is a balance at every church that I have. That is a balance of any Christian. We should simply believe it and obey it and rest in it.

5.) Revelation 1:3 tells me to keep a balance with God and His Word in three things.

*Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.*

You have got three things there. This church ought to teach you how to read it. This church ought to make sure you hear it and this church ought to help you keep it. After you get saved when you start coming to any church then you ought to read the Word of God. You ought to hear what it says and you ought to do your best to keep it. A lot of people read the Bible, they just never hear it. A lot of people read it and they hear it, they just do not follow it, they do not do it. The key is to read it, hear what it says and then keep it.

*Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.*

6.) This church has ministries. The ministry is people. We minister to people and when I work with people and when you work with people we try to give them a balance by giving them three things in their life. Many times they do not know it, I do not understand it but we do so we are trying to accomplish something.

*Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.*

The job at this church is threefold. The job of you working with somebody in this church is threefold.

- The first thing you do is you get that person rooted. You get their roots down. You do that with discipleship one, discipleship two, spending time with them, helping them. We do it in various ways around here but it is getting their roots down in the Bible. You know a tender plant, a plant that you just put in the ground you have to protect till its roots get down pretty deep. You do not want to get too cold weather on it or too much rain or too much sun. You want to get the roots down so you protect it. After about six or seven months that thing can

stand any test of anything in the weather. That is the way it is with God's people. When you first come in here and you need help and you are tender like a tender root you want to get you rooted. So we kind of protect you. We put the things in your life, give you everything you need, help you every way we can. Our job is to get you rooted.

- Once you get you rooted then the next job of the church is to build you up. It is to take now what you have rooted and now you have got down this way now we have got to go this way. We have got you down deep now we have got to get you growing up. We have got your roots down in the Word of God now we have got to get your stature up where you are growing and doing something for the Lord. So we root you first and then we build you up. That is edification, that is helping you. That is me looking at you and finding out and looking and seeing what God has got for you and what your qualities are and what the things that you look like you are good at and then help develop it. It is you coming into me and saying, "You know what, I really want to do this and I want to get involved in this but I do not know how," let me help you how. That is building you up.
- So when this church roots people down in the Word of God and then builds them up the third thing we try to do is establish you. That establish you is not just to establish you in the church but to establish you in your own relationship with God that you know who you are in Christ because that is the number one fundamental thing. If you do not know who you are in Christ and you do not know what your relationship should be with Him and what He should be with you then you have got some issues in your life. I am here to help you with it, we can fix it but brother some things need to be done. So the job of this church and the job for a Christian is threefold. It is to root you in the Word of God, build you up in the Word of God and to establish you in the Word of God.

7.) In Joshua 1 again, you find in the ministry you need a balance for ministry and in our lives for three things. I will tell you right now when I read that chapter these three things stick out like a sore thumb and I will be honest with you these are the character qualities that I look for in people. I want you all to be part of my ministry. I want you all to have a work with God because God saved you for it. God did not save you to sit. God saved you to do something. You may have chosen to sit and not do anything that is between you and Him but I am telling you fundamentally from the Bible standpoint you have nothing, no grounds to stand on. God saved you to do a work. I am not saying the day after you get saved you go out and become a missionary to Africa. I am not talking about that. I am talking about fundamentally letting us root you, ground you and establish you in the Word of God.

- The first quality that comes out of here is you find somebody that is faithful in the ministry. You know you only get out of something what you put into it. Somebody says, "Well, I cannot understand the Bible." That is because you do not do anything to understand it. You know most people, I know how it was when I taught my girls how to drive a car for the first time. It was a disaster and now they are both really good drivers but you should have saw them the first time. I remember bought Kelly a car that was a stick shift, a little Pinto or something like that, a little something I forget what it was and I said, "All right," took her out a couple times, took her around the shoulder how to drive it and I said, "Okay, stay in the neighborhood, drive up and down the streets, get used to getting on a hill and letting that

clutch out, go ahead, stick, every girl needs to know how to drive a stick." So I said, "Get up there and do it." So she is gone a little bit and next thing I know I see her in the front porch and she is crying and cars parked up in the middle of the street, she could not get it up the hill, she just turned it off and left it. We will not even go with Jamie doing how to drive a car, she, but both of them are great drivers now they really are, they keep the insurance companies in business. Jamie is the only girl I know go around the corner and blow two tires out on this side and never know why she did it and then when Danny tries to ask her why her answer is so simple like every woman, "I do not know why, I just need two tires." You know you did not drive very good the first time. If you would apply your driving like you do the Bible, you would be taking the bus to work. Why is it that you would work so hard to learn how to drive but you will not work so hard to learn this book? When you started your job the first day, remember them butterflies you had, you did not know what was going on, everybody around you knew what was happening, knew how to pull this and pull that, where this file was, where this was or where these parts were and you are just kind of lost for a while. I promise you six, seven months after you are there, you could keep up with the best of them. Why is it that you will work so hard to learn how to do your job but you will not work very hard to learn this book? If I did not know this Bible was the Word of God any other way, I know it because we will invest time and learn it everything else in life but when it comes to this, "I do not understand it." That is because you only get out of something what you put into it. You are not putting anything in it, that is all. It is not complicated, nobody is mad at you, we all love you, you are a good person, no problem, but you have got to be faithful in the ministry.

