

# Proverbs 11:25-26

Sunday 4/12/2015

SEC: Review of Previous Principles and Introduction to Giving

Last week we looked at our second set of principles in this last section of Proverbs 11. I think it is probably one of the greatest passages in all of the Bible. It is very clear, very open, very understandable, and it really lays out the number one fundamental function of any church, any pastor, and of course, you and I as Christians. That is the job of spiritually reproducing ourselves and duplicating what God has given us into other people.

Also, in this passage as we started looking at it, we saw the key word was the word "desire." Desire is the key of everything we do. Desire as a Christian to build a sacrificial Christianity over a convenient Christianity. We have talked about that the last couple of weeks. Last week in particular, we talked about the incredible principle of scattering the Word of God and God bringing back the increase. We looked at that.

One of the greatest truths of all the Bible we saw last week, and that is if you want to keep it, you have to give it away. We talked about that and how important that is. But also we saw how that you have to keep some of the Bible for yourself, and that is very important, meat for you, that jewelry box concept.

*Deuteronomy 29:29*

*The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.*

Simply, the secret things that God gives you and only gives to you, those are the things that you keep. There will be a lot of things in your relationship with God that God gives you that you need. I am not saying that there are times that you do not share that with somebody else, but there are many things in your life with the Word of God that you just have that are yours. This verse here talks about passing the inheritance of the Word of God that God has given you onto your family and onto your children.

Today we will look at a couple of more verses, and we will develop out of them more principles that are really an asset to building our lives around.

SEC: The True Meaning of Being Christ-like

When it comes to God, when it comes to the Lord Jesus Christ and the Bible, we talk a lot about and hear a lot about being Christ-like, being like Christ. We hear preachers talk about that we ought to be like Christ in everything that we do in our lives. Many times, most of the time, it is just a term. They never really explain it.

Being Christ-like will be in the relationship that a man or woman has, taking the Word of God and learning about Christ, learning all the aspects of a relationship with Him. Through that, we pick up the character qualities that He has. That is really what Christ-like means.

Many people think it is going to church. I do not know how to tell you this: Jesus never went to church a day in His life and did not have Him back in His time. So it is not going to church. It is not the way you dress. A lot of people think that if you follow the rules, that makes you Christ-like. Christ-like in the Bible is simply nothing more than you having a relationship with Him and picking up the character qualities that Christ has and bringing them into your own life.

You hear me say it over and over and over again: You are who you hang out with. It is just that simple. You hang out with people who love God, you are going to continue to build yourself toward that way. You start to hang out with people that do not love God, it starts to wear on you. You can tell. You can be around the Word of God and be around the things of God, and then you will go someplace for a weekend and get out of the way, and you will be around some people who do not care about God and the things of God. You can tell it has an effect on you if you are not careful. We talk about that nothing in the Bible is more important than that statement. It is the duplication and reproducing concept, but in reverse, in a bad way.

*Psalms 1:1*

*Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.*

Anybody who can read that, and we have talked about it many, many times, you can see the progression. Once you start walking with God and start walking with a counsel of the ungodly, and I love the word "counsel" there because it suggests that you start listening to them. You start taking their counsel instead of God's counsel. When you start walking with the counsel of the ungodly, then the next thing is you are standing in the way of sinners. You stop walking, and now you are standing with them. And then the last one says, you are sitting in the seat of the scornful.

There is a process in every Christian's life based on who you hang out with that you either get better on a level going toward the Lord, or you will get worse on going away from the Lord. It depends on the desire and understanding that great principle of duplication. You either duplicate in your life the character qualities of God, or you duplicate in your life the uncharacteristic qualities of the world.

SEC: God's Giving Nature and the Church's Financial Misdirection

When you look at Christ and you look at His qualities, without a doubt, the greatest character quality of God is the aspect of giving. That is the greatest single aspect of God, His giving of Himself for you and me. When a child of God gets a real Bible-based relationship with God, I mean based on the Scriptures, I mean building the character qualities of God in your life, when you have that, then that Christian too will be about giving to others what God has given to him. This is what our whole chapter or our passage here has been about. You will get that character quality of giving to others.

I am a pastor and a pastor of a church, and I am embarrassed many times to let people even know that, simply because of the fact that the mindset today and the tragedy that churches and pastors are just all about money today. It is a standard joke with the radio preachers and the people on the TV that all that they do is want money. Yet it is the same way in churches today. It is a joke

that you go to big churches and you get 20 minutes of the Bible and 40 minutes of, "We need more money."

They have gotten themselves, and there is a reason for it, they have gotten, and I want you to understand this, there is a mindset behind it. They have got themselves into such financial trouble because of the bad, terrible choices and the decisions that they made in leading their church. When you get extended, everybody here understands the concept. If you have a family, you have a two-income family or a one-income family or whatever, you know that you only have so much money coming in every month. Whatever level you are on, you have to live within that budget. You have to choose and prioritize things that you want to do versus things that you cannot do. Many times it comes down to necessities over something that you would like to do or want to do. It is true in everything.

