

# Proverbs 11:1

Sunday 1/18/2015

Well, if you have your Bibles this morning, I want to invite you to turn back to Proverbs chapter 11 again. Last week we looked at our second study on Proverbs 11:1. As I have told you for the last couple of weeks, we are probably in one of the greatest studies any Christian could ever take who truly wants to have, as the Bible talks about, that victorious Christian life. We try to make it so many different things: "Gotta read this book, gotta do this, gotta do that." But in reality, we are seeing, as the saying goes, where the rubber meets the road. The real secret of a successful Christian life is just getting and keeping a biblical balance in your life.

I have kind of divided this up as we come through here because I didn't want to really miss anything, even though we're not covering it anywhere near the degree that I would probably like to. But you're getting enough that you can go from there, and we can fill in the blanks on Thursday night Bible study.

## I. The Imperative of Biblical Balance

The first week we talked about how God was balanced, and how everything He does, He does it by a balance. Then I showed you how the devil wants to do everything he can to upset that balance. That's really how all history goes, and really how all the Bible goes. I also showed you how the Bible is the most perfectly balanced book that the world has ever seen.

The second week, we talked about our own church, and we talked about our ministry here. We put it under the scrutiny of what the Bible says. As I said last week, if a church cannot withstand the scrutiny of looking at it from a pure Bible standpoint to make sure that they're doing what the Bible says, the way the Bible says to do it, then you ought to be pretty leery of it because we all ought to be able to stand up to that scrutiny. So we did that, and we went through everything that a church should be biblically in a balance, and everything that a New Testament ministry should be in a balance. Like I said, we scrutinize our own work and put it to the test of the Word of God.

You remember last week I laid out for you 10 principles of balance that any church should have, that any ministry should have. You get on track with the pattern and the models that are found in the New Testament church, and there is where the balance really is. We saw the importance of church history, of how important that is to get a balance in everything, of knowing not just what you believe, but not just even why you believe it, but where did that belief come from?

Over my last 35 years in the ministry, 40 years really, over 40, I have probably taught church history 15, 20 times over various times of the year. The last time was three or four years ago, and I did it here. Probably it was the most comprehensive time that I have ever done it. We're going to try to form it into a book. Volume one's already out. John Busquette works on those and puts those out in a marvelous way. Probably going to have four or five volumes before it's all done.

The reason why I do that, and this is the reason why, and also so you understand why not only just with our books that we put out, anything that's meaningful, John usually takes it and formats it and gets it back out. Obviously, it's on cassette, you can get it, and also our website. We look

at, "Well, people can study it and all of these things and get it." And there are people around the country, a host of them that are on it. That's all good. But that's not really the purpose. The real purpose of everything that I want to get down in print is that there is a legacy left of this church for future generations to understand where its heritage comes from.

You hear me talk about Tommy Thomas, and you hear me talking about Phil Ward, two of the old boys that were out of the era of the 20s and really were two great institutions. And my father in the Lord, Mel Shabaka's life, and even Mel Shabaka, his impact into my life. The tragedy about those guys, and I think it's an absolute tragedy, they were great guys. They really knew what they were doing in the ministry. They probably set and blazed trails where no man has ever went before. They're responsible for putting scores of young men into the ministry. And yet they're all gone today and they're all passed off today. The tragedy is that not one thing that they ever understood and did was ever put down in writing where anybody could follow it. And that to me is a tragedy.

There needs to be a legacy carrying on so that if the Lord carries His coming 30 years from now, 40 years from now, that your roots, the roots of this church, are not lost in all that happens. Because there's going to be a time, and maybe not as me being pastor, but there'll be a time down the line someplace where this church will have to face its own hour of temptation. What will hold it to the rock and hold it to the Word will be the legacy that has been left that people understand what's going on. It's important to understand our roots and how the models in Christianity, in church history, and in the Bible work.

The Bible is filled with models. We just took the Bible from that standpoint, and I know the Bible's many things. It's an unparalleled book. I get that. But the models in the Bible form everything for us. I certainly don't know all the models in the Bible. I wouldn't pretend to, but I do understand that that is the key. I realize that for us to have a perfect balance in our life, we have to have a pattern. We have to have a perfect model. And they're found in the Word of God.

We talked about the church at Antioch last week. Of course, I told you that the church of Antioch is the model New Testament church for us. We follow that. We all talk about Paul, the Apostle Paul, what a great Christian he was. But Paul is the model missionary. Most people think that Paul was a pastor. Paul was never a pastor. Paul was the model missionary, and he's also an evangelist. He and Philip make up the model evangelist. That's the way it goes.

