

# Proverbs 13:17-20

October 29, 2023

So the Holy Spirit of God, the servant, goes on a journey to find a bride for Abraham's son Isaac. What follows in that story is not only one of the greatest pictures of your salvation, how God sent out the Holy Spirit of God to look for you, but it is a great picture of how to find the right mate, spouse, and what to look for. It is one of the most compelling, challenging places in all of the Bible. It always interested me that when he finally got her and he brings her back to the son, and they have that marriage, it is found in Genesis 24:66. Picture the last book in your Bible when we finally meet our Isaac and that great marriage supper of the Lamb. It is a great story in the Bible. In fact, I am throwing this one out now; I am going to preach that one.

Turn over to Genesis 24. If you have your Bibles this morning, I want you to turn to Proverbs 13. Last week, I think we saw probably one of the most practical messages on the laws of the Bible in your life and my life. Everything in this world will have laws. It will either be natural laws of science or natural laws of physics. There will be a law of everything that you find in life. When it comes to spiritual things, there are also laws that you follow, the rules of conduct.

I told you last week that the Bible says in 2 Timothy that a young man, Paul talking to Timothy, says, "You can go out there and you can try to do everything for God that you want to do. But there are some laws that you have to run the race by." He says, "You will strive for the masteries. You will try to do everything you think that God wants you to do. But the thing that you always want to look at, always, is not what you are doing, not even thinking this is what God wants me to do. The thing you always want to look for is, are you running lawfully?" That is the great concept of these laws, the rules of conduct.

Today, we are going to look at the next portion of this. You saw last week that the key to victory in our lives is simply staying with the laws. People like to make the victorious Christian life such a complicated thing. You talk to somebody who specializes in that or somebody that writes a book on it, whose whole premise is they want to make money off of it. They will talk about all the different things that you have got to do and all of this. It is just really so easy. It is not complicated at all. It is not some formula. It is not some four or five-point program. It is just staying with the laws that God has provided for us within the structure that God has given us. It is just that simple.

I told you last week that I have probably what would fill three or four notebooks of these laws. Over the years, as I have seen them and watched them work, watched them play out in people's lives, good and bad, watched them play out in my own life, good and bad, I started to write them down. I have now probably what would fill up three or four notebooks full of them over the years. A lady said one time, I said that last week, and the lady after the service, she said, "I could have just listened to you go on with those. Why don't you just take and teach all of those that you have? There would be such a benefit to all of us." I kind of chuckled to myself, and the truth of it is, I do it all the time, just not in the same context as last week.

I fall back on these laws in every scenario that I deal with in my ministry, in my own personal life. You could say my whole ministry is wrapped around them in counseling and dealing with

people, in preaching, in the ministry itself, the people. When we started the people ministry a couple of years ago, I wanted to take a group of people who voluntarily wanted to really learn the practical side of dealing with just about every issue that would come up in a person's life. I want you to be able to surround somebody who is struggling with some stronghold in their life or struggling with some problem in their life. So we started in Genesis. I simply, I know you said, "Well, we just went through every story in Genesis," and that is fundamentally true. But what I really did was just start giving you the laws that I had learned by going through the Bible over the years and learning the things that are absolute about the rules of conduct of life, the cause and effect. The laws of God will weave their way through everything we try to accomplish for God. It is so important that we understand them. The book of Proverbs is just filled with them. They absolutely are.

## I. The Wicked Messenger and the Faithful Ambassador

Today I want to look at Proverbs 13:17-20. We will see yet again some great principles for our lives to always have and keep the victory in our life with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Proverbs 13:17A wicked messenger falleth into mischief: but a faithful ambassador is health.

Ryan, would you stand up and ask God's blessing on the preaching of the Word of God this morning for me?