Where we got the idea that that is not true in churches, I have no idea. Where we ever got the idea that because it is a church and the pastor is in charge and he has got eight or nine hundred people out there or a thousand people, that he can just at a whim do whatever he wants to do and then throw the burden of that on the back of the people because he has got some fantasy island concept of what he wants to do. Because of that kind of pressure, then they have got to hammer the people. Every Sunday you are faced with a terrible mandate. Every Sunday when you get up there, you are faced this next week with a mortgage payment that is off the roof with all the different things that you have spent money for and all the things that you have had to pay. You are faced with that every Sunday. So they have to hammer their people on giving money and then more money. The problem is there is never enough.

I remember one time, this was years ago, Jerry Falwell, he was down at Liberty Baptist College, and he started a church down there in South Virginia, and he needed to raise five million dollars for a project. I remember he had come to Kansas City, and he was speaking at the church where I was just a youth pastor back then, and the pastor and him were buddies. I remember the pastor asked him, he had just got his five million dollars, and everybody was happy about it and all that. I remember the pastor said to him, he said, "Buddy, I heard you got your five million dollars this week." The guy said, "I thought you would be excited about it." He said, "I am excited about it. Now my next problem is next week I need two million more." See, it never ends. It never ends.

When they are under that kind of pressure, you know what has got to happen. It does not take a rocket scientist to figure it out. When you get under that kind of pressure and all you do is talk about money because that has got to drive everything you do. When you get into the pulpit, you are more concerned about raising the money for the things that you have done last week. You know me, I follow the philosophy that God always orders what He pays for. The problem that churches get into is a lot of people are ordering things that God never ordered, so you have got to pay for them. It is that simple.

When they only talk about money because that is what drives everything they do, then all the emphasis goes to building a church, goes to building a building, goes to building things. They lose the Bible concept of Christians taking what God has given them and giving it to somebody else because it gets lost. You cannot emphasize more than one thing in preaching. You simply

cannot. I am going to get up here this morning, and I am going to either emphasize you learn the Bible and dedicate my whole time to that, or I am going to get up here and say, "You know what? I just went out and bought the Crystal Cathedral out there in California someplace because Schuller died and they came up for sale. I did not ask anybody about it. It is \$78 million. Now, I need half of that by the end of the week." You have got to push people. You have got to put that out. When you feel that kind of pressure and burden, the real truth of the gospel and what you have got to really be building is people instead of buildings get lost in all of that. You cannot do that. You cannot do both.

In the Bible, there are two definitive chapters on giving to the Lord, and they are found in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9. These two chapters, along with other places in the Bible, are used by every preacher, every con artist to milk the people and put them on a guilt trip on giving. Let me tell you something, I have been in this business a long time. I have seen every trick that these guys pull. I understand how to do it.

I was with a church one time, and the pastor had this great fiasco dream that nobody else in the church cared about. The deacons were against it. Everybody thought it was nuts. Everybody thought it was crazy. But he pushed this thing and pushed this thing, and the church did not have the money to do it. So he comes up with this grandiose scheme of every family in the church giving \$1,000. Even if every family in the church would have given \$1,000, he still would not have had enough. But he had to get what he got.

So, how do you do that? How do you motivate the people in your church? Let me say this: You will have some people in your church who, in a situation like that, are just good people, and they want to do what is right, and they will follow the leadership because they think that that is what they are supposed to do. Out of the goodness of their heart, they will get duped by a guy like that. So they will be the first one to write a check for \$1,000 and put it in the offering. But then you have other people out there that do not buy into it, that do not believe it, that do not think that is what you ought to do. So they are not going to be part of it.

So the next step is how do you pressure everybody to give? This guy was a genius at it. So what he did is he put in the front of his church a big sign with all the families who donated \$1,000 to his project. In his mind, he would get up there and he would make a big deal about, "We thank God for the people that really got..." It was nice and flowery, and it was everything, and it was beautiful, and it was wonderful. But the bottom line is, at the same time you are touting all these people, you are identifying out there all the ones who did not. That is a pressure tactic.

When you read 2 Corinthians 8 and 9, you will see that the key to that chapter really has nothing to do with money, only it is a great chapter on giving. But it is about God's people making investment in people and ministry first, and when they do, everything else takes care of itself. I might show you here in 2 Corinthians 8:5, very early in the first chapter before he even gets into the rest of chapter 8 and chapter 9, he says this about these people:

*2 Corinthians 8:5*

*And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.*

What he is saying is here that long before these people gave a dime, long before I had to ever ask them to raise up money, and what he is doing, he is asking for money for the poor saints down in Jerusalem who are going through a tough time. But he says, "I did not have to even do that because before they ever gave a dime, they had given of their own selves first." That is what God wants. When you get a church of people who give of their own selves first and they realize that reproduction and duplication in somebody's life is the absolute essence of what a church and a ministry and a pastor and a Christian should be, I am telling you, the rest of it will take care of itself.

SEC: The Liberal Soul and Spiritual Fatness

Now let us look at our first verse today, and we will see how far we get, making no promises today. I want to make sure we glean all of this. Look at Proverbs 11:25. It says:

*Proverbs 11:25*

*The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.*

Now Father, we thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus, and we love You today. Thank You for the good folks that You brought out today, and thank You Father for the Word of God that You provided for us, and help us to be a church that is about teaching people the Word of God. Lord, You always pay for what You order, and Lord, let us always stay within the ordering process that is clearly laid out in the Scriptures. We will thank You Father and praise You for all You do now. Help us to be better, help us to be more like You, and help us to realize that the greatest fundamental quality of God is the fact that God gave Himself to others, and we too as God's people need to give ourselves to others, and we will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name for His sake we ask it. Amen.

