

# Jude 1

Sunday 2/21/2016

This is a good thing because not only does it give guys like me an opportunity to come up here and make a fool of themselves and humble themselves, but it is good because you will realize the type of preaching that we get on a regular basis when you compare it to what I am going to give you today. So, thank God for that.

I am also going to try to not be like Pharaoh, but let God's people go in a decent time. Pray for him on that. But I have a backup plan too. If you see Christian go to sleep, that means it is time for me to stop. He is my buddy. I love that kid. He is one of our new stud volleyball players on our team this year. He helped us for the first time in three years, since we had a team together, win three in a row. The kids, they tore it up yesterday.

I told the kids because of that, we can take away two great truths from this. One, obviously we are getting better. This is our third year together as a team. We got dominated and pummeled every year. I think there are years we only won one game, and last year maybe we only won three. We have won three in a row. I said the second thing we can take from this is that we know the Lord is coming back and it is getting close, because that should not have happened. So, thank God for those things.

I want to clear up some things too while I am up here, just how this whole thing came about. When I came to Old Path Baptist Church, it was not to get involved in ministry. It was not to make a name for myself, but to find a position to elevate myself in or anything like that. I was out there in the world just searching. I was saved. I knew that Jesus Christ was Lord in my life and those things like that. But I did not have any absolute authority to base that off of. I was just wondering and searching.

When I came here, and once I finally got the Bible and got it taught like it is, all I wanted to do was just find a way to take the principles out of this Bible, put them in my life, and I was so fed up with the fake Christianity that was out there and the hypocrisy that was out there. My number one goal was to get into this Bible and put that stuff back into my life so that my friends and family in the world could see what it looks like when a Christian actually follows the Bible. That is all it really was.

From that, people came and went and laughed and stuff like that. I kept getting moved into different positions. I wound up in this spot, and it just seems kind of weird. It is not something that I really like. It is not something that I really enjoy, being in a spot like this. But at the same time, I have learned that it is not my will but His will. It is all about what God wants. I have learned that I believe that He does this just to keep me on track. I am somebody that needs that. I need a strict structure in my life to keep me on track. Now that I have to work with the kids and prepare sermons and messages, that is exactly what it does. So maybe that is the only way I would have grown spiritually, is by doing something like this. So I thank God for that.

The second thing is that I just want to talk to you guys about, before I get into the message, just what my job is. Sometimes I think I get the perception or people look at me as like a teenage

whisperer or something like that. Like, send your kids over to him and he can help them out and help you with your problems and your issues. I just want to be very honest about that. I am really not. Any type of success that I have had in your kids' lives is because of what you guys have already laid, the foundation that you guys already have.

If you are wondering why certain ones jump on it and jump in it more and why are they more excited about it, it is really not because of me. All I am doing is capitalizing on, or I should not even say capitalize, but supporting what you guys have already started in their lives. Then it shows up. They are just hearing it from one more guy, that is all it is. All it does is just a huge support role. I am a glorified cheerleader. That is all I am. That is really what it comes down to. It is awesome that I get to be in that position.

These kids, I tell them all the time, they teach me a lot more than I learn myself. Some of the things that I challenge them to do, I know, I guarantee I would not have had the courage and the faith to do that when I was their age. I know I would not. Sometimes I get down on myself and think, "Lord, how am I going to preach that?" Because I know if I was back there at their age, I would not have been able to do some of the stuff that these kids are doing. They are light years ahead of me. I look at that, and I get kind of frustrated with it. "Why would You still want me to encourage them in these things, Lord? I know I could not do it." But that is the whole thing. God is raising a generation of Christians better than the ones that were here before. That is exactly what is happening with these kids. It is so awesome that I get to be a part of that.

## I. Cleansing of the Flesh and Spirit

Without further ado, I want to talk to you guys today out of the Bible. This message I am going to give you is kind of a conglomeration of some of the things that we have gone over in the youth group here lately. Since camp, one of the biggest things I have been focusing on is that verse over there in 2 Corinthians 7:1. It has been our bread and butter for the last couple of months. We have just been going to the Bible and looking at different stories and different characters through this angle.

*2 Corinthians 7:1*

*Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*

Naturally, you look at that and you think, "Oh my gosh, what is he preaching, legalism or something like that? Look as good on the outside as you do on the inside?" No. The biggest thing that we have been looking at is just the whole idea of—and I want these kids to get this—I want these kids to jump ahead of where I was at their age. I thought this would be a great way to do it.

Outwardly, I think just about anybody can look pretty good and pretty decent. It is not really that hard to put on a good show. Politicians know how to do that. Anybody that is out there in the world knows how to put on a good show for a little bit. But the thing that I have been drilling to these kids is cleansing themselves in the filthiness of the spirit, the inward things that no one can see.

We went back there to Luke 15. We looked at the story of the prodigal son. Outwardly, most people focus on that filthiness of the flesh, the prodigal that went out there in the world and physically separated himself from what was happening at the father's house and went out there. It is a great picture of salvation, how God goes out into the world, gets stuck in the mire, God brings him back from that, and receives him with open arms. It is a great story of redemption.

We did not focus on the prodigal. We focused on that older brother who stayed at home, who the Bible said was at home but was in the world. That guy, the guy that sits on the front row in church, is there every Sunday, yet his heart is in the world. That is the guy that we focused on. Just that type of stuff right there, because we are trying to raise a group of Christians that are better than what we are.

We went over there and we looked at Luke 9, and the Bible talked about three forms of discipleship are over there and what Jesus Christ would challenge you to be as a disciple, the things that He calls you away from. We looked over there, and we are going to talk about this a little bit, Martha, what a beautiful story that is of a work for God versus a work of God.

I just want to take a passage here and develop some of those things and bring you guys along and bring you up to speed on some of the things we have gone over. The biggest thing is these are things that God has personally shown me in my life and helped me to grow with in this past year, and I really appreciate them for that. It has been an awesome year.

## II. Earnestly Contending for the Faith

Without further ado, turn over to Jude 1. If you got chapter 2, you got the wrong Bible. Let us pick it up there.

*Jude 1:1-4*

*Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called: Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*

The reason why I love this thing is because one of the kids' favorite songs is "Hold the Fort." One of our favorite expressions that we say to them all the time is, "Hold the line." It is our job to hold the line. We talk about the true line that we have been a part of and that we have come down in. This passage right here brings that thing up.

The Bible says in verse 3, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and to exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." So we find out that God wants us to contend for something. He wants us to fight for something. What is it? It is the faith. I am going to talk to you guys about what that faith is, and that is what I am telling the kids that their

job is to do. It is something that they are going to carry on to their next generation. It is something that Bob has entrusted me to carry on to them. It is the faith that we are going to talk about.

In verse 3, when he set out to write about how they were alike, the Bible says he was going to talk about their common salvation. The Bible said he was going to talk about the coping and sharing and all the compromising efforts that were going on that day and how Christianity and salvation was a common being going on. The Bible said he found that something was more needful. He said he was going to put them in charge and give them a warning to stand for the body of beliefs that come with that faith, with that salvation.

