

Proverbs 18:1-7

Sunday 11/13/2016

Well, as you know, last week we've been in Proverbs. Last week I got into Proverbs chapter 18 and I told you how absolutely crucial this passage is for understanding the way things are today in the world that we live in. Whether you know it or not, Christianity has lost its Bible.

Christianity has lost the Word of God. Christianity exists with all the things and bells and whistles that we think Christianity is, but the real core value of Christianity is, do you have the very words of God in your life? If you don't, nothing else makes any difference.

We're living in a day and age, and we talked about it last week, that the Bible has been taken from you. The Christianity in the world, the devil has made sure that the Bible has been taken out of your life. Proverbs chapter 18, verses 1 through 7, shows you exactly the mindset that you need to understand today. I want you as the church to be informed. I want you to understand the issues today. I want you to be able to speak to the issues today, and I want you to be able to be well-understood and well-versed in what's going on around you today, so that you're in a better position to deal with it.

You'll remember last week, it was not my intent. I thought I was going to get through the whole sermon, but obviously we didn't do that, so I just kind of capped it off as the introduction. Just so you remember, we talked about that the first sin recorded in the Bible wasn't the consent with Adam and Eve. It went way back beyond that, where the devil himself, who was Lucifer at that time, rose up and said, "I want to be like the most high God." He superseded who he was, his authority they did have, and tried to overthrow the authority of God. Of course, we saw that last week and we talked about it.

Another thing that we talked about, the Bible talks about that there are many devices in a man's heart. We talked about this Thursday night, out of Colossians chapter 2, when a young man asked that question, how that you come to the place in your life when you lose your Bible, you have to replace some things in it with man-made commodities. The Bible says in Proverbs 19:21, there are many devices in a man's heart. We talked about philosophy, theology, we talked about science and religion. All of the things that man orchestrates to get around the fact that he no longer has the absolute standard of the Word of God.

Then I gave you, if you remember, three warnings in the Bible about tampering with God's Word. God put them in such a fashion in the Bible that there's one in the beginning of your Bible in Deuteronomy 4:2. There's one in the middle of your Bible in Proverbs chapter 30, verse 5. Then there's one at the end of your Bible in Revelation chapter 22, verses 18 and 19. We talked about how the devil's goal all down through history is to take from you the single greatest possession that you ever have as a child of God, and that will be the absolute perfect, inerrant Word of God that you have.

You remember, and I'm not going to go through them in any great detail, but you'll remember, I told you last week, seven things that you lose as a Christian when your Bible gets taken from you. Seven things that you lose. Today I want to show you, I want you to go out of here today

understanding the mindset of saved men, unsaved men, but saved men whose whole life is dedicated to proving to you that you don't have a reliable Bible that you can trust in your life.

I want to tell you something. If you don't have a Bible in your life that is absolutely perfect, that you can go to without any error or any mixture of error, we're all in trouble, because all we're left with then is what man has for us. I want to tell you something. You know why I believe the Bible's perfect? You know why I hang on to that truth that the Word of God that I have is absolutely perfect? You know why it is? I'll tell you why. Because I am sick and tired of this world of having to love things that are imperfect. I am sick and tired of this world of being bombarded with everything that is not perfect. Everything in this world that I have to be associated with, everything in this world that I have to deal with, as good as it may be, at the end of the day, it's imperfect. I have one thing in my life, one thing in my life that is absolutely perfect, and nobody's going to take it from me, and that's the Bible that God gave me.

As we come down through these seven things that you lose, you remember I talked about that in 2 Timothy chapter 3. I talked about the no furnishings, how that inside your temple there are some spiritual things that you build into your life that you can't do without having the Word of God. The second thing was 1 Thessalonians 2:13, how that if you lose your Bible, the Word of God, God cannot work in you, because He only works through the Word of God. The third was in John chapter 14, verse 23. We talked about without a Bible, you have no biblical love for God. God tells you exactly the things that He loves, the things that He hates, the things that He wants you to put in your life. The fourth one was John chapter 4, verse 24, the great verse on the fact that you lose your Bible, you can't even have worship with God, because worship depends on truth. When you don't have the truth of God, you're relegated to making worship something that is not. We talked about that last week.

The fifth one, John chapter 15, verse 7, no power in your prayer life, not understanding how to intelligently pray, how to intelligently lay out the Word of God to God and the intercessory of Christ to God at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered, losing the complete concept of a communication with the Lord Jesus Christ. Then we looked at the sixth thing, Jeremiah chapter 1, verses 8, 9, and 10, no power in preaching. This is why today you can't find pastors or churches that will preach the Word of God. They won't preach on sin, they won't preach on judgment, they won't preach doctrine, they won't preach on the judgment seat of Christ, they won't preach on hell, they won't preach on anything that is controversial, because we live in a world that doesn't want to get anybody separated. We live in a world that wants to bring everybody together.

I don't care in the world if you want to get anybody together, that's your deal. But when it comes to New Testament Christianity, Jesus said, "I didn't come to put together, I came to set at variance." He came to separate. When you put an absolute standard of truth in your life or whatever you do, I guarantee you truth is going to separate you from error. We live in a Christian world today that doesn't want that. We want to all get along. We don't care what you believe about the Bible or what I believe about the Bible, as long as we all love God together and we all want to get along together. That's not New Testament Christianity. The real true church down through history is laid out from the book of Acts right up through church history to our modern

day times with a church that took its stand on Bible teaching and Bible doctrine that was never part of the status quo of the world when it comes to Christianity.

The last thing we talked about then was Joshua chapter 1, verses 6, 7, 8, and 9. When you lose your Bible, when you lose truth, you lose your inheritance. Everything that you had, everything that God had for you, is gone. Revelation chapter 3, verse 8, talks about the church of the open door. Revelation chapter 3, verse 20, talks about the church of the closed door. The difference between the two is the church of the open door kept His Word, the church of the closed door left His Word. The Bible talks about the key of David in Revelation chapter 3, that the great Philadelphian church had, the church of the open door. If you would ask the average Christian what the key of David was, if you'd ask the average pastor what the key of David was, if you'd ask the average theologian what the key of David was, he wouldn't have a clue. The key of David was that David loved the Word of God just like God did, and it made it his heart. That was the key. The key of David is one of the seven keys found in the Bible, but it's a key that gives you the ability to have a relationship with the Word of God. It will be the key to everything, what your attitude is toward the Word of God that God has given you.