There are a couple of things here that I want to spend a little time with today. First of all, the first thing I want you to notice is that you notice in this verse there is no negative here. All the other ones we looked at there was a negative part and a positive part, and I talked about that many, many times and showed you now that we are into the Proverbs you will get a negative or a positive and then a negative or a positive and then reverse it sometimes coming through the verses, kind of like a contrast between the two. You do not have that in this verse, and the reason why is because when you take and start to give of yourself to others, there is never anything negative about that. It is all positive. There is never anything negative that is going to happen in your life about you taking what God has given you and giving to somebody else. That is always going to be a positive thing, and what is going to follow here as I lay this out is you are going to see that positive thing, the increase coming back to you.

The next thing I want you to see here is two key words that we need to see and understand. Remember now, the Bible is its own commentary. I am not saying that you should not look at commentaries. We sell them back here and try to get some good ones to help you, but at the end of the day, the Bible is its own commentary. The Bible is its own history book, and the Bible

covers history in a proper way, in a right way, and you can always trust that. My suggestion is if you are going to study any man's history out there, whether it be church history or whatever, whether it be Mayan, Rockmans, or Newells, or Schafers, or whoever you get, you always want to run it back and make sure it lines up with the history of the Bible because the Bible is its own history book. But then the Bible is also its own dictionary. The Bible will define words differently than we do. Sometimes the Bible will have words that will have two different meanings that you need to see, and this is what we have got today.

Now the first word I want to talk about here is the word "liberal," and he says "the liberal soul." In our world today, that is a bad word, and it can be depending on the context of how you use it. The word "liberal" means to express yourself or to accept things without any restraint, giving all and holding back nothing. Liberalism in our government has basically destroyed this country and taken the greatness from it, and it has taken away all the personal accountability and responsibility that we have to ourselves.

I am for law and order 100%, but a liberal mindset will never see it. The liberal mindset will always punish the person that is the innocent person and favor the person who is the guilty person, and it always goes that way. Wars are bad, but wars are terrible, I understand that, but wars are part of our world today. Wars are bad, so therefore the military has to be bad. All religions are okay. There is no Jesus Christ, cannot talk about Jesus Christ. You can talk about God, but you cannot talk about Christ, and they strip the country of any real moral value system, and it ends up in the chaos that we have today.

You look across this country in all of the terrible things that are happening. All the terrible things that are happening with the people getting shot and the people that happen in this and a breakdown of this and a breakdown of that. I want to tell you something, you can sort your way through it and weed your way through it. When you get back at the end of the day, all of the chaos in this world today, all of the problems we have in this country, they go back to one thing, and that is the day that preachers quit preaching this book and setting down a standard for right and wrong, and then moms and dads enforcing that standard in their children. It is just that simple.

I think of this last week and this poor guy that got shot by this police officer. That totally, and I was not there, I am just saying, it looks like it is totally a corrupt concept. Absolutely. Shooting somebody in the back running away, I do not get it. I do not understand it. But it is all around our country, and I am not saying that the police officer is not guilty for what he did. I do not know. The courts will figure that out. But what I am saying is when you live in a society where you just thumb your nose at the rules and you do what you want to do, I may not like policemen. I do. But I may not like them. But you know what? There is still the authority of this country, and when somebody says stop, I am going to stop. When somebody puts their red lights on, I would love to floor it and get on going. I would love to lose them. I would love to get them to the place where I would hear that magical sound that they have no pursuit clause, so they just let me go because it is not worth getting in a wreck and killing somebody over. I would love that to happen. I would love to be able to, when he shut his lights off, wave at him out the window as I kept on going. But I am not going to do that as much as I would like to.

I want to tell you something. I have been stopped by cops who were very disrespectful to me. I had a state trooper cop holding me over, and maybe it was the end of his shift. I do not know. Maybe his wife just left him. I do not know. Maybe his dog died. I do not know. I was going down to Southern Missouri, and I was going too fast, and I passed on a double line. He pulled me over. He ripped me up one side and down the other. He just told me, he threatened me with this. He threatened me with that. He threatened, you know what? I just sat there and took it, and I apologized, and I said I am sorry, and I did not argue with him. I did not do this. Was he out of control? Totally. But I respect authority. I do not have the guts that Mel Shabaka does. One time my father, the Lord, got pulled over by a police officer, and he was railing him the same way down in his face, and Mel just sat there, and he looked at him, and when the guy was done, the guy said, "Now do you want to have the say for yourself?" And Mel said, "Your mouthwash is not making it." Not me, boy. He had a big nightstick. He had to club me to death with that sucker.