Today, there are many people that claim to be saved. It is an easy thing to talk about our common salvation and how we are all alike in that thing. Many people claim to be born again and enlightened, having a new birth, but very few claim to hold to those doctrines that come along with salvation. That is what we are going to talk about today.

You find that many people have faith. Everybody has faith, as a matter of fact. In essence, faith is just a belief or what you lay your trust in. That is in someone, that is in yourself, or that is in something. Jude says that there is a particular group of beliefs that you should fight for. Later we will look at this body of beliefs, but first let us look at what the Bible says about these body of beliefs.

Look at the first thing right here in verse number 3. The Bible says that you should earnestly contend for the faith. So earnestly contend, that first word I want to focus on is contend there. The Bible says that contend is what we have got to do for this faith, and contend just means to fight for.

Anybody that knows their Bible, you know that that is not a physical fight.

*2 Corinthians 10:4*

*For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;*

Ephesians 6 says that we wrestle not against flesh and blood. So it is not a physical fight that we are talking about. But there are many things that we ought to fight over. Just because this is not a physical fight, the spiritual fight is just as worthy. I want to talk about that.

The first thing that you have got to look out for is that, and this is in my life, oftentimes the things I am fighting for are foolish things, but it is not the faith. Oftentimes it is financial things that I might get into a fight over, but it is not the faith. It might be even friendships when you get into these things, but it is not the faith. Coming up in this new election season that we are entering into, we are going to be fighting over our freedoms, but they are not the faith. They are not the earnest fight that we ought to be engaged in.

You say, "Well, what about that word earnestly? What does that add to it?" Well, earnestly just means to be sincere in what you are doing. But I will tell you what, it is hard to do that when you do not truly believe something. It is hard to fight earnestly for something when you really do not

care about it. It has got to be personal to you before this thing happens. So that is the first thing we have got to look at.

The second thing is, the Bible says it was once delivered to the saints. You say, "Well, what the heck are you going to pull out of this? I mean once, what is so big about that word?" Well, this is huge because the faith that we are talking about here, it does not evolve over time. That is something that is huge to pay attention to. It was once given. Then guess what? It has been preserved since that time it was given to Bible believers from that time of Paul, only up to now. It was a once given faith. You will not have to find an updated version of this faith. You will not have to find a new translation of this faith.

Here is a question you want to ask yourself: Was your faith once given? Here is something else you want to ask yourself: Because if it was once given, you can follow that trail of that faith from the time it was given up till now. It was preserved. Here is one more thing to ask yourself: Did your faith just show up in the last 200 years? That is not the faith. Not only is it not worth pulling that paper, but it is not worth fighting for.

The next thing the Bible says here is it was once delivered. You say, "Well, delivered, what does that have to do with all this?" Well, not only was it given once, but when it was given, it was delivered. You say, "Well, what is so important about that?" Well, it was not created or thought up by man. It was not by man's own will or his own creativity, but it was God's. This faith that I am talking about back there in Galatians 1, we are all coming through that in prayer group right now. The Bible lays out what that is.

*Galatians 1:11-12*

*But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

*1 Corinthians 15:3*

*For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;*

Paul received this and then he delivered it. It was not thought up by him.

So now let us get down to it. What is the faith and what are we supposed to be fighting for? The faith in its general, most simple concept that I am talking about is the general body of beliefs for the New Testament Christian. That is what you learn about when you come here.

- The Gap Fact
- The Kingdom of God versus the Kingdom of Heaven
- The Law versus Grace
- Eternal Security
- Bible Basics
- The Seven Mysteries
- The Seven Things Not to Be Ignorant Of
- The Seven Sevens

- The Three Raptures
- The Rapture Verse
- The Second Coming
- Bible Basics
- Eleven Dispensations
- The Nine Pillars of Truth
- The Will of God versus the Plan of God
- Legalism versus Liberty
- Church versus Israel
- Paul versus Peter
- The Four Accounts of the Gospel
- The Trinity
- Eighteen Types of the Antichrist
- Twenty-one Types of Christ
- Baptism
- Lord's Supper
- Local Church

It is our body of beliefs that we stick to, that we hold to. You know how I got this? I could not get that by reading my Bible. I was reading the Bible for 19 years straight. God chose to do this from man to man, from woman to woman. That is how He passed that thing on. I got this because other men and women fought faithfully to preserve it. Now it is my turn.

The Bible goes on and says about this faith in Colossians 1:22-23. It says continuing in this body of belief will allow you to show up at the judgment seat of Christ, and not just to start off that way, but you have got to continue in it.

*Colossians 1:22-23*

*In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: If ye continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;*

Who does not want to show up before Jesus Christ, holy, unblameable, and unproveable in His sight? The Bible gives us how we do that. If there is a clause, you continue in the faith, not \*a\* faith, but \*the\* faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which you have heard, which is preached to every creature which is under heaven, whereof I Paul am made a minister.

*Colossians 2:7*

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

That means this body of belief must be taught to you. Your growth and fruitfulness will depend on your thankfulness for it.

*Ephesians 4:13-14*

*Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;*

Perfecting of the saints, the work of the ministry, and the edifying of the body of Christ is for a purpose, and that purpose is to bring us into the unity of the faith. But look at verse 14, if we do not accomplish that unity of the faith, look what we are left with. That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men, cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.

*1 Timothy 3:9*

*Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.*

What does that have to do? That has to do with what is your attitude about those things that pertain to the faith that you can believe, but you cannot really explain that well. The mystery is in the Bible. What is your true attitude towards that? Will you give God the benefit of the doubt until He reveals that to you? Is He worth the benefit of the doubt? That is something to think about.

*1 Timothy 4:1*

*Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;*

When you leave the entire body of beliefs, that is what you are left with: those seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, the things that people get caught up in nowadays and completely get sidetracked and off track for God.

*Philippians 1:27*

*Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;*

Just like Jude warned us back here and said that our beliefs are synonymous with our salvation, we are to work together to uphold those things. That is that unity that we are supposed to be coming together to do in the church.

*2 Timothy 4:7*

*I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:*

That lets me know that it will not be non-confrontational when I keep this faith, and it will not be a quick sprint. But if I do, and if I can manage to keep that thing, then I will get a crown in the end.

## 2 Corinthians 13:5

*Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?*

The question I have got to ask you is when you examine yourself, do you find that you are living this body of beliefs out daily?

Verse 4 lays out the opposition to these things and what we have got to look out for. Back there in Jude 1, look at verse 4.

## Jude 1:4

*For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Now lasciviousness, that is just a big fancy word for want without limits or boundaries. And denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ. These attacks, this is important because we have got to understand the enemy of the faith now and how they operate. These attacks will not be blatantly obvious. Remember that. This enemy will not announce himself before he attacks. It will be guerrilla warfare. It will be espionage. It will be traitorism, if that is even a word. These subversive agents are hard to see because outwardly they look like you and me.