I talked about how that we today, I call them in my own affectionate way, the "Yea, hath God said" society. The fact that when Adam and Eve were down in the garden, the devil showed up to Eve, the first words out of his mouth, what he wanted to destroy God's plan and destroy mankind, was simply, "Yea, hath God said?" And then he changed what God said. We found from that point in Genesis chapter 2 and 3, 4004 BC, there's a battle right up to today that the "Yea, hath God said" society is still alive today. There are men that will stand in pulpits, there are men that will stand in colleges or universities, and they will stand up there and tell kids just like you, "You don't have a Bible that you can trust." Well, if you don't, you don't have anything. You certainly can't trust your college professor, I guarantee you, or your preacher for that matter, especially this one. I'll lie to you every chance I can.

Now with all that in mind, the number one question we want to focus on today is, do you have the words of God? Why do you have it and so many other people do not? I want to show you a mindset laid out in Proverbs chapter 18, verses 1 through 7, and I want to look at one of the greatest proverbs in all the Bible on how a man can get to that place where he can be saved on his way to heaven, and yet sit in judgment of the very book that God gave him. Pride and arrogance is a terrible thing in a person's life. It blinds us, it blinds us from seeing who we really are. It blinds us from seeing the truth of God in relationship to who we are. The devil's heart was blinded with pride, and when you have a man who's a saved man, stands up and says, "I'm going to correct the Word of God, and I'm going to tell you what it means instead of the Holy Spirit of God using the book that God wrote to interpret it for you," you're in trouble.

I. The Mindset of Those Who Reject God's Word

So let's read Proverbs chapter 18, verses 1 through 7.

Proverbs 18:1-7

Through desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom.

A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself.

When the wicked cometh, then cometh also contempt, and with ignominy reproach.

The words of a man's mouth are as deep waters, and the wellspring of wisdom as a flowing brook.

It is not good to accept the person of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgment.

A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes.

A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul.

Father God, thank you for your Son Jesus Christ. Thank you, Lord, for what He's done for us, the fact that He came down here, Lord, to this broken and sinful world, and actually died and paid for our sins on that cross, Lord. I thank you for that. I pray, Lord, that you would just speak to us today, Lord. Just have us examine our hearts, and just look deep within ourselves, and compare ourselves to what the Word of God says, that we might be more like you, Lord, that we might be more like Christ. I just thank you, Lord. I'm so glad that you've revealed the things of your Word, Lord, to someone like me, Lord. I'm not smart at all, Lord. You rejoiced, Lord, that you revealed the things of your book to babes, and not to the wise, and not to the intelligent people, Lord. Someone like me, Lord, without a college degree, I can open up your Word, Lord, and get into it, and your Holy Spirit searches these things of God, and shows me, Lord, and teaches me, Lord. Thank you for that. I just pray, Lord, that you would just give the Bible to the Word of Jesus, and just speak to us today, Lord, after all you've seen, in your name, amen.

II. No Delight in Understanding

Now, verse 1 and 2 says this:

Proverbs 18:1-2

Through desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom.

A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself.

Now, first off, I want to draw your attention to verse 2, and then in a minute, verse 3. I want to look at those two first, and then kind of put them back together here to set a context. Verse 2 says, "A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself."

The first thing I want you to see about the man that we're going to be talking about here today, is that this man has no interest or delight in understanding anything about God or His Word. There are people out there who are saved people, who go to church every day of their life, every weekend. They're involved in ministry, they do all kinds of things, they'll teach other young people, whatever they do, and yet there are people out there that absolutely have no interest or delight in understanding anything about God or His Word. You need to understand this. They care nothing about the Bible being the very words of God. They care nothing about the Bible being the greatest book the world has ever seen. They care nothing about the fact that when God

gave you your Bible, He gave you the most absolute, precious thing you ever saw in your life. His love is not what he gets from it, his love, but rather is how he can improve on it. I want to tell you something, you and I will never improve on the Word of God that God has written.

In great contrast to that, here's a man, the Bible says in verse 2, he has no delight in understanding and his heart is only to discover itself. Now look at the contrast to that in Psalms chapter 1.

Psalms 1:1-2

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.

But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

Your delight this morning as a child of God needs to be in the wisdom of God. Not the wisdom of yourself, not what you want to do in life, not where you want to go in life, but your desire and your delight needs to be in the law of the Lord.

Psalms 37:4 says:

Psalms 37:4

Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

I told you earlier, I'm not interested anymore in loving anything that isn't perfect. I'm only interested, when it comes to my own life, my own salvation, and my direction in life, I'm tired of imperfection. I'm tired of the things this world offers that just are dead in the streets. I have a book in my life that will lead me everywhere that God wants me to go. Though there may be some rough times in life, and may I have to go through things and learn some things in my life, at the end of the day, it will be the greatest journey you ever undertook in your life. This man here does not in any way delight himself with the things of God.

Yesterday in the people ministry, we talked about, we're going through the wisdom books. We got into Psalms, and I told you about Psalms 119, the greatest chapter in all the Bible that will teach you how to love the Word of God. Psalms 119 is the very core depth of God's heart. 176 verses, and every one of them is a different line or a different aspect on the Word of God. I showed you how that in my own personal life, years ago, I wanted to learn the Bible. I wanted to know the Bible. I realized very quickly where God's heartbeat was and where it was. I looked at Psalms 119 as a man in that time period who wanted God's Word.

I talked to you about making a deal with God about His book. I talked to you about reading those things. What it is, is somebody making a deal with God. "God, you give me your book and I'll do this for you. You teach me this and I'll stand before kings and declare your Word. Lord, you teach me your statutes and I will declare your Word to everybody." I showed you how that years and years ago, I developed my own little prayer. There were times where I read that prayer every time I ever studied the Bible, before I studied the Bible. I'd sit down and I'd put a chair here and an empty chair there, pretend God was in that chair, and I'd read that prayer back to Him, asking

God to give me. I would tell Him, I'd made a deal with Him. I'd say, "I want that book. You give me that book, and I'll never fear the face of man when it comes to standing up for what your truth is."