Bottom line is this: You may not always like it. I do not always like it. But you have got to have laws, and you have got to have rules. What is wrong with our society today is that breakdown. We have no respect for authority. Your kids have no respect for your authority. Your kids in the school beat up their teachers. They have no respect for their authority. They have no respect for anybody. When I was in high school, they whipped you. You went down to the principal's office, and when they made schools back there, they made them so that when you walk down the hall, you could hear the echo everywhere. The principal's office was always in the center, so no matter where your classroom was, you had a long green mile to walk to your execution. When somebody, we all knew it, when somebody fooled around, you went to the principal's office, he had a, he was proud of his paddle. Then a guy in wood shop decided when you drilled holes in the paddle, it made it even a better paddle. We would all sit there quiet as church mice. This guy or this gal. And they whipped girls too. You want equal opportunity, ladies? There it is. We would all sit there, and it would be quiet. You could hear nothing. We would all be waiting for that crack heard around the world. Sometimes it was one. If the guy was a real problem, sometimes it was two. I have seen him get three. And boy, does it sting. I have seen the biggest, toughest guys on the planet come back with tears in their eyes trying to be tough. But oh, not a part of your body was not quite as tough. It is gone today.

Now, I am not saying that whipping kids is the answer, but it sure makes you feel better after you do it. There has to be an authority structure. There has to be something that a person knows, "I cannot go any farther." It starts in the home. It starts with the family. The reason why people get shot because they want to be a police officer, right or wrong. The reason why people get shot and run or try to get pulled over by a speeding ticket and they take off and go, the reason why they do that, it all goes back when you unfold the layers in his own home where mom and dad said, "Don't do this." And he said, "I am going to do what I want to do." And mom and dad said, "Okay." That is where it starts. We have lost the respect for any authority today. When I grew up, you respected a police officer, that was ingrained in me to this day. I respect them. I fear them. I do not want to do anything that I realize I am even a little smarter than they have. When a guy pulls me over, and I have not been pulled over in years, but when I do, I put my hands up on the steering wheel. I put my hands out where he can see them. I know he has got a tough day. I know

he does not know, he can have a mundane day and make that one traffic stop and get killed. So I am going to show him, "Here, I have nothing to hide. Here is my hand. Here, where do you want me to go?" I mean, I pull over, I am going to beep the horn. I am sorry. No respect for authority.

Then you see liberalism in religion. This will be the social gospel. This will be what we call liberation theology. Liberation theology is simply the philosophy and the religion. It is a theology that Jesus was a revolutionary. So if you live in a country like He did with an oppressor of government, i.e. our government, that it is okay for you to revolt and take up arms against your country because that is what Jesus, He was a revolutionary. That is liberation theology. Crazy. No absolute truth. Everything is relative. No bad, no good. Pastors and deacons, you can be whatever you want to be. No hell, no judgment, no sin. God is replaced with your higher power, whatever that may be. The hallmark will be getting rid of all the differences between us. So the number one aspect of the Bible, doctrine, being able to rightly divide anything goes out the window.

Liberalism is simply a person, or will be a person who has no real boundaries or moral structure to them. No absolute standard to adhere to. Everything is okay. Solomon defined liberalism in Ecclesiastes 9:7 when he said:

*Ecclesiastes 9:7*

*Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works.*

That is liberalism. A pragmatic hedonism approach to life. Situation ethics, the end justifies the means. Pleasure is a chief pursuit in life. It does not matter what happens as long as you are pleased and pleased by it. No moral guidelines. Everything okay. No right, no wrong. No black, no white. Just gray. It ends in a complete breakdown of government, family, and churches, and it winds up in anarchy because all three systems break down.

So it has a bad connotation that we all are aware of, giving all and holding nothing back. But in the Bible, there is another use to it that is a good term, and I want to talk about that for a moment. It is a good context. The liberalism of being liberal and scattering the Word of God. The giving of yourself to God. On all that, you are liberal. You have no boundaries or limitations in what you will do for the Lord Jesus. You are liberal in putting out the Word of God. You are liberal in your ministry. It is everybody.

*Ecclesiastes 11:1*

*Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.*

And verse 2 says:

*Ecclesiastes 11:2*

*Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.*

That is liberalism in a good sense. Going beyond what is asked of you. If they ask seven, give eight. If they ask eight, give nine. Be liberal in your approach. The reason why he said that is in the next part of that verse because you do not know what evil is out there. Sometimes just going that extra mile. Sometimes just going that extra phone call, that extra step. Sometimes just putting your arm around that person the extra time or telling them you love them one more time will simply be the key that turns that lock. That is what he is talking about. Not holding anything back and giving what you have that God has given you and giving it to others.

He says on down through there, "You sow in the morning. You sow in the afternoon and you sow in the evening." You want to put that in a practical application? You sow in the morning. When you are 10, 12, 15, 16 or 17, start sowing the Word of God in the early times of your life. When you grow up a little bit and you are in your 20s, 30s, 40s and 50s, then sow in the afternoon. And when you get 50, 60, 70, 80 or 90, then sow in the evening time of your life. Be liberal about it.

Now our second word is the word "fat." Again, we think about this as a negative word in the world and in the Bible. And it can be. There are two uses of the word in the Bible. One is good, and another one will be, usually be a reference to the Antichrist like you have in Job 15:27. Now in a Bible sense, Proverbs 11:25, "fat" is good in our context. Lean may be mean and thin may be in, but in the Bible, fat is where it is at in the context.