Father, thank you for this day you have given us today. I ask you to be with Bob and give him the words to say. Open up our ears and our hearts and let us receive the things that you have given us today. I ask that you be with all things that we do and endeavor throughout the day. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Now, Proverbs 13:17 says, "A wicked messenger falleth into mischief: but a faithful ambassador is health." Here again, one of the key ways to really lay out the book of Proverbs is the contrast. Contrast is one of the most incredible things that you will ever apply in trying to understand the Scriptures. Much of Proverbs is built around contrast. A verse that in the first part of the verse will show you something good and then contrast it with something bad, or sometimes it starts out with something bad and then contrasts it with something good. That is very important to see and understand as you start to come through the book of Proverbs. It is all through here.

Proverbs 13:17 says, and we want to look at the first part of the verse, "A wicked messenger falleth into mischief." Within the Bible, there are many examples of this first part of this proverb, as there will be throughout your life. Men and women in the Bible who bear a message of wickedness, you will find men and women in the Bible who bear a message that is going to deceive somebody or be a false witness, unfaithful in their message or whatever they are trying to put out. You find it in life too. In any relationship, probably the hardest area to deal with will be the area of being betrayed by a friend. I think that probably in all of the things that you go through in life, and everybody has experienced it, nobody is immune from it. You will have somebody that you thought was your friend only to find out that they really were not. To your face, they say they love you. In school, you had people who you thought were your best friend, and all the time behind, they had some ulterior plan or motive. You are going to get a job

someplace, and it is going to happen there. Somebody is going to be telling you what a great job you are doing, and, "Boy, you really know what you are doing," and they are cutting you down behind your back. It happens all the time. You see it all the time: an evil message being communicated about you.

As I said, there are many examples of this in the Word of God. In life, whether you are saved or you are lost, you will find that you have to deal with this great principle. It is just a matter of life. One of the greatest examples of this wicked messenger talked about in Proverbs would be Judas in his betrayal of the Lord Jesus Christ. When it comes to Judas in the Bible and his betrayal of Christ, I completely get it. When you look at it from a doctrinal application, Judas is the Antichrist, the only man in the Bible who is called the son of perdition.

*1 Thessalonians 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;*

*John 17:12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.*

It does not take much of a spiritual connect-the-dots to figure out when you put it all together that they are one and the same. Just as the devil infiltrated Christ's inner circle of the twelve to stop Him, then the Antichrist, the devil himself, will infiltrate into this world to stop the second coming of Christ. It is just that simple. So that is easy to get. But the practical aspect will be an incredible insight into where people will fulfill this proverb in your life.

Most people, when they look at the crucifixion of Christ, most churches for time and eternity have been so sterile when it comes to the crucifixion and the life of Christ. They put it in a little box. You think of Easter time, Christ on the cross, the death and the burial and the resurrection. That is all good, and I understand that. But when you read Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, which cover the accounts in the New Testament of the betrayal of Christ and the crucifixion of Christ and the playing out of Judas and his betrayal, you realize that you just get the surface of it there. You do not really get the depth of it.

When you go back to the Old Testament passages, if you really want to get an insight into Christ's death on the cross and how it applies to you, you will never find it in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. You have got to go back to the Old Testament passages that will actually show you what Christ was feeling, what He was thinking on the cross as He was crucified. The Bible in the Old Testament will cover the events when He stood before Pilate early in the morning. It will cover the events as He is brought before the scribes and the Pharisees and the Sadducees about 11 o'clock in the morning. It will cover the time when they are beating and whipping Him, when He went before Caiaphas and all of the Roman people that were connected and the Jewish people that wanted to kill Him. It will cover the time and show you His thoughts when they are laying Him on the cross and they are actually putting the nails in His hands and His feet. The Bible in the Old Testament records for you what is going through His mind.

On that terrible sixth to the ninth hour when God turned His back on His Son, that terrible time, those terrible three hours in the Word of God when the sun refused to shine and the whole earth is covered in a blackness, because it is representative of the fact that God now has turned His back on His Son. In the Old Testament, you have the account of during that time what He is feeling, what He is thinking, and what He is going through. This is why the crucifixion means so little to most of God's people, honestly. This is why most people never really Christianity ever really affects the change in their life. All they ever get about Christ's death on the cross is the surface material. The stuff in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the stuff that you hear at Easter, and when a pastor preaches on the crucifixion, he is so inept himself at understanding the depth of it that he never ventured into Isaiah, Psalms, Job 30. He never ventured into the places in the Old Testament that actually take you to the depth of what Christ is feeling in His betrayal.