- The second thing you have to be fearless in the ministry. I am going to tell you something, this will be true of everybody here. I know it sounds nice, "Well, I am going to go get in a Bible believing church and I am going to learn the Bible." Let me tell you something, there is always going to be a cost associated with that. Not everybody is going to be as happy as you are about it and at some point in your life you are going to have to display the courage and the fearlessness to take your stand. I do not know where I would be right now, I would probably be in the insane asylum someplace if many, many years ago when I saw that book I made up my mind that I did not care who believed it or who liked it or who did not like it. I saw what it was, I saw what it could do for me and I dug my stand on that book right there and never wavered off of it. It will be something in your life at some point, maybe with your friends, maybe with your parents, maybe with your work people, at someplace you are going to have to take your stand and you are going to have to be fearless about it. That is hard for a lot of people because most people do not like confrontation, most people do not like people being mad at them, they do not like people being upset with them. Hey, let me tell you something, follow this plan, being hot water so long you get hard boiled. My advice to you. So you have got to be faithful in the ministry, you have got to be fearless in the ministry.
- Then you have got to be fervent in the ministry. That is passion for the things of God. You know me, I enjoy life and I like the things of life. Nothing wrong with having a nice car, nothing wrong with having a nice house, nothing wrong with having all the nice things of life, not a thing wrong with it. I have a nice house, I have a nice car, I have two, four, five, six or seven now nice dogs. It is all great, all kinds of things in life is good but I want to tell you

something, you have got to keep it in balance. I know people who take more care of their lawn than they do the ministry in the church. I mean I have got people in my neighborhood that just, I mean they are meticulous about their lawn and my lawn is not, there are bare spots in it, dogs running up and down the backyard. In the spring you get this ChemLawn man out here that is spraying to keep the dandelions down. What is wrong with dandelions?

Personally, I think they all work for the CIA when they spray your yard, it is listening devices all through there, they are hearing what you are saying. My neighbors do not like me because of the fact that I have got dandelions. They even tell the ChemLawn man, "Once you go over and talk to him." I had a guy last year that spring, ChemLawn guy pulled up out there, he just sprayed his lawn and he says, "Hey," he says, "I can get rid of these for you, no problem at all." He says, "I can spray that yard and they will be gone in a week." And I said, "Why, what is wrong with them?" And I said, "Why you are at it, go back and tell all my neighbors that I do not appreciate them dumping all their dandelions in my yard because they do not have it and they are all over here." I have seen people that had swimming pools and you know I think of my sister and my brother, they do a great thing for the Lord but they have got a huge almost Olympic swimming pool in their back where they play, it is huge. I mean those things are a lot of work. Do not listen to her, she has no idea what she is talking about. She would not know an Olympic swimming pool if it fell out of the tree. It is a big pool. You know it is a big pool. Well, come on, you know you need to get control of yourself when I lie, you are supposed to help me out with it man. I know the work they have got, they have got a pool house, in a pool house they have got things they put on the wall that they have got little long pools with little strainers on them, they are dipping out at night, dipping the bugs out. They have got something that goes across the bottom eating whatever it eats down there, mechanical thing, not a live thing. It has got a big hose on it, it has got chlorine in it, but I have the chlorine in the water about that is a lot of work man. Many times that takes the place of the work of God and I am just telling you and I am somebody who loves life but you have got to be faithful in the ministry, you have got to be fearless in the ministry, you have got to be fervent in the ministry.

8.) When it comes to the ministry and dealing with people in any ministry, you are going to find three kinds of people who form the out of balance crowd in any church. I do not care what church it is.

- You are going to find people who know what is going on.
- You are going to find people within that same church who do not have a clue what is going on.
- You are going to find people in that same church who do not care what is going on.

In the ministry and in every church you are going to have 20 people. I remember a time in the past I have asked, stopped and I have asked, "Hey, the last six months we have had 12 people saved, you know who they are?" People in this church did not have a clue. The interesting thing for me looking over from my perspective is watching God's people go from knowing what is going on to not caring what is going on.

9.) Ministries to people, a work of God and to be basically biblical balance in all that we do, this church follows three formats that you notice.

- We preach.
- We teach.
- We pray.

We preach on Sunday morning and Thursday nights. We teach you through discipleship one, two and all the different things we have got going on and all the myriad of special classes that we have. We pray. We have our prayer groups. We take our prayer requests. We are praying for each other all week long.

Churches in accordance with the book of Ephesians exist for just three reasons.