You have to make your own deal with God. You have to come to the place that you realize that the only way you're going to learn that book is to delight yourself in it. I'll tell you what's wrong with God's people. They have their delight in too many other things outside the Word of God. Your delight, I'm not saying you shouldn't delight yourself in other things, I do. I enjoy all kinds of things. But my premier, primary delight of my life is that book. I started a love affair with that book about 40 some years ago and it's only gotten better. It's just gotten sweeter, it's gotten closer, it's gotten more real. I'll tell you what, these guys don't understand it that way. They look at a book and all they see is cover pages and words. When I look at it, I see the very words of God that God looked down over the banners of heaven and saw when I needed and gave it to me.

Don't take this wrong, folks, I love you to death. But when it comes to this book, He didn't give it to you, you just found it. You just happened into it. I mean, I love you. But when He wrote this Bible, my name was on His lips, not yours. When He wrote this book, every word He put in it, every chapter, every verse, He said, "Bob is going to need this." He didn't say Drake. He didn't say Zach. He didn't say Maddie. He said Bob. I guess I'll let you in, anybody named Bob's in, I guess. He wrote it to me.

Now I say all of that, you're laughing at it, it's funny, but you know what? You ought to stand up today and raise a revolt against me saying, "You know what, it wasn't your name, it was my name." You ought to take issue with me. You ought to say, "Who do you think you are? He didn't have your name on there. He didn't even know who you were. He was thinking of me." We could fight about that. That's what God's people ought to fight about. Amen. If they fought about that, they wouldn't fight about all the other things. Though so many other things are good to fight about, I have to tell you.

Delighting yourself. This man in no way does he delight himself, this kind of man, never delights himself with the things of God. It's just a book to him. It doesn't mean anything. It's just words on paper. It doesn't move him. He doesn't spend his life pouring over it. I met a lady one time that was an elderly lady, and I was talking with her about her Bible, and I always like to look at people's Bibles. I asked her, I said, "Could I mind if I look through your Bible?" She says, "Oh no, go ahead." I was going through the Bible. I got into someplace in Psalms. She had a lot of notes in it, but there were circles here, circles here, circle here, circle here. I'm thinking to myself, I'm not sure what that is. I hesitated to ask her. But then after a while, my curiosity got the best of me. I said, "Honey," I said, "let me ask you a question. I really love your Bible, man, you have spent a lot of years in your Bible." But I said, and I asked her a question, I said, "Over here in Psalms, you have these circles here. Did they mean something to you?" She started to smile, and she says, "Oh yeah," she says, "years ago when I was going through a tough time in my life, and I was over my Bible, and I wept over that Bible, and I wept, my tears ran down and stained the pages of that Bible." She says, "I knew that those tears were dry, and I'd never see them again. So I put a circle around them, so I'd always know where those teardrops were."

Do you think those guys do that? Do you think they care that much to get into the Bible, that it rips their heart out, that you go through something? I've seen old Mel Shabaka on his knees praying over something and not get up, just praying and beating a chair and hanging onto that Bible. That's why he went through about three Bibles every year. He beat them to pieces. I've seen guys like that get on their knees and not get up until God, until they got a hold of God, because that book was real to them. They delighted themselves in it.

Everything out there, we talked about some of the cults on Thursday night in Bible study, predestination being one of them, and I'd let you know some of the other ones. You know what they all are? If you know your Bible, you know that none of them, not one of them, not one of them, can be remotely defined in the Bible as truth. You know what those people have done? They've come to the place that they made their cult religion a "one another" device. They made that as a device that they wanted to have, to get around the truth of God. That's what man does. That's what man always does. That's what he's done down through history. A man who believes and teaches those heresies is a man who has set himself up over the very authority of the Word of God. He is going to tell you now what the Bible means, instead of the Bible laying out for what we mean.

III. The Heart's Desire to Discover Itself

The second thing, that his heart may discover itself. This man in his heart wants to exalt himself above God and His Word. It's like Isaiah 14, verse 13 and 14, where the devil said:

Isaiah 14:13-14

For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

Count them, five times: I, I, I, I, I. "I will be it." Listen, I want to tell you something. I'm not interested in discovering my heart. I lived with a sucker for 66 years. I am not interested in discovering my heart. I've lived with it so long and I understand it all too well. I understand what Jeremiah 17:9 says:

Jeremiah 17:9

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

My heart is deceitful. Your heart is deceitful above all things. It will deceive you. If your heart and my heart doesn't have an absolute standard to keep it between the white lines, you will deceive yourself. You say, "Why is that?" Because your heart's deceitful. "How bad is it?" Above all things. Not only that, it's desperately wicked. "And who can know it?" Well, anybody who has God's wisdom and understanding could. Anybody who delights themselves in the Word of God would. And anybody who delights themselves in understanding so he can get the truth about his own heart should.

Hey, I have a headline for you. I am in no way interested in discovering my own heart. I want to discover God's heart. I want something perfect in my life. I want something that stands for something in my life. I'm tired of me. I'm tired of me leading myself down every road path that ends in disaster. I'm tired of me and my heart following my own conscience, following my own guide, doing what I think is right. I need something perfect in my life. When I delight myself in what is perfect, and you have a lot of men out there today in religious circles who do not delight themselves in the Word of God, and very frankly, they don't like you delighting yourself in it. They'll try to take it from you. They'll try to take it from you.

Just for the record, that heart of God is the Word of God. Do you have it? Just for the record, the heart of God is only found in a King James 1611 Authorized Version. Do you have it? Just for the record, the heart of God is truth. Getting God's heartbeat is the number one thing for a child of God.

I've talked to you many, many times about the Apostle John and how that probably the greatest man of the Old Testament that mirrors what we should be in a relationship with God and the Word of God is David, probably, a man after God's own heart. But the greatest example in the New Testament is the Apostle John. I've told you many, many times, he's the only disciple that Jesus says that He loves, and yet I know He loved them all. You have the 12 apostles and then you have the inner three, kind of like God's clique. You have the inner three that are always where God is when God's doing something. The other ones are out here always complaining, but these three are in the middle of it. But in that three, you have one who goes all the way.