Biblically, in a spiritual sense, it is the fatness of our soul. Animals, those who hibernate through the winter, they will always in the fall, they will put on layers and layers and layers of fat. They will gorge themselves in September, October, because when they hibernate through the winter, they cannot always get the food, and they have got to sustain themselves.

I used to, we do not have many out here anymore, but back in Ohio, I used to be an avid groundhog hunter. A groundhog is, it can be about that big or they can get that big, and they live in the ground, groundhog, they live in the ground, and they burrow down deep. But they ruin crops. Farmers in Ohio would love you to come in and shoot them because they dig. They look like Motel 6s. There are holes everywhere, and the cows step in them, break their legs. So they build whole little, they are like prairie dogs only, they come to be 40, 50 pounds. Some of them, they are pretty good size. So you get out, and me and another guy had a contest one summer, years ago, when I was in Ohio, who could kill the most. We would go out every night after work. I think I killed 128, and he killed, he beat me, he killed like 135. We shoot them at 340, or my father's shot was, I think 550 yards. It took me about nine shots to get him, but 500 yards, they do not even know the gun is going off. They will hear the bullets splat someplace, they will come down, come right back up. So you get a lot of shots. When I hit him at 500 yards, you can tell he goes every which way.

Anyway, when you start hunting them in the fall, and they are putting on that fat, and you get out there, and there is one 40 feet from his hole, and you miss him the first time, he starts running for his hole, it looks like jelly belly, welly, melly running. There is fat blowing everywhere on him. He is packing it on because there is a winter coming, and he is going to have to sustain himself through that winter, through the layers of fat. That fat gets them through the tough times when the food is scarce.

In a spiritual sense, when he is talking about the fatness of the soul, it is the things that God fattened us up with that when we go through the lean times, and if there is any lean time today we are living in, it is the lean times in church period. There will be times in your life when you have to go through some tough times. There will be some times in your life that you, everybody thinks that the answer when I am going through a tough time is God just deliver me from the tough time. So they are praying, "God deliver me from the tough time." That is not the right prayer. God will not ever necessarily deliver you from the tough time. If you have a fatness spiritually about you, God will deliver you in the tough time, not from the tough time, but people cannot get that today. It is a spiritual fatness that will get us through.

*Amos 8:11-12*

*Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it.*

Now that famine there is not a famine of food. He tells you that. It is a picture of the day and age that we live in. I understand it is a picture of Israel in their time historically, but it is also a picture prophetically of the time that you and I are living in right now because we are going through the spiritual famine where people cannot get the Word of God. They are wandering. They are running to and fro. They go from the north to the east. They seek it, and they cannot get it. Yet I want you to know that verse. It says there, "not a famine of bread nor a thirst of water, but of the hearing of the words of the Lord." What I want you to know is that the Word of God during this time, it is right here. He did not say the Word of God was not here. He is saying that it is here, but nobody is listening to it. That is the problem.

Hosea 4:1-3 is another great passage during this famine. It shows you in that thing he says that there is no mercy, no truth, and no knowledge of God in the land, a complete breakdown of what we know Christianity. It is that fatness spiritually, the fatness that God builds into your life of your soul. As you run it through the Bible and study it, in ancient times, most people do not even know this, the fat off of an animal was considered a delicacy. If you cut it off and you roast it, it has a very sweet taste to it.

In the Bible, when the children of Israel were sent out to spies to check out the land God had given them, you see the word used again in a good context. He says in Numbers 13:20:

*Numbers 13:20*

*And what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time was the time of the firstripe grapes.*

A fat land or a lean land? Can it sustain us, or will we starve to death when we get there? Fat is the abundance of food and water and all the things that a nation needs to survive. In a spiritual sense, when it talks about the fatness of our soul, it is talking about us having the sufficiency to get through.

*Proverbs 15:30*

*The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart: and a good report maketh the bones fat.*

Now there are fat bones. Fat soul, now we have got fat bones. That in a spiritual sense, that is a strong structure for your spiritual body. That is your foundation. It says "a good report." That is the Word of God. The gospel means good news. So it is showing you that fat used in the Bible in our context here is a good thing that builds you and sustains you and layers you with biblical principles that will get you through everything in life.

Because of what fat represented in the Bible in a good way, if you want to continue on to study it, you will find in the Old Testament offerings and the sacrifices that when they offered them, they did not eat the fat. That is because of what it stands for, what it represents.

*Leviticus 6:12*

*And the fire upon the altar shall be burning in it; it shall not be put out: and the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order upon it; and he shall burn thereon the fat of the peace offerings.*

The fat gets burned up. It is the smell of that. You remember over there in 2 Corinthians 2:15 when the Bible talks about, when you talk about Christ, it brings up the sacrifice of Him on the cross. And the Bible says it is a sweet savour and a nocturnal God. That is what that Old Testament sacrifice represented. They burned that innocent animal. I do not totally get it. The smoke of that animal being burned, its innocent went up. It appeased in God's nostrils, and God appeased the nation of Israel of their sins. So when it comes to the fat, the fat is set apart to God because any spiritual fatness that we have in our life and our soul, it only comes from the Lord. It is from Him. We do not have any spiritual strength. So when they offered that sacrifice, they did not eat the fat. It went back to God. That is where strength comes from. That is where your fatness comes from.