Here is something even scarier. This is what happened to me. Some will not realize that they are one until they run into the verses and compare their actions with this book. They have gotten the grace of God. They are probably saved, but they use it to sponsor their own lifestyle. They use God's grace to fulfill their own fleshy desires. What we are going to do today, we are going to take a look at these things, and they show up in three men the Bible lays out.

Look down here at verse 11.

## Jude 1:11

*Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.*

So we are going to look at these three men, and I ask you to do like I did with myself and ask yourself if you have actions that line up to them, if your heart is set right for the faith and defending it. These are three characters the Lord has brought me through to show me, like I said, where I am weak and how I was endangering myself and others. He showed me that if I could identify these things, isolate these things, and then annihilate these characteristics and actions in my own life, that I could keep up a good fight for them.

While going through these things, I challenge you, based off my own experience with these guys, to look inwardly and honestly at your own walk. I had to look inward because I have yet to find a reward. This is huge. I had to look inward because I have yet to find a reward that I can give the judgment seat of Christ for keeping tally on someone else's spirituality. I have not found that verse yet in the Bible. If you come across it, share it with me.

I have yet to find one verse that says I can add to my inheritance by inspecting your walk. When I look at that verse in Romans 14:12, it says, "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." That is the thing we have got to focus on right here. That is what we are going to honestly look at.

With that, before we get into it, Justin, can you stand up and ask the Lord to bless our time in the Word? Amen.

### III. The Way of Cain: Worshiping God Your Way

The first guy in the Bible says, "Woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain." So that is our first guy, Cain. What happened with Cain? What was so bad about Cain? What is it that I have to look at in my life that I do not want to line up with Cain?

Here is the issue with Cain, guys. Cain chose to earnestly, and look at that, he chose to earnestly worship God his way and not God's way. It was not faint, it was not fake. He earnestly, he sincerely chose to worship God his way. I want to say this to you: You can earnestly and sincerely and determinately and tearfully, with snot flowing out of your nose and dripping on five rows of pews, worship God your own way but not His.

In Genesis 4, we find Cain working his tail off to produce something for God. He labored, he sweat, he offered a sacrifice to God cheerfully and willfully. The only problem is that the sacrifice was pleasing to Cain, not to God. Did you know that today there are many people sacrificing and laboring and offering to God? They earnestly desire God's favor and acceptance. Physically, they are impressive, and they are getting a lot accomplished, yet their fatal flaw is that they never stop to see if what they are exhausting themselves over even matters to God.

The question I asked you is, how did Cain end up worshipping God his way and not God's way? That is something that I am fearful of and I have got to look out for it because I do not want to end up being just a vain worshipper, just a guy that is out there earnestly contending for a faith that is not even of God.

When you look at that story, Cain kind of started out with a religious beginning. Look at what the Bible says in Genesis 4:1. I am going to go through a ton of verses today, so if you do not have time to turn there, just listen to it.

*Genesis 4:1-2*

*And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.*

Nothing. But when you go to that story in the Bible, it is funny because you realize that it was the complete opposite. Cain was not the man from the Lord. It was Abel. But I want to say that to you about religion. Religion always boasts about things like that. It always is very outspoken and likes to promote itself out there when it has actually nothing to do with God. But salvation is a personal relationship with God that is inward.

In the Bible, one of the big things I have been talking to you kids about is the Bible says in Matthew 6 that those things that you do secretly, your Father will reward you for openly. So that is not something that happened there. Cain started out with a kind of religious connotation behind him, and that is something we have got to look out for. Cain had a religious beginning, but Abel had nothing.

A good verse with that is Ecclesiastes 9:17.

*Ecclesiastes 9:17*

*The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools.*

That is a great principle right there. The Bible says that Cain worked the ground, but Abel worked the sheep. I looked at that thing, and I was wondering, "Well, how did that happen?" Do not you guys realize that after Adam and Eve had that horrendous fall, where they had paradise with God, but they traded that thing for one sin, and after that thing, that thing stuck into their minds, and they told their kids about that probably every night before they went to bed. The kids probably got around that campfire or whatnot, however they did it, and right after mommy and daddy brushed their teeth and gave them their milk and cookies and pulled the covers up over their heads, right before they turned out that light. I guarantee you, those kids said, "But wait, mommy and daddy, tell us the story again."

Adam's heart would kind of start to quiver, and he would turn back around and say, "Yeah, that is right, boys, I probably want to hear about what the world used to be like, what we are hoping for God to restore to us again one day. All right, sit up. Let me take some time and tell it to you." So Adam begins in there. Eve, who was originally pretty cheerful, seeing her young kids there and thanking God for their births, kind of started to get a little sober over there in that corner and kind of start to feel like she was a little cold and kind of put her head down in shame.

Adam starts to tell that story, and he talks about how they fell into sin, and he talks about how great the world was before, but then he talked about what God did to cover that sin. He laid out how it was a strange thing. He had never seen anything done like that before. Nothing like such a vicious act. God took the most beautiful, precious, innocent being or animal on that earth at that time, little baby lamb, Mary's little white sheep that she had there. You know what He did? He sacrificed that, and He slaughtered it for us, that innocent little creature that had nothing to do with anything.

He heard that thing, and those kids looked at that thing, and they understood that. But you know what I think was going on? While Adam was telling that story about what God used to cover their sin, that lamb, that precious, innocent lamb, I think Abel caught that thing, but I think Cain was actually just thinking about the old world and how to bring back that awesomeness, that paradise. Abel looks like he was paying attention to the fact that, hey, when you mess up with God, He is looking for a sacrifice, an innocent sacrifice to cover your sin. Cain, all you heard was about how beautiful the trees were, how beautiful the animals were, how it was a paradise. He was set on bringing that thing back. He was going to make that paradise come back if God was with it or if He was not.

Abel listened, he understood while he was sitting there at daddy's feet about how important sheep was and getting covered with skin was. Cain was just about doing work and bringing that thing back in itself. You see the effect of that thing when they got down to there. Later on, those boys got older, and the Bible says it came time to bring a sacrifice to God. What happened? Abel brought those sheep, what did Cain bring? He brought the work of his own hands. He brought what he had labored and sweated over.

All in all, Abel trusted in what God did, and that is why God accepted it. Cain trusted in his own work, and God rejected it. Those of you that know what your Bible says over there in 1 Peter 1:18-19, the Bible is so clear about what God will accept and what He will not.