When Christ is being crucified and everybody else is scattered away, John is standing right there. While Peter is cussing Him out at the fire, denying Him. While James is probably running off naked and everybody else is scattered for their own fear, their own life, John is right there watching everything that goes on with his Savior. The Bible says that one time they were in the upper room and Jesus made a statement. He says, "This night one of you is going to betray Me." Without exception, except one, every apostle, every disciple in that room, after Jesus says, "One of you is going to betray Me," every one of them looked at Jesus and said, "Lord, is it I?" Peter said, "Lord, is it I?" James said, "Lord, is it I?" Matthew said, "Lord, is it I?" When it came to John's turn, John looked at Him right in the face and said, "Lord, who is it?" He didn't know who it was, but he knew one thing, it wasn't going to be him.

John's the only man in the Bible, Old Testament and New Testament, that leans over and lays his head on the very breast of Jesus. He hears the heartbeat of God encased in the human Son of God. Only man in the Bible, Old Testament and New Testament, that heard the very heartbeat of God. Can you imagine what that must have been like for him to lay his head on the breast of Jesus and actually hear encased in that human man, the heart of Almighty God? There's only one person on this planet outside of John that can do that, and it's you and me. Because you have the heartbeat of God right here. Now when you lay your head in that book, and you put your mind into that book, and you delight yourself with that book, you'll get the heart of God.

The devil doesn't want you to get the heartbeat of God. He wants you to discover your own heart. He wants you to follow your own path. He wants you to follow your own conscience. He wants you

to plot your own course in life. He wants you to decide who you're going to be and what you're going to do, and then follow your career, and wind up in the lake of fire, following you, discovering your own heart. God doesn't want that. God wants you to get His heart.

Imagine a man putting together and compiling the Bible based on his own heart because he has no delight in the wisdom of God, setting himself up, and sitting down and opening up the Bible and correcting it based on his education. He decides now what's going to be in the Bible and what isn't. He sits in judgment of the book that stood for 400 years that God used more than 200 billion times to win people to Christ. Now some guy, because he's got a PhD, and he went to a seminary someplace, he's going to open up that book that God put a stamp of approval on for 400 years, and now he's going to say, "God didn't mean that, let me change it." You actually think you can improve on what God did and put a stamp of approval on for 400 years? That you're going to make it better? Why, you and Lucifer are sitting in the same church pew this morning. Whether you're saved or whether you're lost, you've been hanging out with that "Yea, hath God said" crowd again. I'm with Festus over there in Acts chapter 26, verse 24. "You're beside yourself, much learning has made you mad."

IV. Intermeddling with Worldly Wisdom

Now let's look at verse 1 here. Let me show you how this all works now that we defined our guy here. It says, "Through desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddeth with all wisdom." Now I laid out verse 2 and verse 3 first so we could have a better context here, but let's look at verse 3 now here and get it together here. It says:

Proverbs 18:3

When the wicked cometh, then cometh also contempt, and with ignominy reproach.

So here's what we've got so far, getting it all together. We've got a man here in Proverbs 18 who is wicked. He has a desire, but his desire is not for the heart of God, his desire is to discover his own heart. We know he's a fool from the verse in the book of Proverbs defined for us what a fool is. We know he takes no delight in understanding, he's void of understanding the truth about God and His Word. So the Bible says he separates himself from all the reality of truth of God's Word as the final authority. Then he intermeddles with all the wisdom that's out there in the world. He takes everything that man has done and tries to bring it in and reconcile it all with what God has said.

You see this in Christian counseling today. There hardly isn't a church, if it's a large church, that doesn't have a bonafide on-staff Christian licensed by the state, psychiatrist or psychologist or at least a therapist. If you would go to one of those people and sit down with your problem in your life, you would find that you were talking to somebody who has taken some things out of the Bible and taken a lot of things out of psychology and psychiatry. What he has done is exactly what the verse said. He's intermingled them.

I had a Christian psychologist one time, a pretty good friend of mine, not anymore. But he said one time, he said, "Well, you know what?" He says, "I believe the Bible is truth, but I don't

believe the Bible is all truth." What he's saying is he's intermeddled himself with all the other "ologies" out there, the unsaved man who came along. He's saying the Bible is truth, but there's truth in what unsaved men say too. I'm going to tell you something. There isn't any truth in anything an unsaved man says unless he gets it from the Bible. There's only one source of truth, but that's where you're at today. So you'll go in there and you'll get a little bit of Bible, you'll get a bit of Freudian psychology, you'll get a Mendelssohn, you'll get a bit of this, you'll get Mithermeyer, you'll get all of these stuff.

Now the greatest example of this in history, so you can get a handle on it, I think would be what took place from around 20 AD, right before Christ shows up, to about 200 AD. It takes place down in a place called Alexandria, Egypt. This is the greatest example I know of this verse. It sets the theme and the tone for where it all goes from here. Now in Alexandria, Egypt, and I must tell you this, around the time from BC to AD, and up through 20 AD and up to this time period, the seat of the world's knowledge was in Alexandria. It had been with the Greek Empire under Alexander the Great, but the Greeks now have pretty much come off the scene, Rome is now in power, and yet everybody is still worshipping the Greek, the world is still a Greek speaking world. Everybody is looking to the Greeks for the wisdom of the world. They reached the apex as far as the world was concerned of knowledge and wisdom with all the great philosophers, Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, Aesop. He was tough to swallow. The great library at Alexandria was unparalleled. Alexandria, Egypt was the seat of all knowledge at the time of Christ, when He was born during that time period.

You're going to find there that there was a great school at Alexandria that actually was kind of on a quasi-Christian basis. The first leader of that school was a guy by the name of Philo. He took his name from Philo philosophy, and he lives around 20 AD. He's a Jewish philosopher who is steeped in all of the Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, he worshiped the Greeks, he was into the Roman, all of it. He had definitely intermingled himself, intermeddled himself with it.