It really hurt the Lord what Judas did to Him. When all you see is the doctrinal side of it, you just think it is the devil against God. But there is really more to it than that. There is always more to it than that. When you study the Lord Jesus Christ, you study Him as the God-man. But then you also have to see Him and examine and study Him as the Son of Man. As the God-man, He was very God Almighty. As the Son of Man, it was the human part of Him. It was the human part that felt rejection when He looked over Jerusalem on that hill and wept over them because of the fact that He had come for His people. The rejection was so deep in His heart because of His love for them that He wept for them.

There were times when He was hungry. There were times when He had a desire for food, just like you and I do. There were times when He was tired and fell asleep. There are times when He lost a dear friend like Lazarus in John 10 and 11, that here He was the God-man. He knew that within that same time frame, He was going to shout the words, "Lazarus, come forth," and He was going to raise him from the dead. But the Bible wanted to show you that yes, He was the God-man, but He was also the Son of Man. It shows you and me that even though you are a son of God today and you have Christ living inside you, you are still a human being that has feelings. You are still someone who feels the pain of life. Here it was when Lazarus died, the Bible says, and it is easy to remember, it is the shortest verse in the Bible. It simply says, "Jesus wept." The Son of God who was about to raise this man from the dead, why was He weeping? Because God wants to show you and me the account that He was on all points, the Bible says, touched with our infirmities. He could feel the things that we all feel. Yet in His case, He was without sin.

The prophet Zechariah, speaking of Christ's betrayal by the wicked messenger Judas, Zechariah 13:6 says, speaking prophetically:

*Zechariah 13:6 And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.*

A lot of wounds hurt, but betrayal by a friend, wounds by a friend, are probably the worst kind of wounds that a person can ever sustain. It will always hurt when somebody betrays you or hurts you, like the verse says here, a messenger. But when it is somebody you thought was your friend, it is especially painful. I tell you all the time in dealing with people and dealing in the ministry

that the rule that you follow is you never take things personally. That is a good rule to follow, but sometimes that rule is hard to follow because of the fact we are all human.

Judas, the messenger of evil, all doctrine aside, it hurt the Lord what Judas did to Him. Judas, the messenger of evil, when he turned Him over to the scribes and the Pharisees and he sold Him out for just 30 pieces of silver. In Matthew 26:50, when Judas is bringing everybody that they are going to betray Him with, when Jesus sees him coming, He stands up and He calls him friend. Jesus was his friend, but he was not Jesus' friend anymore, if he ever was. Then Judas does what everybody probably does when they want to mask the betrayal. The Bible says that he kissed Him in Matthew 26:49. You know there are seven kisses in the Bible? You guys need to study that. Seven of them. One of them is on the mouth, hard. Seven kisses in the Bible. One of them is the kiss of betrayal, the kiss of Judas.

*Psalm 35:14 I behaved myself as though he had been my friend: I went about as one that mourned for his mother: I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.*

But he was not. Psalm 41:9, Jesus again speaking prophetically, He said:

*Psalm 41:9 Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.*

If there is ever any doubt, and you do not have this reference in your Bible, that this is a reference to Judas and the Antichrist, that verse right there, doctrinally, put it in there, it goes back to Genesis 3:15, the first prophecy in the Bible, and the first coming of Christ, and the second coming of Christ.