*1 Peter 1:18-19*

*Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as with silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:*

Oh, look at that, a huge similarity going on here, as of the Lamb without blemish and without spot. Abel had that principle right there. If you are struggling today with salvation and with acceptance and with assurance, please follow suit on this thing. It is going to take the blood of the Lamb. The Bible says, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

Now, I do not just want to be preaching to the choir because I think anyone that is here, we have all got that type of covering on us. Any Christian that is here, you had to go the way of Abel, and you accepted the blood of the Lamb. I want to look at this thing more inwardly, the thing that God showed me about this first thing, that you can be saved and still earnestly worship God your way and not God's way. For that, you have got to come over to Luke 10. Let us look at Martha for a little bit.

*Luke 10:38-42*

*Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.*

So for the Christian that has already gone the way of Abel for salvation, we are going to talk about how you can still, afterwards, backslide in the way of Cain. We are going to talk about how Martha chose to earnestly do a work for God, instead of a work of God. It is a great picture of me, a child of God, who is immersed in the ministry after salvation, on fire to do something for God.

I look at this story, and you have got two sisters here, and just looking at the human aspect of it, I am sure they are probably close in age. Whenever you have two siblings that are close in age,

subconsciously, or maybe intentionally, you are going to have some comparing, some coveting going on, and some little bit of a competition happening between those two. You probably see that Martha is thinking that this is an opportunity for her to pull ahead in that spiritual competition.

She is at an exciting time in history, and of her faith. Historically, you look back to that time, that is the first coming of Jesus Christ. This is what Moses and the prophets have been talking about forever. They are living in that time where it looks like this could be the end of the world. Jesus Christ comes back, the Messiah, to bring God's kingdom, to bring His power back to Israel. If they accept Jesus Christ, that is the end right there. We go straight into the millennium. Martha is probably excited about this thing. She is at a time like no other in history. This is the time that all prophecy has been talked about. Prophecy has been fulfilled. Her country is under Roman rule, and there is a buzz of revolution in the air out there. According to Bible prophecy, this could be the end. She has got the front row ticket to it all.

Now, as if it was not exciting enough, the Messiah Himself chooses to come to her house. I imagine what that must have been like for Martha. She has already been working her butt off in the ministry, and now she has got this opportunity. Jesus Christ is coming to the house, and there He is. He shows up. She opens up that front door. "Oh, Lord, glory to God. Praise the Lord that You are here. Come on in." Brings Him over here into the living room, sets Him down, says, "Oh my gosh, Jesus, You sit there. I am going to go get some water and take care of You and make sure that I give You the... It is not the water of life, Lord. It is not the bread of life or anything like that, but it should do. It is purified. It is distilled."

She goes over there and grabs that water, sets it down on Jesus's lap, goes back into there. "Now, Lord, what else can I get You? Oh, You just stay right there. You have to go in here and start whipping up some food." Then she starts thinking, "This is so awesome. The King of Kings, the Lord of Lords is down here. The Messiah, the chosen one of Israel, came to spend time with me. I must be a great Christian." This is exactly what I need. She is in Super Martha mode. She keeps running and running and running and going.

Next thing you know, she realizes, "Well, hold on. I need to be getting stuff done. Where is my sister? Where is Mary?" She looks back into the living room, and there is Mary at His feet. She is like, "Okay, well, she must be at His feet because she is massaging them or washing them or something like that. So that is all right. That is good service." But then she noticed Mary is not doing nothing. She is just sitting there looking at them. She is like, "Okay, well, that is kind of crazy. Maybe she does not realize that I am in here really busting my butt." So she goes back in there and as she describes, "Would you like some more water? My sister and I love to serve You, Lord. We are so glad that You are here," trying to give Mary the hint. "Come on, come on." She grabs that thing, goes back over here, puts it back down on the counter, looks back in there. Mary is still sitting down. So she is like, "Okay, this is not working. Okay. Hey, Jesus, what else can I get You? How about some food? I love to cook for You. My sister makes a great dish too. She should make it." She comes back over here, goes and grabs the food back over the thing. She is not listening.

So what does she do? She goes over to the oven and starts punching the reheat button like 10 times just to get Mary's attention. "I am doing this!" She is not listening to her. So she keeps going. She keeps going. Mary is still in there just sitting at her feet. She is like, "What am I going to have to do?" She opens that oven door and slams it shut. Surely Mary is going to hear it then. Mary does not do nothing. She stays there. Finally, she is fed up with it. She comes back in there. "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve thee alone?"

You say, "Well, Zach, what is that?" That is a Christian doing a work for God, not a work of God. You say, "Well, how do you know that?" Because of what it produces. She was cumbered. She was burdened. She was in strife. It produces an anger. It produces an attitude. You ever see Christians that are in the ministry but they seem like they are mad about it? Yeah, that is what that is all about. Who are you doing the ministry for? That is something I had to check myself on.

It is funny. We will be down there at Restart. You think you are really doing something for the Lord and going to town on it and really putting in some good work and stuff like that. Next thing you know, you kind of start looking around and trying to figure out what everybody else is doing around you. You are kind of like, "Okay, this is awesome. I am glad I get to help these people out and do this, glory to God and everything like that." But you kind of look out the window. You see the cookers like, "Well, what are they doing? They are not carrying nothing. What is that all about, huh?" Then you kind of get your attention back on you. You are like, "Okay, well, I am done." You know, we are just going to keep laboring and doing this stuff. You keep running up and down the stairs and you are like, "Man, Lord, glory to God. I am glad, Lord, that You got me helping You out here because I am not just taking time to fold clothes and stuff like that. I am really busting my butt and sweating. It would be easy for me just to go out and pass out tracts and hot dogs and stuff like that. But I am really into the grimy tough work." What is going on there? You are doing a work for God, not a work of God. It is what it produces. You know which one it is by what it produces. If you are getting upset about the work that you are doing for God, you are not doing it for Him.

You say, "Well, Lord, I am suffering for You in the ministry." No, Jesus Christ said, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light." You are carrying something of your own. That is not what God wanted you to carry. That is something else you have got to look out for. God will not accept a work for Him. He is only pleased by what He does, a work of Him. That is a work of God. This produced bitterness, envy, and strife in Martha. Her work was not done for the right one. Martha ended up just like Cain. Is not that funny? Christian ends up just like that, that Cain, that sinner there.

One of my favorite principles that I learned when I came to this church was look around, look ahead, and look behind. But the funny thing about it is when you start doing a work for God, you use that principle for the wrong reason. That is a great principle, but it is not a license to kill and destroy another Christian's spirit by being critical of how they look to you. It is a principle on walking circumspectly. It is a principle on understanding where you are in history and this age and time so that you can more effectively serve the Lord. It is getting coordinates to help you, as in myself, serve God. It is not a pedestal for self-righteousness. It is not a license to judge another man's spirituality.

A work of God is when God does the work through you. He is the master craftsman. The Bible talks about the heavens declare the glory of the Lord. We know that by His hand, all the handiwork that is out there was accomplished. You can accomplish a job for God. What you ought to be, you ought to be the tool. He is the master craftsman. He needs a tool to wield in His hand. You cannot accomplish that job for God until you become the tool that He needs for that job. This is only revealed when you sit at Jesus Christ's feet. That is the only way that you can accomplish this.