- You want a model for a pastor? It's Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. Those three books that Paul wrote, he wrote to those three young men who were pastoring; they're called the pastoral epistles. And there's your model for that.
- You want to follow and study about being a servant for God? It'll be 1 Thessalonians.
- You want to have a model walk with God? It'll be 1 John.
- You want to have a model faith with God? It'll be the book of Galatians.

➤ If you want to have a model ministry, it'll be the book of 2 Corinthians.

The models are filled through the Bible. You just learn the models, follow the models in the Bible, and match them up in history. It works all down the line. It's just a great way to do things.

Then I also gave you seven absolute doctrines that our church is biblically built on. We also talked about our name, the name of our church, Old Paths Baptist Church, out of Jeremiah 6:16. I showed you the old path, the old way, and the old book, putting our ministry under that biblical microscope in every aspect of it.

But I think the single greatest thing I gave you last week was that little rule. I'm going to give you three or four more rules today that are going to help you. I've learned that life can be very simple. We like to make it complex. I'll be honest, the more we get out of fellowship with God, the farther we get away from the Word of God and what we do, and out of balance, the more complex it does become. But the Christian life is designed by the Word of God to be a very simple thing. What makes it work and makes it right and makes it workable for everybody is the simple basic things that you put into your life. That's totally different from what you get today. Of course, people can't charge you a lot of money if you make something that's complicated simple. They get their money, earn their living, make their money by taking something and keeping it as complicated as they can while you're paying for it.

I gave you the single greatest thing last week, and that is the fact that you never in the Bible emphasize something more than God does. I cannot tell you how that will sustain you and help you in so many different areas of your life. Let the Word of God define for itself the key doctrines in the Bible, and then you build what you believe on top of those foundational principles. I gave you some key examples, and we'll not go through it again this morning. The Bible forms the perfect balance for us in everything. This is why the devil has to get rid of the Bible. When he does, then Christianity and churches and everybody that's connected with it will lose that balance that God so desperately has worked so hard to give them.

## II. The Dynamics of Personal Balance

Today, we'll begin to look at our balance again. But this time, it will be in reference to our walk and our personal relationship with God. We're going to bring it up to the next level in all aspects of our life. Years ago, I saw a guy at a county fair, and he was pretty amazing. He had these plates on sticks that were about this high, and he got one plate spinning, and he put it down, put a little holder there, and got it spinning. He got a second one and got it spinning, got a third one and got it spinning. By the time he was done, he had five plates on sticks, all of them perfectly balanced, all of them spinning. He kept all of them going. None of them stopped. None of them lost their balance and fell off. He just kept them going. It was the most amazing. Then after doing that, he got three tennis balls and he's juggling them while he's keeping everything moving on the plates.

I thought to myself, that's exactly the picture of the Christian life and the balance it requires. Each one of those spinning plates represents something in my life. I start out with one plate, but then as I get a little older, another plate comes in. As you get a little older, you get into a

relationship or get married or start having children. Before you know it, there's a lot of plates in your world that need to keep spinning. You've got to be able to juggle all these things.

I looked at that and I thought to myself, for that guy to be able to do that, it took three things for him to really be good at that. It was an incredible act.

1. It took tremendous concentration. That guy could not take his focus off what he was trying to stay balanced. I thought to myself, how true that is in my life as a Christian? Because the things that I have to balance, when I get out of balance, when I lose my focus on them, when I get my attention on something else, when I quit working at keeping the balance of those spinning plates, each one representing something in my life, and I get my focus on something else, the plates get out of balance.
2. The second thing that I realized that it took for that guy to do that was a tremendous amount of work, a tremendous amount of dedication. He just didn't go out and buy some sticks and some plates and do that trick. He had practiced and worked on that, and the attention to detail was absolutely incredible.
3. The third thing that I looked at and thought about that guy is that guy had had a tremendous amount of ongoing practice every day of his life. He couldn't stop a day of practicing. The moment he let up for a couple of days because he wanted to do this or to do that, he saw it. Patarinsky was a great piano player, and he used to say that, "You know what," he says, "I have to practice five, six hours a day." And he says, "If I miss one practice one day, I can tell it in my play. If I miss three or four practices in a row, my critics, the music critics, can tell it in my play. And if I take off a week or two weeks, everybody can tell it in my play." There are certain things in life you just have to stay with all the time. Just as that man had to keep balancing those plates, so will it be for us and our balance in life.

This is why the Word of God is the only way to accomplish it through a New Testament local church. When used properly, the Bible through its principles will always keep the right spin in your life. That's a good word. Bill Riley on his show, he talks about "the spin that stops here." Of course, spin being putting a spin to something, getting it to say what either you want it to say or somebody else wants it to say, take something and spin it to get it to say something. Life's a lot like that because life will try to spin its way to show you one thing when it's really something else. A life of sin will spin to show you it's fun. But the reality of the Word of God will give you the true spin. When it comes to the Bible, I don't know if Bill Riley stole it from the Bible or not, I doubt it very seriously. You want to talk about the spin stopping someplace, there's where it stops with the Word of God. Because the proper balance has to be in everything in our life.