Judas, the messenger of evil, sold Him to the scribes and the Pharisees for 30 pieces of silver. I want to tell you, everything in here about this story is an incredible principle. Boy, is that ever a great principle, 30 pieces of silver. Think about it. How do you say, "Alright, so it was 30 pieces of silver?" When you put it into the context, when you work with people, because you are going to see it in your own life so many times, and to keep you from getting discouraged and keep you from never giving to the point where it becomes a stumbling block for you, you need to see that the Lord experienced this proverb just like you and I will. You will find in the ministry, you will invest so much in people, and they will sell you out for so little. The Lord, for three and a half years, had invested everything in those guys. For three and a half years, they saw everything that He did. He included them into everything that happened. They had discussed about who is going to be the greatest in the kingdom. They asked about the end of the world, and they knew their relationship to the kingdom of heaven and all that He invested in them. Yet he sold out for such a small price.

In this proverb here, Judas is the perfect example. Today his name is so associated with the evil messenger of Proverbs 13 that you will not find the name Judas on any list of names for a boy. Nobody names their boy Judas. Nobody. But the name Judas is used today exclusively as a label for a person who betrays somebody and sells them out. The verse says, "A wicked messenger falleth into mischief." I suggest some time on your own, if you want to investigate what that mischief was, go back to Psalms 109, the whole chapter, and Acts 1:20.

Now, the second part of that verse, "but a faithful ambassador is health." Here you cannot miss the New Testament application here because in 2 Corinthians 5:10-20, we are called as New Testament Christians, the ambassadors for Christ.

*2 Corinthians 5:20 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.*

The example of an ambassador: an ambassador is a representative from your country to a foreign country. We have ambassadors to almost every country exclusively in the world. Those nations will have their ambassadors to our nation. The concept of an ambassador is simply this: it is to build the bond and keep the relationships going between the two countries. As a foreign ambassador, you do not have your own agenda. If you are an ambassador to America from Argentina, from Russia, from wherever, as an ambassador, you do not have your own agenda. You do not have your own message. Your job is clearly to impart the message from your government to that government that you are assigned to. You only relay what your government gives you and tells you to do and say.

As a Christian and as God's ambassadors to this world, as the Bible says, now that we are saved, our citizenship is now up in heaven, Ephesians 2:19. This is why, and I tell you all the time, maybe it helped you understand a little my position on it. This is why when it comes to politics, I think it is interesting. I think it is informative, but only to the extent that it shows me how it all dials into what God is doing in the Word of God. Personally, from a personal standpoint, politics are worthless. We get the idea that there are Christian politicians. There is no such thing as a Christian politician, like there is no such thing as a Christian mechanic. You drive up through Liberty there and you see on the side over there next to that big Southern Baptist Church, the Brothers Fix Your Car place. It is a Christian Brothers concept. I like that. I think that is wonderful. I am not fighting it at all, but it gives the idea to people that there are such things as Christian mechanics. There are no Christian mechanics. There are just mechanics that are Christians. There is no Christian anything other than a Christian. You say, "Well, I am a Christian businessman." No, you are a businessman that is a Christian. You say, "Well, I am a Christian. I am a saved politician." That may be good, but you are not a Christian politician. They say America is a Christian nation. No, America was never a Christian nation, but one who followed and valued Christian principles. That is simple. You are not a Christian today because of what you do. You are a Christian today because of what happened on the inside of you.

People get confused on that. I look at the Democrats. None of us like the Democrats. They are liberal. They care nothing about values. Somebody says, and I get people all the time, and I do not usually get into it because I think politics is not worth arguing about for me. I learn from it. I listen. I look at it, but I never take it too seriously. Somebody says, "Well, the Democrats are destroying this country." I have some news for you. The Democrats did not destroy this country. Bible-believing churches who dumped the Word of God destroyed this country. All they did was show the field and show the seed that the Democrats could get a foothold and finish off what they started. That is called perspective.

Somebody says, "Well, I am a conservative." Well, you know what? I am glad for you. Bottom line is there is no form of government that is God's form of government other than when Jesus Christ comes back and sits on the throne and sets up God's theocracy. That is the only pure, true conservative government. Somebody says, "Well, we were part of the fundamentalist movement." Well, let me know what those laxatives are because they sound like they work pretty good for you. The only fundamentalist movement that I am interested in is God moving His Son from up there at the right hand of the throne of God down into Jerusalem. That is the fundamental movement I am looking for.