The best way to think about that thing is whenever you get an opportunity to work for God, imagine that it is God stopping what He is doing, as if it is necessary. He could keep His eye on you without stopping other things, but for the sake of whatever, let us do that. To give you a private audience, He stops and watches you. He says, "I am going to do that. I am going to not have a divided attention at all. Zach, I am going to pay attention to you. You have been pretty loud. Sunday morning has been singing pretty boisterously. I heard you love Me. So I just came down here to see for Myself." I am like, "Oh, glory to God. Of course I do, Lord." He says, "Okay, I will tell you what, Zach, I have got 12 tables and 144 chairs. I need to set up for Bible study. Why not show Me how much you love Me?"

You know what happens at that point? When God gives me that assignment, when God says, "I have got this job to be accomplished, I want you to go over here and do that," you know what happens at that time? Each chair that you are able to put up and each table that you are able to assemble is now an official token of your love for God. You have an opportunity. That is funny. You say, "Well, I do not see anything in the Bible about putting up tables and chairs." No, it is about what God dedicated it for, what you purpose it in your heart to be.

*Colossians 3:23*

*And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;*

So now this has gone from just a mundane routine exercise to something that I can do for the Lord. It is an opportunity for me to serve Him. There are two great whatsoevers in the Bible. One is a whatsoever, one is a whosoever. There is whosoever before you get saved. The Bible says, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved." You say, "Well, what does that mean? How many people is that, that get to get salvation?" Whosoever means all. But then after salvation, there is a whatsoever for your service.

*1 Corinthians 10:31*

*Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*

That means all that you do after you are saved can now be a blessing to God.

*John 8:29*

*And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.*

That is what happens when you get down to a work of God. Whatever work you put your hands to, you can now do that and be a blessing to God and accomplish something for God. So look out for that as a Christian. That is one of the things I had to check on myself. So that is woe unto them for they have gone the way of Cain.

#### IV. The Error of Balaam: Using God's Gift for Self-Gain

The next guy here, look at verse 11 in Jude again. The Bible says, "And ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward." Who is Balaam and what happened with him? That is back there in Numbers 22. The thing with Balaam is simply this: We see when we look at the life of Balaam, that Balaam chose to use the gift of God, the gift that God gave him, for his own gain and not God's.

*Numbers 22:2-6*

*And Balak the son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites. And Moab was sore afraid of the people, because they were many: and Moab was distressed because of the children of Israel. And Moab said unto the elders of Midian, Now shall this company lick up all that are round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field. And Balak the son of Zippor was king of the Moabites at that time. He sent messengers therefore unto Balaam the son of Beor to Pethor, which is by the river of the land of the children of his people, to call him, saying, Behold, there is a people come out from Egypt: behold, they cover the face of the earth, and they abide over against me: Come now therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people; for they are too mighty for me: peradventure I shall prevail, that we may smite them, and that I may drive them out of the land: for I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed.*

*Numbers 22:10-12*

*And Balaam said unto God, Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, hath sent unto me, saying, Behold, there is a people come out of Egypt, which covereth the face of the earth: come now, curse me them; peradventure I shall be able to overcome them, and drive them out. And God said unto Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed.*

So God says, "I do not care what this king said unto you, I am going to give you a three-point outline, I want you to stick to it. Number one, don't go. Number two, don't curse them. And number three, bless them." So Balaam gets a commission from God, and he has a choice here. Not everybody was a prophet, not everybody had the gifts that Balaam had, not everybody had the wisdom that Balaam had, and he was right now between a rock and a hard place, if you want to call it that, two opposites, and he had to choose which one was going to get his talents, which one was going to get his abilities. That is the story of Balaam, and the Bible shows that it ends up being for himself.

*Numbers 22:37*

*And Balak said unto Balaam, Did I not earnestly send unto thee to call thee? wherefore camest thou not unto me? am I not able indeed to promote thee to honour?*

So the king, Balak, says, "Listen, if you come unto me, I am able, and I can promote you to honor."

*Numbers 24:10*

*And Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam, and he smote his hands together: and Balak said unto Balaam, I called thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast altogether blessed them these three times. Therefore now flee thou to thy place: I thought to promote thee unto great honour; but, lo, the Lord hath kept thee back from honour.*

The reason why I like this story of Balak and Balaam, when I talked to your kids about this thing, it was simple because it is funny. When they were younger, they were having an age where they were dying with tons of free time and extra time and stuff like that. No one really paid them any attention. There is a snotty nose, little chuckleheads running around, stuff like that. Nobody really cares what is going on with them. But the older and older they get, now all of a sudden they are starting to have potential. People are starting to notice this. They are starting to pay attention to this thing.

Before when they had this load of free time and extracurricular opportunities to do whatever they did, now all of a sudden they are getting into middle school and high school, and activities at school are starting to pop up. The teachers are starting to look at these guys and take interest. "Oh, I know what I can do with that guy. That kid has got a really good personality here. I can use them over here." All these different venues now start to kind of chomp at them. Before when they had tons of free time to do whatever, now their time is split up against everything.

God has got this Holy Spirit inside of them. They are fresh. They are on fire for God and stuff like that. They are learning about what it means to have a personal relationship with God. They are learning about the opportunities that God can give them out there, what they can accomplish for God and eternity and how that stuff is all going to play out. At the same time, there is that drive, there is that pull from the world right now saying, "Hey, you can accomplish so much more right now. There are so many things that we can accomplish with you right now that you give yourselves over to us." That is one of the things that they are faced with right now.

It is kind of one of those little things that is going on that happened with Diotrephes. Saved by God, but the Bible says that he loved to have the preeminence more. It is kind of like what has happened with Demas. The Bible says he loved the present world over what was happening with Paul at the time. You see this oftentimes in what we call Christian celebrities. They kind of want the best of both worlds, and that is what happened with Balaam here. He had Balak on one side saying, "Hey, curse God's people." He had God on the other side saying, "Hey, you bless My people." What did he do?

The Bible shows us in Numbers 31:7-16. Turn over there real quick. Let us find out about his end before you put the summary to get on this, fellow.

*Numbers 31:7-8*

*And they warred against the Midianites, as the Lord commanded Moses; and they slew all the males. And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; namely, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword.*

It is funny because when you only read back there from Numbers 22 to 25, when Balaam's story takes place, it looks like Balaam actually does what God wants him to do. He blesses Israel. He has a little mess up in the beginning of his ministry. God told him to preach a certain way. He did not do it. So he had that thing where his donkey starts speaking to him on the road, and God got him back on the right track. From that point on, it seemed like he did pretty good. You end up finding, like at the end of Numbers 25, that is all he does for the rest of that chapter. He just blesses Israel, blesses Israel, blesses Israel. Balak cannot stand his guts. He says, "Listen, I was going to promote you to honor, man. I was going to give you the whole Ponderosa, man, but you just pretty much blew it. You chose God over me. Get out of here." So it looks like the story is over with. It looks like he stood up to the world and made the right decision.