Now, you see how that works? So when you are liberal with your Bible, I guess, you are all liberals this morning, when you are liberal with your Bible, scatter it, put it out, it will come back as a fatness to your soul, spiritually speaking. One of the greatest truths of life that you will ever find is that you will see the longer that you get into the Bible, the more you will see that every bad thing in this world is really a good thing that the world and the devil has twisted. You look at those two words, we look at them as a bad thing, but in a spiritual sense, they are a good thing.

SEC: Watering Others and Breaking the Spiritual Sound Barrier

Now, look at the last part of Proverbs 11:25: "and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." We have talked about this a lot lately. We have talked about how you really do not start to take off in your spiritual growth until you start putting out what you have. It is like the old sponge concept. You can take a sponge and you can mop up a lot of things with it, but it comes a point that you just keep pushing water around because it will not soak up anymore. It is absorbed everything to its capacity. It will never be useful again until you go wringing it out.

Your life and my life are the same way. You can only absorb so much on Thursday night and Sunday morning. You can only take so many notes and get so many things in your Bible. Then you become like that sponge that is unuseful anymore. You have to go get wrung out. You have to give it out to somebody. You see it in our own church. Our church is a very strong church. It has a real depth to it in men and women who really understand the Bible and its importance. This church is filled with people who can hold their own with anybody. Any pastor in this country, I would put just about all of you guys and gals up against, certainly any Christian. Understand. If you do not think that is true, just let somebody try it on for size sometimes.

Yet you are not a warmongering herd. You have discernment. You have compassion. You have discretion. You have the ability to use the Bible and not just know it. But in truth, what God wants to give you and the simple fact that you have broken through that barrier. God, you have taken what God has given you, and you have broken through that barrier that held you back to get you to the next level. You have taken a convenient Christianity, which most of you had when you came here. Through a process, you have turned it around to a sacrificial Christianity, and you are willing now to take what you have got in you that God has given you and be liberal with it and put it back out, and you water people.

Most of you do not know this date: October 14, 1947. A great event happened. One of the great heroes of mine down through history is Chuck Yeager. Chuck Yeager is the first man who broke the sound barrier. The sound barrier is somewhere around 760 miles an hour, something like that. When he did, it definitely opened up a completely new world in aviation. The sound barrier was a very strange thing, a very scary thing. Many people thought you could never go through it because when you approach that speed in an aircraft, everything began to vibrate, everything would begin to shudder, and they were afraid it would tear the wings off. Many people thought that in flight, we had went as far as we could, that you just could not get through that sound barrier without destroying your aircraft and destroying yourself. That it was a brick wall of aviation that we were going to have to live with.

Many people did not believe that, and Chuck Yeager in his little rocket plane, he proved that, and he blew through the sound barrier. Today, my goodness, we have planes that fly, that is called Mach 1 in today's terminology. We have planes that fly three or four times the speed of sound today. But back then, it was a really big deal, and it paved the way for the first seven American astronauts to enter the space age. If you ever get a chance, and probably most of you have seen it, everybody ought to watch the movie \*The Right Stuff\*. It is a great documentary, and yet it is a movie that shows you how the two blended together. It starts out with Yeager busting the sound barrier and winds up with the seven Mercury astronauts and shows you how it all goes together.

But spiritually speaking, when you break the spiritual sound barrier of your life in Christianity, which takes you to a new level now, to a level that you are now beginning to take what you have and minister to people. I want to tell you something, that can be just as scary as him breaking the sound barrier, probably more so. If there is anything that holds God's people back from getting to that next level, I have seen them all my life. They will come to a point, they will come up that, they will do great, but boy, getting in, strapping yourself into that rocket powered plane, that will blow you through to the next level where you now take what God has given you and you give it

to somebody else like him going through the sound barrier will scare the fire out of you. But you know what? When you do that, it will change all the dynamics of your Christian life forever. Just like Yeager's famous flight changed the course of aviation, you will change the course of your life as a Christian, and you will absolutely never be the same again.

I told you many times, and we have talked about it, I have showed you lots of times, the great principle in the Bible, how when God changes a man's name in the Bible, it really changes everything about him. There are seven men that God changes their name and women in the Bible. Not all of them are good, but many of them are. When God took Abram, who means "high father," and he came to a point where God changed his name to Abraham, means "the father of many nations." Now he is doing something for God. It is a picture of you getting to the place in your life where you get to that barrier in your life that you have learned everything, you have done well, you have grown, you have done really well. Now you have got to go to the next level.

Sarai, "princess," to Sarah, "I will bless her with many nations." Jacob, "schemer." How many of us when we first got saved, that is exactly what we were. We figured it out for ourselves, we did it ourselves, we did everything the way we wanted to do it, but there was a process in our life and time that God changed who you were and who you are now. Israel. You see it with Paul. Saul represented the man who persecuted Christianity. Paul represents the man now who is going to take Christianity to the ends of the earth. It is very interesting because it looks like in the same chapter where Paul got his name changed, that God changed his name in relation to the first man who he won to Christ, Paulus. That is an interesting thought.

All of our names mean something. The Latin root word will have many, many meanings. We have all been to Branson or been to someplace where you could go around and get a coffee cup with your name on it and what it means. Bob, "lover of truth." A rock. Men among men. Shoulders of steel. The wisdom of God. Beams of light. The fence of the truth. I got a really big coffee cup. They mean something in the Bible. In your life, in my life, when you get to that point, it changes everything.