An ambassador, he represents his foreign country. We represent God's government in this lost world. There can be no message in our messages of deceit. We do not have our own message. We do not have our own agenda. We communicate what the headquarters, our government, has given to us to communicate. There is no deceit in it. There is no wickedness in it. There is no betrayal in it. But only what we are given to speak by our home government. We are pilgrims in a strange land like Abraham, so journeying, looking for a country.

Without a doubt, the greatest example of this in the Bible will be the Apostle Paul. Where Judas is the greatest example of the wicked messenger, the Apostle Paul was the greatest example of an ambassador. His life is incredible. When you look at his life, you understand that he was the Apostle to the church. Every New Testament Bible-believing church on the face of this planet today goes back to him. We talk about the two lines of churches, two lines of Bibles, two lines of Christianity. That true line going back to Antioch will be the line that Paul established. His life was the Apostle to the church. He started churches. His work was the establishment of those churches. To him and him alone, and he makes this reference many, many times, God only revealed to him the body mystery of the Gentile world getting New Testament Christianity. When he wrote the book of Ephesians, the book of Ephesians was the book that unveiled and explained that body mystery. His ministry was to the Gentiles, where Peter was the key player in the kingdom of heaven to the nation of Israel, the Jew in Matthew 16. Paul was the key player to the kingdom of God and the Gentiles in the book of Romans and the book of Acts.

He is the model ambassador. Never in any case of his ambassadorship did he ever give an evil report. Just a common man that all his life represented the government that was not of this world. A simple tentmaker turned ambassador. That is what God does. God will come down and He will take you as a common man or a common woman. Whatever job you do, He will take you and He will turn you into being His ambassador.

Last week when we were talking about what we talked about last week, I talked to you about back home in Canton. I thank God for, when I talk about all the time that I hate the time period that I was born in, I would have loved to live back in the days when it meant something. But I totally understand and I am very appreciative that if I had to be born in this sewer, it was in the part of the sewer that allowed me to see the clean water turning into the dirty water. It gave me a perspective, unlike that I probably would have never gotten any place else. I actually watched, and I have told you this before, I have actually watched how the churches that came out of that time period that really once stood for the Word of God and believed the Word of God, one by one

they began to fall. In every case, and I saw it, I saw it, I was there. In every case, it was the fact that education began to creep in and override what the Bible was.

I grew up in a time when, as I told you this last week, with Mel Subaca, with Dr. Henniger and Dr. Bob Johnson, and the conflict that arose over the Word of God. That conflict ended with that church basically being destroyed as far as any real reality of a good church anymore. Today it stands as basically an empty shell. I looked at that, and I looked at these men who had the Bible, knew the Bible, and I watched them get sucked into this movement that was coming across Christianity of higher education. There were places that would, it was all a very subtle plan. There were places that would pass out honorary doctor degrees. When they gave you an honorary doctor degree, you felt puffed up like you were something special. Of course, that doctor degree that you had or you got, even if you earned it, it came to the point where it was the thing that you had now more of an allegiance to the school that gave you that degree. Dr. Johnson back then got his honorary degree as Dr. Henniger from Bob Jones University. Bob Jones University, like so many of them, and I told you this last week, they had everybody jumping through the hoops. A little bit later on when Dr. Johnson did not jump through the hoops, you know what they did? Took back his doctorate. That was the trick they had. Boy, once you had that, you did not want to lose it. It became an illusion.

I used to look at myself and I used to talk about it with Mel, and we used to say, "Everybody wants to be a doctor today. A doctor of divinity, a doctor of theology. Everybody wants to be this, everybody wants to be that." I said, "Here it is. The Bible says in Revelation 3, if you look at the Laodicean church, it is wicked, it is wretched, it is miserable, it is sick, it makes God sick. We have a sick church that has never been so sick in its life in the midst of a hundred million doctors, and nobody can cure it." Because that is not the answer.