*And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:*

It all performs the balance. Do you begin to see how all this will work as to putting a balance in your life? The job of a pastor, the job of a church, the job of a ministry is to put all these balances together for you in a daily workable format. You do not get them all at one time. They have to be built in as you get rooted in.

## VII. The Name: Old Paths Baptist Church

10.) We call our church Old Paths Baptist Church. That is Jeremiah 6:16. I know that I can always tell where a person is at in the Bible. When you say, "What church do you go to?" and you say, "Well, I go to Old Paths Baptist Church," and he will say, "Whoa, what old paths?" I picked that name for a reason.

*Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein. Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Harken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken.*

There is a real science to names of churches. I do not know if you know that or not. I love names of churches. I love to drive around town. I always think how it does you some. You find some churches are called Bible Baptist Church, emphasis on the Bible. I like that. You find some churches called Antioch Baptist Church, they tie on the roof to Antioch. I like that. My home church in Ohio was called the Canton Baptist Temple, Baptist but the temple connected with temple being your body. You find some churches are called Grace Baptist Church, emphasis on grace. Some are called Fellowship Baptist Church, emphasis on fellowship. You have some that are called New Hope Baptist Church, emphasis on the new hope you get when you get saved. Some churches are named after places in the Bible. Some churches are named after doctrines in the Bible. Some churches are named after geographical locations within the city. We have down the road here the place called Tri-City. Tri-City is a church that is between three cities, so it is called Tri-City.

I had a buddy of mine out in Las Vegas. He had a church in Las Vegas, Nevada, and he was called Paradise Baptist Church. We always give him a tough time because it was Paradise Baptist Church, it worked for him. I have seen a New Life Baptist Church, emphasis on a new life. I have seen some old-time churches called Shiloh Baptist. Shiloh is a very important place in the Bible. Some churches get way carried away. I have seen churches at the Fellowship Table with the Bible and then Grace and the Holy Spirit Baptist Church. I do not think they know what they believe. Could you imagine getting that on a T-shirt?

I picked Old Path Baptist Church because it makes a statement. It makes a statement on who we are and what we teach and what we preach, and I think it shows the balance that I want to have here.

*Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.*

So I picked Old Path Baptist Church based on that verse because it says there, it says there that, "ask for the old paths."

- Our church is still on the old path. Nothing modern about us. We do not move into the modernistic world where we change the message so we can make you feel good. We do not cater to all the things that go on that make a beautiful building so you will come here and get a warm fuzzy feeling. We are, we are still on the old path. Our roots go back to Antioch and we simply believe what the line of heritage has believed and we still teach it. A lot of things that we believe would be quoted as heresy today by many other Baptist churches. You know what the tragedy that is? A hundred years ago what we believe was standard in every Baptist church in this country. They have changed. We have not. By the grace of God we never will. We are going to go the old way, or the old path. The Bible says it is the good way because it is based on the Bible and not man.
- Then it says, "stand in the ways." This church not only stays on the old path but we stand in the old way. It is God's way. We believe still that there is a way of righteousness that we ought to live our lives. We believe there is a way of faith that we ought to live our lives. We believe there is a certain way we ought to train up our children. We believe there is a certain way we ought to have and conduct our marriages. There is a certain way that we ought to induct the principles of God in our life. There is a certain way of truth that we should follow. There is a certain way of holiness that we should try to live. There is a way of ministry by doing the work of God.
- And we walk therein and then rest in what God has given us. So we are still on the old path. We are still standing on the old way. And the third one we are still preaching the old book. It says in Jeremiah 6:17, "a watchman, shouting the trumpet." In the Old Testament the watchman watched for the enemy to come and when he saw what was happening he blew the trumpet, the warning in the city. The job of any pastor is to stand down that wall, watch what is coming and then blow the trumpet every Sunday morning. Getting other people to get into the same ensemble, blow the trumpet too. It happens because you still stay on the old path. You stay on the old ways and you still preach the old book.

That is where we are at. I have told you many, many times that my goal is to keep this church as close to the New Testament biblical process found in the Bible as we can. Now you see and understand we put our church to the test today. It is Bible based. It is not perfect. No church is. But it is based on the Bible. Based on the Bible even when it is not perfect we have the wherewithal to work out any problem that comes because we just take it back to the Bible. That is how it works.

Next week I am going to bring you through and show you the balance in your own personal life. I am going to show it to you in your marriage. Show it to you with your kids. I am going to show it to you in your relationship with God. We are going to look at the aspect of this. We looked at it last week as God and the Word of God. This week the church and ministry. Next week we are going to apply it to ourselves. Let us have a word of prayer. Father we do thank you and praise you for the Lord Jesus. We love you. Thank you for all you do for us. Thank you for today. Thank you for these good people who want to grow and want to be everything that you want them to be. Lord we will just thank you and praise you for all you do for us now. Help us to always stay with the old book. Always stay on the old path and always stay in the old ways. We will thank you and praise you. In Jesus' name for His sake we ask it. Amen.