You know, it's always been an amazing thing to me. I look for things like this. Most people, I'm weird like this. Most people don't think about this. But I look at that time period when he was here, around the time of the beginning of Christ, after the 400 silent years, when Christ, right before the first coming of Christ. You know, there are two periods of silent years in the Bible. Do you know that? There are two time periods where God really doesn't do anything for anybody, He just waits it out. The first one is when they're down in Egypt, back there in Genesis. They go down in Genesis about, what, Genesis 48, 49, when they all go down there. They're down there for 430 years. For 430 years, God never does a thing. He doesn't write anything. He doesn't say anything. He picks it up in Exodus 12 and brings them out. For 430 years, God said nothing. You know what the devil did in those 400 years? He got a race of giants over there in the promised land, that his own desire and goal for that 400 years, while God said nothing and was formulating His people, he got over here and he raised a race of giants that was in that land that when God probably brought them out and those spies went over, they saw those giants and it scared them to death.

The second 400 years starts in 606 BC, right up to this time period here. You know what the devil did in this 400 years? He didn't populate it with giants out of Genesis chapter 6, but he

populated with giants of intellect through the Greeks. He populated with men who rocked the world with knowledge and even to this day, where you go to college, I don't care where it is, you get into a sorority or fraternity, they're always named after a Greek letter. You know why? Because to this day, the Greeks are synonymous with wisdom and understanding, as far as the world's concerned. Where in the Old Testament in that 400 years, he populated with giants to keep God's people out. In the 400 years before Christ shows up, he populated with intellectual giants to keep God's people from ever getting the Word of God. That is so, so, so, so clear.

So Philo, he's deep in Greek and Roman philosophy. What he does is he tries to take the Old Testament that he has, New Testament's not even written yet. He tries to take the Old Testament that is already there, and he tries to reconcile what God said in the Old Testament with all of the tradition of the Greeks, the wisdom, the Romans, the Babylonians, the Egyptians, and he tries to take and put it all together. In other words, he intermeddles himself with the Word of God, with everything else, to try to get a hodgepodge of truth, but in reality destroys the truth of God's Word.

He dies. After he's dead, another man takes over this most unusual Christian university by the name of Pantanus. It's the same deal. He's the poster child for Proverbs chapter 18, verses 1 through 7. He does the same exact thing. Only now we're getting the New Testament beginning to be formed. These guys have absolutely no love for God, no love for the Word of God. They claim to be Christians, some of them. After he's dead, a guy comes on the scene by the name of Clement of Alexandria. Now we're getting into the bulk of New Testament manuscripts. They do the same thing. They take the New Testament manuscripts just like they took the Old Testament, and now they begin to correct them. They begin to look and read what God said, and then bounce it off of what the Greek said, or the Babylonian said, and where in their thought they didn't agree with what God said, they changed it.

After this guy, it comes to the guy that we all love and know so well, by the name of Origen. He lives about 150 to about 200 AD. Now Origen claims to be a Christian. He's even martyred for his faith. He stands as one of the great examples of Proverbs chapter 18, because he takes the very New Testament, he is steeped in all of the traditions, he's intermeddled everything, he cares nothing about the love of God, nothing about the Bible. The Bible to him is just a book. He is so screwed up in the Word of God, he actually thinks that the devil and Christ are going to get reconciled someday. He believes in baptism for salvation. He's the guy that read over there in Matthew that if your right eye offend you, pluck it out. If your right hand offend you, cut it off. He's the guy that read that over there and took it literal, had a problem obviously with some kind of sexual problem, so he castrated himself. Bad misinterpretation of that passage. You can teach him my Bible study, nor am I going to you for problems. Which he later regretted. I can, with great understanding, I can get that.

These guys care nothing about the Bible. There's no love affair with the Word of God. They don't delight themselves in it. They delighted themselves in looking at what God had given to man and they wanted to sit in judgment on the Word of God so they intermeddled themselves with all the other wisdom of the world and brought it in to destroy God's Word. The end result? The end result is in any new translation you get today outside of a King James Bible, there'll be at least

60,000 changes in it because it comes from Origen, fundamentally. Origen took the blood out because he didn't believe you got to heaven but by the blood of Christ. Origen took the deity of Christ out because he didn't believe that Jesus Christ was God. Origen took the second coming out because he didn't believe that there was a literal return of Christ. He took the millennium out because he never thought there was going to be a reign of Christ. He never thought Christ was literally resurrected. He leaves whole passages out because he just simply thinks they shouldn't be in there.

Now who gives any human man the right to do that with God's Word? The only people stupider than Origen were the people today who believed what he did and follow what he taught. He destroyed by what he did, every cross-reference in that Bible that you can legitimately cross-reference anything and learn. Try it sometime. The devil knows that the Bible lays him out better than any book. So you know what happened when Origen and his buddies got together with it? They destroyed every reference and changed every word. You couldn't track the devil through the Bible if your life depended on it now. They all follow the God syndrome. They're all part of the "Yea, hath God said" society. They all think they're smarter than God. They all hate truth. They all hate the very concept of an absolute truth that you can have. They want to be your absolute truth. They have no care or delight in God's wisdom, only their own.

You know the book of Acts is an incredible book. I think at some time in your life if you're really going to understand how New Testament Christianity gets defined, it's going to have to be the book of Acts. I always looked at the book of Acts as a Genesis of the Bible. The Genesis is the book of the beginning. It's always been amazing to me how that you have Genesis and then you have four books after that that all cover the same time period. But when you come to the New Testament you have four books who cover the same time period. Then you have the Genesis book, Acts, after that. There's a reason for that. When you get into the book of Acts, Acts will clearly define for you everything. You learn the book of Acts as far as understanding the fundamental basics of where you're at and how the thing works.

It's the book of Acts that told you that there are only three cities you have to focus on when it comes to understanding what's going on in Christianity: Antioch, Rome, and Alexandria. Your first called Christians at Antioch, Rome is always against Christ, and Alexandria has always been against it too. It's laid out very clearly in the book of Acts. You know the first Christians are found in the book of Acts defined for you, the first churches found in the book of Acts defined for you. The first missionary trips are laid out and defined for you. The New Testament Christianity is laid out and defined for you, and I'll tell you something else. The first Bible college is laid out and defined for you in Acts chapter 19. The first time you find an institution on a professional level to teach young men and young ladies the Word of God, when you study that passage, they're teaching against the Word of God. You know what they do? They set the model for every Bible college down through history. I know a lot of people don't like that. I don't know what to tell you, but it's the truth. It's the truth. You can pick one.