There is a guy who most of you know him. We sell his books in the bookstore. He is a boy from Canton. I know him very well. If you look at his books and you would talk to him or look at his website, he has got his name with a THD, PHD, double D. It is just endless. I know the truth because during that period of time, when it was so important to be a doctor of theology, a doctor of this and a doctor of that in the religious realm, guys would pop up what we called degree mills. I was telling Chris about this last night, degree mills. The guy that was a doctorate, you would send him \$50 and write a three-page thesis on something, and he would send you your doctor degree. So you now could be a doctor. For \$75, you get your THD. It was all about a mill that just produced them because it produced people who their God became education.

You never saw that with Paul. He is the greatest example of us following and disusing the Bible. He was an ambassador for God, but he never let it go to his head. He never let anybody or anything exalt him above what he was. Boy, that is so, so important today. He said in Philippians 3:4-8, when somebody had challenged him and he talks about his education in that passage:

*Philippians 3:4-8 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the*

*law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,*

You know what he is saying in Philippians 3:4? When we get down through here, you are going to find that Paul probably on an education level had anybody beat hands down. He says in Philippians 3:5, "Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." He kept the law. He was on top of everything in that Bible. "But what things were gain to me, those I counted lost for Christ." He talked about his education. He was circumcised the eighth day. That means according to the law, he held the rigor of the law. He is of the tribe of Benjamin. So he is an absolutely bonafide Jew. He is a Hebrew of the Hebrews. He is better than any other man out there when it comes to understanding. You go back to Acts 5. He studied under Gamaliel, who was the greatest mind of the Old Testament teaching of the Bible, any time in the history of Israel. He is a doctor of the law. Paul studied under him. When he is saying these things, he is not just blowing smoke. He is saying, "You know what, you want to go toe to toe with me and talk about your education? Let me tell you something, pal. Here is where I have been. Here is what I have done. I am a Pharisee." To be a Pharisee, you had to be the most strictest, unbelievable, dedicated. It is unbelievable what they had to do to go through that. But he said, "But what things were gained to me those I counted lost for Christ." Never one time did Paul ever bring up other than here. The only reason he brought it up here is because of Philippians 3:4. It is because of Philippians 3:4, "Though I might also have confidence in the flesh, if any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh." You know what he is saying? He says, "When you put your education and your degree before your name in the theological realm, it is of the flesh." That is what he said.

*Philippians 3:8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,*

Somebody find me an NIV back there, I am sure they got a better word in it than that. You know what he is saying in Philippians 3:8? He says, "Every piece of fleshly knowledge that he got, and it was all about the Bible. He was not out and studying science and philosophy. He was studying under the Old Testament mandate of the man who was the greatest mind on the Old Testament law, but it was man's flesh, it was not God's Word." It never let him puff him up. Yet, you do not want to miss this, all he learned was connected to the Word of God, it just was not by God. He is just a faithful ambassador with a faithful message. That is all we are. You are not a PhD as a Christian, you are not a PhD, you are not a doctor, you are not even a male nurse. You are an ambassador. You are a saved sinner who deserved hell, that is saved by the grace of God, and God just wants you to carry the message from His country that you are now a citizen in, to this one, and leave all the fluff off of it.

Of course, the greatest example of this even more than Paul was the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The Bible says that God Himself, the greatest theologian in the world, who is called the great

physician, who has everything that knowledge that anybody could ever want and have. Yet the Bible says He took on the form of a servant. He made Himself of no reputation. He did not walk around in a white suit. He did not pass out calling cards that said, "Dr. Jesus, Personal Assistant to God Almighty." He was not a scholar with a tradesman's language. He did not talk about eschatology and angelology, or hermeneutics. He did not talk about all of the things that common people look at and say, "I wonder what they are talking about." He just simply used the everyday things around Him. He said things like, "You know what? You want to understand God and you? Let me tell you something. See that little sparrow? Sparrow falls to the ground. God knows he fell. You look at that guy over there, he has got a lot of hair. God knows the number of hairs on his head."