SEC: Not Withholding the Corn

Look at Proverbs 11:26.

*Proverbs 11:26*

*He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him: but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.*

Now, this is a great verse with a great principle, but I want you to understand the concept of selling corn. He is not saying we should sell the Bible that God has given us, though I must confess and I am ashamed of this that many churches and many preachers do that. There are churches where you have got to pay for everything you get. If you want to go learn the Bible, there is a class you have got to pay for it. You have got to buy this. You have got to buy that. It is crazy. It is good to me. Freely give, freely receive. I do not know how else you can get around that.

Rather, he is putting it into an everyday context so we can understand it. Proverbs 31:18 and 14 talks about the virtuous woman. It talks about that what she has is she is like a merchant. It gives you a picture that she is a merchant. Then down in Proverbs 31:18, it talks about the Bible that she has is like merchandise. "She perceiveth that her merchandise is good." He is putting it into an everyday understanding of it. He is saying in time of famine, when you have a storehouse of food, do not hold it back from hungry people.

Now, the example of this is Joseph. Ever notice how Joseph was a type of Christ, and he is second in command over Egypt, the type of the world? When they were going through a great famine, Joseph over the world has a storehouse of corn when nobody else has it, and he takes it and he feeds the people. That is exactly what you and I are to do. You should have a storehouse of the Bible. You should have a storehouse of the Word of God if you are around here any length of time. What you have to do is you have to take it and you have to give it out to other people who are starving. You have to feed them.

We do it two times a month. You go down there, and there are people, I know some just take the hot dogs and stick them in their pockets and never eat them. Some of them, but there are actual hungry people down there that you give something to that they are starving and they are hungry, and you give them something to eat and a bottle of water. How hard is it to grasp the concept at a much greater scale that there are millions and millions of people around you every day of your life who are starving to death spiritually, and you have got the corn?

In America, we are in that famine. There are a lot of hungry people around us. You see them in Wichita. You see them up in Lincoln, Nebraska. See them right here in Kansas City. You know what? Most of you came to this church for one reason. It was not our big screen TVs on the wall. It was not our mega, mega thousand dollar surround sound system. You came here for one reason because you were hungry, and we had something for you to eat. That is the only reason. Craig is moving out from Washington because there is nothing to eat out there. Lauren and Barbara are coming down from Iowa because there is nothing to eat up there. Larry and Gail bought an 18-wheeler so they could drive 1800 miles just to go to a church because there is nothing to eat up there. You were hungry. We had a warehouse of corn.

We talked last week about two times that the church goes into apostasy and has a famine in a spiritual sense. That is really the prophecy of Amos 8 that we looked at a minute ago. Look back to it again.

*Amos 8:11-12*

*Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it.*

People are starving to death. When you, out of the abundance of what God has given you and fed you, take and feed them, they will bless you. Now I do not want you to get the idea that when we give it out freely, I do not ever want you to get the idea that there was not a price tag connected

with it. It is like the idea we live in a gimme society. We live in a handout society. We live in a handout Christianity. Yet I want you to know we look around us, and we take for granted the freedoms that we have, but if you have seen it on the bumper sticker, and it is so true, freedom is not free. Somebody paid the price for you to have the freedom that you have today.

One of the reasons why I push you and your children to go to things like this military expo to see the veterans and learn about them and talk to them, educate, broaden their horizons, because I do not want them growing up thinking that they have all that they have and it just was handed to them. Somebody paid the price beyond any imaginable price for our freedom we have in this country today.

I will tell you something else, your salvation was not free. He hung on that cross there, and He paid that price, and the Bible says over there in Acts 20:28 that God purchased us with His own blood. But these are the things we take for granted. I will tell you one more thing, your Bible was not free. We like to think it is, we like to make ourselves not think about those things, but there is a whole history of men and women who paid an unbelievable price for you to sit here and hold that Bible in your hand. They paid an unbelievable price in their families and their lives and everything up to their death so you can have a Bible that is the absolute Word of God that God got it down to you that you could ignore and not read.

Here is the question today. I should have just started with this so we could get out of here early. Here is the only question you have got to answer. Your freedom is not free. Somebody paid the price for it. Your salvation is not free. Somebody paid the price for that. Your Bible is not free. Somebody paid for that. Now here is the question: Will you pay the price today that the next generations could have the book that you have? That is the only question you have got to answer.

See, we live in a convenient Christianity. "Oh yeah, I will do something for God as long as it does not cause me any discomfort." "Yeah, I will believe this, and I will do that as long as nobody gets mad, as long as nobody says anything nasty about me, as long as somebody does not attack me." We live in such a convenient Christianity. The problem today is not putting it out. The problem today are God's people not willing to pay the price to put it out because they will come up with a price.

#### SEC: Blessings Upon the Head

Now he closes out the verse by saying, "but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it." Of course, the key word here is the word "head." In the Bible, when the blessings of God come to somebody, it is always connected with their head. Did you ever see that?