When you begin to see that, you see the same thing. The work of wicked men to destroy the truth of God and you see the same thing all down through history from 300 and 400 AD. It was Eusebius and Constantine. We've talked about it before. We don't have time to go into it today.

No, you should. We've talked about it many, many times. From 500 to 1500 in the Dark Ages, it was the Roman Catholic church with their theologians, Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. From 1600 to 1900, it was the Jesuits and Tischendorf and Westcott and Hort, which we've talked about. From 1900 to 2016, where we're at today, it's every Bible college on the face of this planet and almost without exception, every pastor and every church across this country, not the world. Every one of them have one goal, and that is to sit in judgment of the Word of God and tell you that the book you have in your hand, you can't trust.

When you come here on Sunday morning, Saturday night, or Saturday morning like yesterday, Thursday night, you're told that the Word of God is absolutely God's perfect, inspired Word to man, the final authority in all things in faith and practice, and we make no apology for it. When you go to any Bible college, or both any churches today, you just pick one. You're told that it's not the perfect Word of God, it's that the Greek and the Hebrew, or the pastor and the professor will tell you what it means instead of the Holy Spirit of God laying it out through the scriptures interpreting itself. You're told you need to learn the Greek and the Hebrew and understand your Bible. My God couldn't teach it with you without that.

Let me tell you something, I've said it many, many times, I'll say it again, because I'm going on record here on tape, Greek and Hebrew is absolutely worthless to you. It's worthless. We had a kid one time here. Oh, he's a nice little guy. No matter what I taught, he always thought you could get something out of the Greek. Let me just show you how goofy people can be. He would study Greek words from the back of a Strong's Concordance, and there was a Greek thing back there. He didn't even know it wasn't the right Greek. But he studied back there. We had him preach down the mission one time. Now the mission, how many of you have been down to the mission? Okay, you know the mission. The mission down there is, and I'm not saying this wrong, but it's the reason why it's called the mission. You have every person down there who's out on their luck, and every guy on the planet who's just in a mess. I mean, we go down there and the best thing, I don't go down anymore, because they limited us, and I don't want everybody else to go, but I always went down. It wasn't the guys that you've got. The fights break out is what I'm interested in. Sometime, last time, who preached? Some fight broke out down there. I don't know if it was over your preaching or not, but it would be a good thing if it was.

But this kid goes down there. Now keep in mind, we're in the mission, if you've been there, half the world are on drugs, the other half down there is on drugs. He's up there preaching. He starts taking them to the Greek. He starts to talk about their drug abuse, and he starts to go over in Revelation and talk about the Greek word for drugs in Revelation, is *pharmakeia*. Now like these guys at the mission really got a hold of that truth. I think half of them thought it was a cuss word. You know, *pharmakeia* sounds like a really good cuss word. He's down there with guys who probably never graduated from sixth grade, got all kinds of problems, near to hear that there is a truth of God's Word that'll change their life and they got *pharmakeia*. Taking them to the Greek. He's no longer here, by the way. Crazy man.

I've had guys arguing with me down the line that the Greek and the Hebrew is superior to the Bible you have. I mean, they'll get real toxic about it. I mean, they'll get really heated about it. "Well, you know what, no, no, no. The Greek and the Hebrew is absolutely superior to any

translation." My answer to them is simply four or five parts. I'll give you four ways that I know that my King James Bible is superior to any Greek text or any original manuscripts anywhere on the planet. It shuts them up. You would think they would be smart enough to themselves. I think a lot of them, I think a lot of them have a real attitude toward us because of the fact that they spent \$80,000 a year to get a Bible college when you got it from going to Dollar General Store and spending a buck and getting a King James Bible. They need to get their money back. Remember the tithe belongs to the Lord when you get it back.

I'll give you four ways I know that this book is superior to any original Greek. Here it comes.

- 1.) You could read this one. Nobody ever could read the original manuscripts.
- 2.) 200 billion people at least have been saved by this. There's never been one person in the history of the world that ever got saved by the original manuscripts.
- 3.) The Bible, the word Bible means book. There was never a time when the original manuscripts were ever in one book. So when you talk about the original manuscripts being superior to my Bible, you're talking about something that never even existed in the history of the world.
- 4.) The originals were never given for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 2 Timothy 3:16. Only the Bible says the scriptures were. Originals weren't scriptures.

Now, if that's not superiority, I don't know what is. But that's where we're at today. You know why they can't get that? Because they want to be God. They want to be like the most high God. Man has an insatiable desire when he hates truth and he does not delight himself in the things of God, and he goes after the own desire in his heart, he has an insatiable desire to be like the most high God.

V. The Snare of the Soul

Verse 6 and 7:

Proverbs 18:6-7

A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes.

A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul.

Now, the greatest answer, why a saved man can do what he does with the book, the easiest, most plainest answer that I can give you based on the Word of God is simply this. The Bible makes it very clear that that book is God's mind. Very clear. "You have the mind of Christ. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." That book you hold in your hands is not just a book with paper and ink and words on it. Though it is, it's the inspired, perfect Word of God that God brought down and gave to you that you could have His mind.

Now, it's real simple, folks. It's real simple. Here it comes. Really the only reason you needed to be here today and then you can leave as soon as I say this. Here it is. Here's the answer. It's real simple. You mess with God's mind, He messes with yours. The Bible says over there in Ezekiel chapter 14 that God will give a man a lie to believe if he wants to after the multitude of his idols

in his heart. That's how it works. That's exactly how it works. It becomes, that book becomes the snare of his soul. When you mess with the Word of God, you're in for a rough time, folks. Strokes.

The greatest single verse in the Bible, for those who reject, hate, correct, the Word of God will be found in Proverbs chapter 13, verse 13. Man, if you don't have it marked down, mark it down. It simply says this:

Proverbs 13:13

Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded.