I told you the story years ago. Back in Canton, we had a guy that people used to make fun of him. He obviously had some challenges. Everybody kind of kept him around and everybody kind of just put up with him. I always thought that he was something special. All the guys who were the pastors had nothing to do with him. His whole day, he did not work, he could not work. He did not speak well. All day long, he would just go around the church parking lot, he would pick up trash and pick up paper, a little bag. Never said, "Look at me." Never, never, never complained about anything. When it was raining or snowing, he never, never failed to be there. I am sure he is gone, dead now. One day, God taught me one of the greatest lessons I ever had in my life. It was not something, some great theology, some great book I read by somebody. I had come out of the church back door and I saw him sticking, his rear end and leg sticking out of the bushes. He had bushes around the church. I even forget his name now. I walked over and I said, "Are you okay?" I said his name. I said, "Hey, are you okay?" He backed out and he kind of backed out and just kind of sat down and he had a little bird in his hands that had obviously died and crawled back behind those bushes. I said, "Are you okay?" He looked at that little bird. He looked up at me and he said, "Yeah, I am good." He said, "You know what, Bob? Bible says that not a sparrow falls to the ground, God does not know it. God has been here. I just want to sit here where God was for a few minutes." You do not get that with a PhD. You do not get that with your exalted education in theology. You get that from just being an ambassador. You get that from just going out on a parking lot, picking up trash.

Never let anybody exalt you. I am always suspect of any pastor who likes to put those things in front of his name. I always just say to myself, "Why do you need that?" I know all the answers. I had a discussion one time with a guy, and he was pushing a little bit, and I was cool with it. But you know, back me into a corner, I will bite you. I was cool with it all, and he said, and I said, "Well, I just do not, I said, what is the point?" I said, "You did not, I said, you did not even earn it. I said, if you earned it, I said, I would still tell you what is the point, but at least I would say, well, at least you earned it. You did not even earn it." He said, "Well, brother, you just do not understand." I said, "Well, I am really trying to understand." He said, "Well, you know what? The reason why I got doctor in front of my name is because, brother, it will get me in places to witness for God that I could not get in with if I did not have it." I said, "Oh, well, I am glad you told me that. So that really helps me a lot. So that is why I did it." I said, "Okay, good. I was under the wrong impression." He said, "What do you mean?" I said, "I thought it was the Holy

Spirit's job to get you in wherever He wanted you to go." People look at things weird, do not they? It is amazing how unbiblical some people can be who try to be biblical.

## II. Regarding Reproof and Honoring Instruction

Proverbs 13:18 Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction: but he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured.

This verse is self-explanatory. We have seen its principles many times throughout the book of Proverbs. Obviously, I am sure you have seen it in action in your life and the lives of others. It is simply a man that refuses instruction will come to shame and poverty. That is a physical thing in life, and it is a spiritual thing in life. There will be a physical poverty that if you do not listen to your parents, some of you young kids, when you are growing up and you think you know it all and you are going to do it your way, when you get out there in life and you did not learn the lessons that your parents want to teach you and give you and help you understand because you did not regard their reproof, you will probably wind up busted and broke, busted and broke. In a spiritual sense, the same thing happens. You grow up and you do your own thing, you will not listen to anybody, and nobody can give you any advice, and you will not take reproof, and you see it all the time. My whole ministry, my life, has been filled with it. One goes into physical poverty, that one goes into spiritual poverty, bankrupt Christianity, I call it.

He says, "a man that regardeth reproof." I always thought that was interesting. I have that marked in my Bible. I have a lot of little things like that marked in my Bible to catch my eye. Because it says if you note that it is not the fact that he hears it. It is not even the fact that he is saying here that he takes it, but rather that he regards it. When you regard something, there is some value to it. A lot of people do things because they know they have to. A lot of people hear things but never do anything with it. But somebody who hears something and regards it, he assigns it to a value in his life. It is a value to him. It means something. He regards it. He does not just hear it. He does not even just do it. Because you can do something without regarding it. But boy, when you regard something, you stop and look at it and you say to yourself, "There is value in that for me."

You could not miss the application if you tried. Shame