We get one plate going, it's relationships. You know as well as I do, relationships when a boy meets girl and girl meets boy, it's a thing where the emotions go crazy. Relationships are up and down, up and down. It's a tremendous upheaval in a person's life. At work, work's not always going to be pleasant. You're going to have some hard issues that you have to deal with. There are going to be people at work who you annoy them or they annoy you that you can't get along with. There's always going to be situations like that. Some of you are in school and you're going to have to work hard in school. School will present its own challenges. Everybody has to pay bills. Everybody has financial obligations. There has to be a balance in that. Then you have a family.

Not only does the balance change when you get married, but then the balance changes all over again when you have a family, and every kid you add to that family, you're adding another plate you've got to spin. It's just the way it goes.

Then you've got the fun things you want to do, which there's nothing wrong with. You like to play sports. You like to play this. I've known guys that love to play softball and they get into a summer softball league. Ain't nothing wrong with that. They'll get into a summer softball. Five of them will play every night and everything else goes to pieces. That's out of balance, you see. Everything in our life has to have a balance. You have to have a balance in church. Usually church is the first thing that goes when somebody has something else they's got to do. You've got to have a balance in your Bible study. You have to have a balance in holidays. Holidays, Christmas and New Year's, they're the, everybody thinks they're the most fun time of the year. After Christmas and New Year's, there's more suicides in January than any other time of the year. You know why that is? Because people are out of balance. They put all of the things, "Oh, here it is," all the Christmas stuff, and it's all a real high and then it all comes crashing down because it's one or the other. There has to be a balance.

Let me say this. The hardest thing you'll ever do is to try to keep that balance because unless you, as long as you stay in the Word of God, you're okay. The hardest thing you'll do is to try to keep that balance because when you get it all going and you get it balanced, then you've got to balance the balance. Then you balance the balance. You've got a couple more things come in. You've got to balance that balance. There will never be any time in your life when you don't have to balance it out. This is why the Word of God makes it so simplified. When we get out of the Bible and try to do it ourselves, well, as Dr. Phil says, "How's that working for you?" It doesn't work very well. It takes tremendous concentration. It takes tremendous work and dedication. It takes tremendous ongoing practice in doing it. A perfect balance requires a perfect set of rules, and that will be the Word of God. Without it, everything in time will get out of balance. As we all know, things left in themselves don't run up, they run down. It's that God concept of God injecting himself into man. When God doesn't continually inject himself into everything you're doing by you bringing him in through the Word of God, your life gets out of balance.

Let's look at our verse here.

*Proverbs 11:1*

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

Now I'm going to give you 10 more balancing principles today. These are actually, as I said last week, these are actually mini sermons. Each one of these you could develop into a 45-hour long sermon. They're great devotional things, but I'm going to give you 10 more today and then we're going to come back and we're going to look at another 10 probably next week. There's so much of it here, and I want to cover as best as I can, as thoroughly as I can, so I don't want to lump them all together. We're not going anywhere till the Lord comes, so we'll just keep working on it from there.

Now let's have a word of prayer and then we'll get into it this morning.

Father, we thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus, and we do love You and we thank You for the Word of God. Now Lord, I realize that in most Christians' lives the problem is not believing in God. The problem is not believing in the Bible. The problem is one of application, doing something with it. Help us today to realize that the greatest challenge in our Christian lives will be to try to keep the balance. Lord, by ourselves, on our own, there's no way we can do that. So help us learn the great book that You've given us and the principles that are found therein that will help give us the balance in all things, and we'll thank You and praise in Jesus' name for His sake we ask it, amen.

Now I'm going to go all the way back, start at the beginning with your salvation, and I'm going to work you through here a little bit. Next week I'm coming in, I'm going to talk about everything else in your life: your marriage, your own personal walk with God, your kids. I'm going to talk about every aspect on that level. But today I want to start out with the day of your salvation and then work your way through it and show you how it all balances it out.

### III. Foundational Principles of Salvation

- 1.) Three Important Days
- 2.) Complete in Christ
- 3.) Saved, Sealed, and Sanctified

### IV. Principles for Christian Growth

- 4.) Rooted, Built Up, and Established
- 5.) Confidence in God's Word and Calling

### V. Principles for Understanding and Application

- 6.) Understanding God's View of You
- 7.) Balancing Emotions with Faith and Fact
- 8.) The Word of God in Action

### VI. Principles of Protection and Discernment

- 9.) Warnings Against Deception and Discouragement
- 10.) The Outcome: Discernment, Discretion, and Perspective