You just watched that reality of that verse. I've watched it for over 45 years. I've watched men who hated that book, who made a joke of that book. I've watched over the 30, 40 years of their life where they're at today. Now, let me just cut through all the garbage here. Let me cut through all the sermons, all the books, all the great deliveries, all the big churches full of people just like you, who know absolutely nothing about the Word of God. Let's get to the bottom line of Proverbs chapter 18. When it comes to that book, we have to go back to 1 Thessalonians 2:13 for just a second.

1 Thessalonians 2:13

For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

No need for any Greek to understand that verse. It's very clear. The bottom line, pulling back all the layers of your education, pulled back. When it comes to the Word of God, as far as God is concerned, you either love His Word or you hate it. In Revelation 3, it was either the church of the open door or the church of the closed door. You never find a church with a halfway door open. It's either open or it's closed. It's that simple.

VI. The Supernatural Gift of God's Word

I believe that when God gave the Word of God to you, it was a supernatural gift. I believe the greatest model of it is back in Exodus chapter 16. When you read that great chapter, you will get one thing out of the Greek and the Hebrew that will help you with Exodus chapter 16. But here's what you get from the Word God gave you. You know what it was? God's people back in Exodus chapter 16 were in a wilderness of sin, much like you and I are in the wilderness of sin. Nothing in that world of sin would sustain them. They didn't have any food. They didn't have any water. Nothing that was there would help them. They're out there wandering in the wilderness of sin, just like you and I are wandering in this world.

God looked down and saw that they had a need. They needed to have some supplement. They needed to have something to eat. God brought manna from heaven. That manna from heaven is a picture of the Word of God. When they ate it, they got strength. It's called angel's food over in

Psalms. While they slept at night, while they were asleep, God rained it down all around the camp. The supernatural food from God that was going to sustain God's people in the wilderness of sin was supernaturally provided by God to get them through the wilderness of sin. They woke up in the morning, threw the tent flap back. There, across the ground, was everything they needed to sustain themselves. The food from God supernaturally came down during the night, church age. When they opened up that flap, they had a decision to make.

When you realize that God gave you the supernatural Word of God for your supernatural strength to get you through your wilderness of sin, and you look at that book in your lap today, you look at the Bibles in our bookstore, you hear somebody preach from the Word of God. When you understand what you have, you too have a decision to make. When they pulled that tent flap back, looked out there and saw the Word of God, the manna from heaven, they had two choices: pick it up and eat it, or trample it under their feet and go their way. Every man who sits in judgment of that book is a man who denies the supernatural inspiration of the Word of God. It's a man who denies, and does not delight in the understanding of God, but he desires his own heart, and he tramples that book under his feet.

You've got the greatest book God ever gave man on this planet. I was kidding you a little earlier, but how when God wrote that book, He wasn't thinking about you and He was thinking about me. That's for me. That's my own love affair with the Bible. That's me knowing God loved me that much that in a sense He did that, because God has the ability to do that. It's like God can listen to my prayer, but a million other people can be praying and He hears theirs too, but He never gets them confused, does He? God has the ability, there may be 10 billion people out there talking to Him, He has the ability to deal with every one of them personally, even though there's 10 million of them. So in a sense I'm right. In a sense I'm wrong. In a sense, when He was writing that book, He had my mind, me on His mind, and that localized, "This is for Bob," but every one of you can claim that, but He was thinking of you too.

When He rained that manna down from heaven in my life 40 some years ago, I didn't have a clue. I tried everything. I was only 19 years old and I was already despondent. I was already disillusioned. I'd seen more things at 19 than most people see when they were 40. I was disillusioned with life. I have a real thing with somebody who wants to take that book from me after where I was and when God gave it to me and what it did for me. I'll put up with a lot of things, folks, I really will. You can come into a Bible study on night and you can be a charismatic or you can be this or you can be that and we'll just let you go at it. But brother, there's some things about that book that are very personal to me.

Now, when you try to take that book or get me to believe that the book where I was headed and the truth that God gave me and where it steered me from and what it has done in my life and I don't deserve it. When the manna came down from heaven and was all around my tent flap, brother, and you're going to tell me, "Don't eat it," we're going to war. We're going to war and you will lose. You say, "You're not that tough." You look around here, stand up. Stand up. Stand up. If I can't beat you here, meet my big boys out here in the parking lot. My sons. I used to be that tall before I got sick.

It's your book, folks. You live in a world where the world wants to take it from you. It's that simple. It's called the simplicity of Christ. God made it so simple. Say, "Where'd you get your Bible?" "It just rained down from heaven." How much simpler can that be? "Where'd you get your Bible?" "Well, in the eclectic Greek text of the Hebrew Old Testament, it was handed down through the eclectic people of the scribes and the Pharisees and the great intellects of the mind who kept that book and perfected that book and brought it all through." Not so complicated. "I just woke up one morning and there it was, all around the floor." "I just woke up one morning in my disillusionment of life and God said, 'Here it comes, parachuting down right on my feet. There it is, Bob.'"

You know what? You don't have to have a college degree. You don't have to have a high IQ. You just have to be dumb enough to believe that I'm a God that wrote a book that's perfect and true. If you believe that and you delight yourself in it, Bob, I'll give you the desires of your heart. He's given me the desires of my heart. I didn't get them because I deserve it, didn't get it because I'm smart, didn't get it because I'm educated. I got it because I'm dumb. I got it because I'm just dumb enough to believe that God wrote a book and meant what He said. Nobody's going to take it from me. Can't speak for you. Nobody's going to take it from me.

There have been people in my life that I fought for desperately, so they would make it, because I loved them that much. If you think I wouldn't fight for somebody here on this earth that I love to make sure that they are okay, you think I wouldn't fight for that book that God gave me, changed my life, changed everything about it. You either want to be like Christ through delighting yourself in His Word or you want to be God and change it because you think you're smarter than He is. It's just that simple.