That is until you come a couple of chapters over here, Numbers 31, you find the conclusion of the matter.

*Numbers 31:14-16*

*And Moses was wroth with the officers of the host, with the captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, which came from the battle. And Moses said unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive? Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the Lord in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord.*

Now one last spot, come over here to Numbers 25 again. Now it looks like Israel was being taken care of by God. Balak the king wanted to curse Israel. God put his man Balaam down there and said, "You bless him." It looks like Balaam did that. But then you have got a strange thing happening right after all that stuff takes place.

*Numbers 25:1-3*

*And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel.*

How in the world do we go from such a contrast of God loving them and having this prophet prophesy over there and bless them to this thing right here in verse 25? Well, it looks like Balaam did everything he was supposed to do. Well, under the table you find what really happened back here in Numbers 31:15-16. The Bible says, "Behold, these caused the children of Israel through the counsel of Balaam."

Up front on top, he was a Christian. Glory to God. "Kids, listen, if you keep God first, He will add everything to your life." You know, that is the message out there. We went through an article

called, "11 NFL Players You Did Not Know Were Christians." The whole premise of that article was because these guys in the NFL were trying to say how them making it to the NFL gave them a better platform, it gave them a better stage to put the gospel out. I guess they did not see the contradiction in the article. If making it to the NFL gave you a better stage and better platform to put the gospel out, why is the article "11 NFL Players You Did Not Know Were Christians?" I guess they missed that there. But what it is, it is an easy justification for you to go and live your life how you want to. Then once you accomplish everything you accomplish, kind of put a blanket of God over it all and say, "Glory to God, look what He gave me."

That is what happened right there at Balaam. He went out there before everyone, "Glory to God, bless Israel, do this and do that." But under the table where nobody was watching, he kind of had his own things going on for his own ends and for his own desires. The Bible talks about that over there in 1 Corinthians 4:7-13. Paul had trouble with these guys like that. Paul was down there and he said, "What happened?" It is a group of Christians he is dealing with.

### *1 Corinthians 4:7-13*

*For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you. For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but we are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised. Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace; And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.*

Right there, he is just talking about the salvation. These guys are acting like they went and got it by their own good works and stuff like that. Paul said, "You received it like everybody else. Why are you acting like you got it on your own?" Now, watching verse 8, he says, "Now ye are full." Today we say, "You are full of yourself." "Now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God that ye did reign, that we might also reign with you." Who knows when we are supposed to reign as Christians? It is upcoming. It is in the millennium. It is not now. But someone is trying to reign right now.

Paul says in verse 9, "For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were, appointed to death. For we are made a spectacle unto the world, to the angels and the men." But look at this. "We are fools for Christ, but somehow you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are honorable, but we are despised. Even until this present hour, we both hunger and thirst and are naked and buffeted and have no certain dwelling place. Laboring with our hands, being reviled, we bless it, being persecuted, we suffer it." At the end of verse 13, he said, "We are made as the filth of the world and the offscouring of all things until this day." There are two types of Christians showing up there. One is benefiting from the world system. Another one

seems to be the outcast to that thing. Paul says those two did not line up right there. That is what happened here. That is kind of like that idea of that Christian celebrity.

### *Philippians 3:13-18*

*Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.*

This is kind of like that idea of the Christian celebrities, the Christian colonels, the generals, the Heisman Trophy winners, the Stanley Cup winners, the pennant winners, who are doing nothing more but kind of leavening what Christianity ought to be. It is kind of a soft soap, compromising, humanistic, motivational speaking type of deal, whose whole works are built on nothing more than half-truths. They are just cover-ups for political expediency and image building. The Bible talks about no cross, no crown. That is the thing. Yeah, absolutely. God wants you to reign. He wants you to have that promotion. He wants you to be in that position. But the Bible says now there is a cross. There is a burden to carry. There is something that you ought to be bearing right now.

It is funny because one of their number one things that they often say is, and I got this from Emmitt Smith actually, I should not say his name, but he said, "Hey," and he got saved and he said that, "I learned that I can do whatever it is that I want to do, as long as I keep God first." "I can do whatever it is that I want to do, as long as I keep God first." Well, Christian, did you know that if you kept God first, you actually cannot do whatever it is you wanted to do? Thank God that I do not do everything it is that I want to do, as long as I keep God first. That is like a funny thing when you look at that. How did the guy get to that point where he could say something like that?

What is keeping God first? Is not keeping God first when you kind of have an opportunity to do something for yourself, but it may conflict something that God needs or cares about? So you know what you do? You set aside your opportunity for what God desires. You trust that by doing that, you are putting God first, and in the end, He will still accomplish what you had to forfeit, if that is what He truly wanted for you. That is what it is. It is putting aside your desires and your needs and stuff like that.

You say, "Okay, well, Zach, how do you put God first?" Watch out for compromising these three things:

1. Does it cause you to compromise a Bible principle? If it does, then you are not putting God first.

2. Does it take you out of your local church? If it does, then you are not putting God first.
3. Does the ministry take a hit from it to where you find yourself fitting the ministry in around your life, instead of your life in around the ministry?

If you have to compromise one of those three things, I am not telling you, you cannot do it. Have fun, man. Who am I? I am just as messed up as you, but the fact of the matter is, do not say you are putting God first. Do not lie to yourself. That is kind of where we are at now. That is the day and age that we live in, because I understand it. The questions come up, and what happens? It is like, "Oh my God, I mean, I have got to look out for school. My school is providing me an opportunity to get a scholarship for myself. If I do not do these things by the book like they have laid out for me, then I am going to miss out on that." So what do you do? You put all the side, and you work on this, still to win one of these scholarships, or one of these agreements, or whatever it is. Then it comes down to it, and you are like, "Well, why not become who God told you to be, and allow Him to accomplish that thing, and bring that thing into your life when He wants it, where He wants it, and if He chooses to do so?"

It is kind of like we have lost faith, in that God has the opportunity to step into abnormal situations and bring about His end. That is one of those things you have got to look out for. It is funny, because the Bible says, Jesus Christ said back there in Luke 18:8, "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" I am starting to wonder about that. We are in a Laodicean age. We do not have to kind of trust in God to bring things about anymore. We have got every opportunity. We have got every type of rich. We have got every type of whatever support that we need to accomplish our things without God. So it gets down to that thing, where we are looking at setting things aside for God. It is not necessary anymore.

You say, "Well, what about a job?" Well, somebody says, "Well, man, you have got to be able to leave all and make yourself available to where the jobs are." Well, why not put God first and take care of Him and watch Him take care of you and support you and give you what you need? If God gave you that gift, and He wants you to make it to the level of whatever it is, the professional level, whatever it is, do not compromise His time or His events for it. You know what will happen if you do that? Then He will get you there after taking you to such an abnormal road, and you will know that it was Him. But if you do not compromise, if you do not act like Balaam here, you will find you will end up being something that you should not have been there.