- Genesis 48:17 when Jacob blesses those two boys, he puts his hand upon their head.
- In Genesis 49:26 the Bible says the blessings of the Father will prevail on the head of Joseph.
- In Exodus 29:7 when they anoint a new king who is going to be head of Israel, they pour that oil on his head symbolizing the Word of God and the blessing of God through the Holy Spirit of God, exemplified by the oil.

Now here is how these verses and here is how the blessings on the head work for you and me in the church age. Here it comes. When you take what God gives you and you put it out to others,

the liberal soul, scatter it, put it out, break through that barrier, get to that next level. When you take what God gives you and puts it out to others, the blessings come back on your head.

1. 1 Corinthians 11:3 says the head of every man is Christ. So when you put out the Word of God and you do with the Word of God and you are liberal with it and you feed other people and give them food by scattering the Word of God, the Lord gets the blessing out of it. He is your head. In Acts 13:2 it talked about that early church in Antioch, it says, "they ministered unto the Lord." Somebody says, "How do you minister to the Lord?" I will tell you how you do it. You put out the Word of God, and the blessing comes back on your head, and the head of every man is Christ. He gets the blessing.
2. Next thing, Colossians 1:18 says that Christ is the head of the body, the church. So then the church gets the blessings.
3. The third thing, Ephesians 5:23, the man is the head of the woman, so the wife gets the blessings.
4. The next thing, the father is the head of his family, so his family gets the blessings.

Now do you see that? When you water the Word and put it out and you are liberal with it, you get watered yourself, and when you put it out, the blessings come back to you, down through you, down on everything you are ahead of, starting with Christ, down through the church, down through your wife, right down to your family, the blessings of God, and it makes everything fat in a good sense. It layers up the family, but whatever will come, it will layer up the church that no matter what happened, no matter what transpired, no matter what takes place, you will get through it, you will survive it.

That is so simple, that is why the church and God's blessings on it, that is why God has blessed this church and given us what we have. There is no other reason, there absolutely is no other reason other than the fact that you people are willing to take what God has given you and do something with it, and you want the automatic spiritual blessings of God in your life that it cannot be denied. You just start going through that sound barrier spiritually and start being liberal with the Word of God, scattering it, putting it out, feeding hungry people with what God has given you, and the blessings will just move right down that line. Our church today is as strong as it is, it is as tough as it is, it is as durable as it is, it is as flexible as it is, it is as adaptable as it is, and it has the strength and the spiritual maturity it has for that one single reason. He blesses your head, your family, your ministry, then He blesses the church, and then He blesses everything that you are in charge of. Your family gets blessed because your liberal approach to putting out the Word of God, watering thirsty people, and giving it to others, and it comes back on your family. You take the Word of God and scatter it, and the increase will come back to you, and God will bring those blessings upon your head, Christ, and He will bless all that you are ahead over.

#### SEC: Conclusion and Call to Action

Now you can begin to see how week by week in this last section of verses, it is absolutely imperative, absolutely imperative, and it impacts everything that we do. I told you when we started that there were eight fundamental principles for being successful in our Christianity in this section. I have given you four.

- First week we talked about your desire, the desire that is the key to everything.
- We talked about the scattering of the Word of God, casting your bread upon the waters and finding it after many days.
- Now we talked about the liberal soul, not holding back the corn, giving out all, coming to the place of not withholding what God gives you, the corn.
- Now we see it comes back on your head, Christ, He is the head of the church, the church, you are the head of your wife, the wife, you are the head of your family, the family, right down the line.

Now there are four more to go. We will pick it up next week as we continue to move down through here, but every week we are adding to these, and you can begin to see how it all works and how it all comes together of giving out the Word of God. My suggestion to you with all that God is doing here and all the opportunities that God is giving us today is an absolutely right time for you to make the decision in your heart you are going to blow through that barrier. The people are here to help you, I am here to help you, you have got everything that you need when you get to that point to go to that next level. The only thing that will stop you, the only thing will stop you is that you are not willing to pay the price to give that Bible to the next generation.

I often thought where would I be today if Peter Waldo looked at the Bible like most of God's people do today? He was the head of the Waldensians. I have often thought to my day what would the Paulicians and what would I have done if the Paulicians took the position that most Baptists take, or the Wall of the Huguenots, or the Vaudois, or any of those groups back there? Those men and women knew what they had, they knew what they believed, and it was imperative to them not only for them and their own families, but they had the foresight to understand that if it did not, if they were not willing to pay the price, just as Christianity would have went nowhere if God was not willing to come down and pay the price, they understood that, and they realized that the Bible that God gave them was only going to perpetuate itself down through history if they were willing to pay the price. Every man and every woman were willing to pay the price themselves to ensure that it got to me and it got to you.

Now here we are. I do not know how much time we have got left, but if we have got any time at all, the bottom line is this: The question is simply, are you willing to pay that price to get it to the next generation and the generations beyond? Are you training up your children to make sure that when you leave this earth, the legacy keeps going that ensures that in generations to come, when somebody, if Jesus tarries His coming a hundred, two hundred years, they are talking about our time period, and they will come back to this church, come back to you and saying, "If it was not for them people right there, just as I am saying if it was not for the Waldensians, if it was not for that church back there, we would not have the book that we got today." Somebody has to be willing to pay the price. Father, we thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus, we love You.