Proverbs 18 is a picture of a mindset of a man or a woman whose only delight is in the desire of their own hearts and never the things of God. Some are saved and some are lost. But they all have one thing in common. They can't stand having a final authority in their life. They can't stand a book that all other books of this world will be judged by. They can't stand any book being a final authority that they have to submit to. The very thought of them spending, as I said earlier, \$80,000 a year for a Christian education when you can get it from Dollar General Store for a buck and just believe what you read. It's just too much for them.

Three great lies of life.

- 1.) Lie number one is older is better.
- 2.) Lie number two is bigger is better.
- 3.) Lie number three, the more it costs, the better it is.

It's the simplicity in Christ. The Bible says man looks on the outward appearance. God sees the heart. It was a time back in the Old Testament when they wanted a king. They came down to Jesse and they said, "We hear you got some boys and we want to think maybe one of them might be the king. So I want you to get all your boys and bring them before there and bring them out and we're going to see which one God wants to pick." You know, I've often looked at that story and thought to myself, well, there's a great analogy of even parents. Jesse lined up all the boys except he didn't even bother to bring David. David was the one that God wanted. David was

little, probably scrawny. The other boys were probably more manly and older. Probably looked very kingly. David didn't look kingly. When you read that story, it struck me that even his own dad missed the potential that God saw.

I just, this is not my sermon and I'll just touch this lightly. Mom and dad, don't miss the potential that God sees in your child. Don't think that they can't be something that God uses because maybe right now they're not where they need to be. I've seen kids in this church that were really some kids. I think of Joe Christensen's boys. When you have four boys in your home and they're all boys and there's no girls there, that's got to be, well, you talk about a wild time. Those guys used to run all over the place, get into everything. I used to have to chase them out everywhere. They got into everything. Up in the ceiling one time, they're everywhere. We'd all scratch our head and just look, and I remember telling Joe, because I know Joe and Chrissy. I remember telling Joe, I said, "You know what? They're boys. You keep a right herd on them and you keep them, but they're boys. But I'm going to tell you something, Joe. I said, watch those boys when they grow up, they're going to be something special for God." The oldest one now, is that Riley the oldest one? Yeah. He's now graduated from being a little runt down here causing all problems that he's on my number one list for one of my granddaughters to marry.

Jesse never considered David. He didn't meet the stature. He didn't meet the physical qualification. Jesse thought for sure, nobody's going to want this little guy. So he paraded out the best that he had. But sometimes the best the world has to offer is not what God's looking for. God looked down inside and God looked down inside and He saw David. All those boys went through there and He had the one, Lord said, "You know what? There's one yet, he's over there tending to sheep. I know that one. You know, I know that one. You have to hear him at night over there. When he's watching the sheep out, the moon's full and the sheep are just kind of meandering around and it's lonely and dark. He's bored and nobody's there with him. He just gets that harp and he sings to Me some of the most beautiful songs about Me. That's who I want. You know why I want that guy? Well, that guy delights himself in Me. That's why I want him."

I'm telling you, don't sell yourself short. Don't sell yourself short. You all have something to offer. We all have our problems. We all do stupid things. We all have issues. At least one of you are honest. We all have our issues. But God looks beyond those, doesn't He? I thank God for where I'm at. I don't deserve to be where I'm at to have you folks. But if God only focused on the stupid things that I did, I never would have gotten here. If God only focuses on the dumb things that you do, you'll never be where you're at. I thank God that God's bigger than that. He looks beyond those things. He sees what He saw in David. David was far from perfect. David had his problems. But David delighted himself in the Lord.

I told the kids yesterday in people ministry, David, he just never got far away from the Word of God. It was a time in his life when he is about as far from God at a fellowship as you could ever be. He's still on the throne. Somebody comes in and starts telling him about a battle that's taking place. A battle has taken place. He said, "Didn't five guys or six guys get killed over here because they got too close to the wall and somebody threw something down on the wall?" David, when he is in the midst of his out of fellowship with God, he says to those guys, "You should have known better than that. Don't you remember reading back here in Chronicles or Kings or

wherever it was that so and so, or Joshua, that so and so was in the same kind of battle. When you get too close to the wall..." He's referencing even when he's out of fellowship with God, his mind is still fixed on that book. There'll be times in your life and my life where you don't do right all the time and you'll get out of fellowship with God. You know the thing that'll bring you back is the fact that you have spent so much of your life delighting yourself in that book and God will always bring you back with that. He'll always bring you back with that. You're never wrong to fall in love with a book. I don't care what scholarship tells you. The greatest love affair you'll ever have in your life is the book that God gave you.

VII. Conclusion: The Certainty of Truth

I'll leave you with this, Proverbs chapter 22, verses 17 through 21. It says:

Proverbs 22:17-21

Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge.

For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee; they shall withal be fitted in thy lips.

That thy trust may be in the LORD, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee.

Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge,

That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee.

Now you know the question is, do you today have the certainty of the words of truth? Are you certain you have the truth of God? Has it changed your life to such a degree that no one could ever talk you out of it? I've known Christians who probably got saved and five or six years down the line because they never got into the Word of God, they get caught up in a cult. They get caught up in this, they get caught up in that. Or you could talk them out of their salvation in five minutes. When you have the certainty of the Word of God, I'm going to tell you something folks, nobody will ever talk you out of that book. It's your book. Down from heaven to your tent. It's yours.

There's a mindset out there that people want to take it from you. They want to take it from you and they want to replace it with themselves. They want you to be like them, the "Yea, hath God said" society. But all that you do is stand in judgment and sit in judgment of the Word of God instead of submitting yourself to it. The only thing in this world that is different than anything else that the world has to offer is that you have a book that is absolute truth in all things in faith and practice. Never let anybody take it from you. Never let anybody tell you that there's something better. Develop your own love affair with it. Fall in love with it. Let it give you the desires of your heart when you delight yourself in it. It'll cover all of the bases when people hurt you. It'll cover all of the, I'm telling about Psalms, in Psalms yesterday where it says:

Psalms 119:165

Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.

When you love that book, nothing offends you. You know why? Because the delight of what you have is greater than what somebody says to you or knows to you. You don't get offended. You don't get offended because there's a book that God gave you that is your delight.

Psalms 1:3

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper, delighting yourself in the law of the Lord, the Word of God.