Now, do not beat yourself up about this thing if you are getting convicted about it. All convictions are healed with time. In a couple of minutes, I will be out of here, and all this stuff will be forgotten about, so it is not something you have got to worry about.

## V. The Gainsaying of Korah: Rejecting God's Structure

Last but not least here, the Bible says, "Woe unto them because they have perished in the gainsaying of Korah." The situation with Korah that ends up messing us up when we are trying to earn something to contend for the faith is that it will cause us to murmur and complain.

*Numbers 16:1-7*

*Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men: And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown: And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord? And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face: And he spake unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, Even to morrow the Lord will shew who are his, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto him: even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him. This do; Take you censers, Korah, and all his company; And put fire therein, and put incense in them before the Lord to morrow: and it shall be that the man whom the Lord doth choose, he shall be holy: ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi.*

So what is happening here? You have got a couple of guys that have come to Moses, and they said, "Listen, man, you are taking way too much of the burden on yourself." You say, "Well, what is the purpose of this, man?" This kind of develops that idea of the structure of the local church, and trusting the leadership in that local church. That is what we see here with Korah and his opposition to Moses and Aaron. So let us keep reading what goes on here.

Verse 4, "When Moses heard it, he fell upon his face." And he spake unto Korah, and unto all his company, saying, "Even tomorrow the Lord will show who are His, and who is holy, and who will cause him to come near unto Him. Even him to whom He hath chosen will He cause to come near unto him. And this do: Take you censers, Korah and all his company, and put fire therein, and put incense in them before the Lord tomorrow. And it shall be that the man whom the Lord doth choose, he shall be holy." Then watch what Moses says, he throws his own saying back on him, "Ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi."

You have got 250 of the chiefest of Israel showing up here. They say, "Listen, man, you are taking too much upon you. You know, we are all Bible believers. We have all got the Holy Spirit of God inside of us. I do not see why it is that you should be the one making all the decisions. I mean, is not that how the Holy Spirit of God works? We kind of just get together in unity and sing kumbaya, and come up with a plan of action. I mean, why is it that you think you are more holy above us? Who are you to elevate yourself above all of us and make these ideas, and not make these plans?" So they do not like what Moses has done here.

You say, "Who are these guys in verse 2?" Well, back there in Israel, they are the princes of the assembly, the famous in the congregation, men of renown. Today in the local church, it is going to be the deacons, the other preachers, other than the pastor, the elders, and the spiritual dreamers.

In verse number 3, you find something else. They said, "And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them. And the Lord is among them, wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation." "We are all holy. We all have the same Holy Spirit. Like I

said, we have all got the same Bible. Why should we follow you and listen to you? What gives you the right to call the big shots? You do not even have a degree after all." That is the type of thinking that is going on here. They say, "You take too much upon you."

Let me say this. When you look at verses 6 and 7 down there, when Moses gives his reply, and he throws back the same thing that they do to him, I have got to say this is the great principle that I found out. When God puts a man in a job, when God puts a man in a position, that man is more capable than 250 of the finest minds and the chiefest people to get that job done. Because one man and God is the majority. I will say this: If 250 of the greatest minds get together to try to do one job that God gave for one man and ordained for one man to do, you will be over your head. You will not be able to accomplish that thing. That is the principle we see here with this guy. It is trusting that structure and that leadership. If you do not, you wind up like Korah, causing other Christians to murmur and complain.

Look at verse 9 down here.

*Numbers 16:9*

*Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them?*

So after these guys murmur and complain and talk about, "Hey, we should be in the same position. We ought to be able to make these big shots. We do not think that we always have to listen to you." Moses says, "Well, first boys, let us take a look at where you came from. You think it is a small thing that what did God do? That God hath separated you from the rest of the congregation of Israel."

Now, who is this? Look at Numbers 16:1. "Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi and Dathan and Abiram, the son of Levi, a son of Kohath." You guys remember when we went through that whole big chart about the 12 tribes of Israel and the families who looked at the inner tribes and the outer tribes and the mixed multitude and how the problems usually came from that mixed multitude? Now, what do you have? You have got a family that is a part of that inner circle. One of the three inner families, the Gershonites, the Merarites, and the Kohathites, who is a part of the tribe of Levi, got chosen people bringing up an accusation against the pastor there, Moses. What the heck is going on? They are not supposed to be the ones causing the problems. They are supposed to be the mixed multitude.

How did this happen? How did one of the inner families get this jealousy? How did they get this attitude of, "Oh my gosh, you know what? God has lifted us up to this position. Why should not we go ahead and take the rest of the way?" You guys remember a guy in the Bible that thought like that, who had a supreme position over everyone else but thought, "You know what? I am up this high. Why not go all the way?" I do. Absolutely the devil. He had that same idea in his mind. How did the guys in the inner circle of the ministry, the ones closest to the pastor, start to think like that? What got into him?

Look what it is right here. The Bible says, when Moses talks back to him, he says, "Seemeth it but a small thing unto you." The reason why this happened to these guys, they forgot, watch this, they forgot, they could not remember what God brought them from. That made them not content with where they were. I had to ask myself the same question.

- Seemeth it but a small thing, Zach, how you were out there in the world at one time and did not know for sure about being saved?
- Seemeth it but a small thing how God gave you assurance of salvation?
- Seemeth it but a small thing to you how God gave you eternal security after you were saved?
- Seemeth it but a small thing to you how God brought an infallible authority into your life that you can stand on?
- Seemeth it but a small thing to you that God fed you through your own personal relationship that you do not have to actually get through someone else?
- Seemeth it but a small thing you can open up your Bible and get fed from it, one to one individually with God?
- Seemeth it but a small thing that God taught you His word in a way to where nothing is really intimidating to you anymore? Where you feel like you can stand up with the best of them?
- Seemeth it but a small thing that now God has elevated you and allowed you to teach others?
- Seemeth it but a small thing that God has given you a chance to lead and take part in the ministry?
- Seemeth it but a small thing that you have been able to take other suffering and woes and help them out with a book?
- Seemeth it but a small thing how God has put you into one of the most awesome 401k programs where your suffering in this present time earns you a greater reward and glory?
- Seemeth it but a small thing to you?

Well, if it is a small thing to you, that is how you end up in the same position. I ask you guys this, seemeth it but a small thing that eventually you are going to wind up sinless, immortal, and just like Jesus Christ? That is what happened here. They forgot where God had brought them from and therefore it made them not content with where they were. Seemeth it but a small thing to you that these things have happened. That is what goes on in our church today. That is one of the things we have got to watch out for. Do not take what God has put you in that position and look at that thing as a small thing that is insignificant. He has done a great work in you. You have got to be thankful for that, being remembered that.

Now look over here in Hebrews 13:7. The Bible lays out how we ought to look at leadership in the local church.

*Hebrews 13:7*

*Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.*

*Hebrews 13:17*

*Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.*

Now the funny thing when we start talking about this, that is when people start getting that idea that you are in a cult. That is when people start getting the idea that you are brain dead. You do not think for yourself any longer. That is when people get that idea that, "Well, that guy is lost it. He is just out there following a man blindly. He is not doing what he ought to be doing." But it is funny because when you take that same philosophy, you take that same outlook, you apply that to a football coach and it is totally okay.

It is funny when you apply that to a music director and you take his feeling. You might interpret that music one way, but he chooses to go this way. But in order to make music, you know what you guys have to do? You have to put your way aside and follow that guy's way to get something accomplished, do not you? Otherwise it sounds like junk. It seems it is also okay that you can look at things like that for these guys, but not for a pastor of a local church. It is okay to have your army sergeant cut you out, but man, do not let the pastor say anything negative to you or give you any type of criticism. It is okay to go to a classroom and be able to get the right grade that you have got to make that passing grade to listen to the teacher's philosophy and apply that thing to your work. But man, when the pastor tells you to apply a certain principle in your life, you just cannot do it. That is not how you see it. You have got a different interpretation on it. It is possible for you doing the workforce to get paid, but not to do it in the work of the ministry.

In politics, what we are doing right now, we are finding a guy that may not have all of our beliefs right now, but he is close enough to where he can kind of exercise the things that I care about mostly. But man, there is no way that we can compromise what we believe when it comes to a church. You should not when it comes to that church lining up with the Bible. You know what? You are going to be in a church where you have got certain convictions that are personal to you that maybe the pastor does not see all right. Maybe he does not have those same ones. What are you going to do in that being?

You know what this is a question about? It is about do you trust the structure that God set up for us to walk to work and operate in today? When you got saved, God gave you the Holy Spirit of God. He gave you the word of God. Last but not least, He gave you the local church. That is what is happening right now. The question you have got to ask yourself is if God first got my attention through this man and supplied my needs through this man, then why would He stop? You know, he is my spiritual parent. He is going to take care of me until I am able to provide for my own. I am happy about that. That is one last thing I have got to worry about.

The Bible says, "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful," not right, not accurate, not successful, but faithful to what? To that leadership. Do not you know that if you learn how to follow well, God will eventually take you out and teach you how to lead well? That is how that being operates. That is how it ought to be. It is funny because we will believe the Bible. We will believe the Holy Spirit, but we will not trust the structure of that New Testament local church.

The cool thing about it is this: When you trust God's structure, you know what you are doing? You are putting the responsibility back on God. You are saying, "Now, Lord, my thoughts and ideas are contrary to this guy's, and if it were up to me, I tell you what, I probably do it a little bit differently. But you know what? He is my pastor and he is saying this. But since he is a leader of the local church, You put me in. I am going to submit to his leadership, trust his guidance for my life, and trust that You will manifest the opportunity and the plan that You have for me through him." Amen. That is what that thing is. Otherwise, you wind up like Korah. You wind up out here with this murmuring complaining.

You say, "Well, what happened to him?" The Bible says in "perished in the gainsaying of Korah" back there in Numbers 16. Look at verse 33. You see what the end of that guy was.

*Numbers 16:31-33*

*And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them: And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation.*

If you cannot trust that structure, you will end up dying spiritually. It is funny how that thing works out. I have known people in my seven years or eight years I have been here that have come in on fire for God. They are awesome. They developed their own personal relationship with God. We are trying to get something to accomplish. But for whatever reason, they had the Holy Spirit. They had the book, but they could not submit to the structure of the New Testament local church. It is funny because God was doing some awesome stuff in their life. But you know what happens the moment that they leave that structure? It is funny. You do not hear anything about them anymore. They are not in any church. It is almost like they have perished. The ground clave asunder under their feet and swallowed them up. What happened to them? Where have they gone? It has to do with this thing right here.

Do not forget those three things:

4. They could not remember where God brought them from.
5. They were not content with where they were because of this.
6. They end up perishing.

As we earnestly try to contend for the faith, this is something that we have got to look at in our own lives. This is something that we have got to make sure that we have got a handle on. This is one of the things I like to come back to and check on myself.

- Have I gone the way of Cain? Am I trying to earnestly worship God in my own way?
- Have I gone greedily after the error of Balaam? Do I take the gifts that God has given me? Am I using that for my own fleshly desires and trying to compromise between God and the world?
- Lastly, what is my faith, my testimony like when it comes to trusting the structure of that New Testament local church?

All right, guys, well, thanks for suffering through that. I will toss it back over to Bob now. Amen. Longer than I expected. Yeah, well, like Father, like Son. Yeah, exactly. Good job, buddy.

## VI. Closing Remarks

One of the things I love about this church, I love many things about it. But one of the things I love about this church is the fact that there are probably 20, maybe 30 guys out there today that could do exactly what he did today. There is no greater blessing to me as a pastor than to understand what this church does and what it turns out. A church that does not, and a pastor that does not reproduce himself in other young men and young ladies, is wasting his time. As this church grows and God continues to bless it, if the Lord gives us time, we will not have to look around out in the country someplace to find somebody to come in and do something. You grow your own. You take what God has been faithful to give to you and then you commit it to other faithful men. You build men and you build women.

I will tell you something else. I mean, I know we do not have women preachers and pastors here, but I will tell you, I have got about as many women that could get up here and tear the paint off the walls as the guy does. Some of you husbands know that because they do it to you all the time. These are the things that make a good, solid church. Men and women who know the Bible, believe the Bible, and can preach the Bible. That is as good as it gets today.

As I sat back there and listened to him, I was scanning over the crowd and I looked at individuals that I said, "You know what? He could do that. He could do that. He could do that. She could do that. He could do that. He could do that. He can do that." Anybody here can have all that you want from the Lord. There are no restrictions on anybody. God has given us a host of young men and young ladies who love the book, who know the book, and can preach the book. I thank God for that. It was a real blessing today. Not only a blessing of what he preached because it was a great sermon, but just the fact to me personally that there are so many young men and young ladies in this church today that you have done exactly what he preached. You have adapted yourself to what God has given you to train you. It shows. Your life is better for it. Your family is better for it. This church is stronger for it.

I use that as a challenge for you young men and you young ladies that maybe you are just coming into church or you are in here now for the last year or so. You are really getting your feet on the ground. You can be everything that God wants you to be here. It is just the job of the church. The job of the pastor is not to put obstacles in front of you. The job of the pastor in the church is to cut the red tape so you can get to where God wants you to be. We thank God for the men and the women of this church that God has given us. So praise the Lord for that.

I am going to dismiss you here in just a moment and I will call you back up here in about five minutes. You are ready for Restart. Gary slipped me a note back here that we are 216 hot dog buns short today. So if you can get with him and work that out, I would appreciate it. The problem with that is I do not know one place that we can go and get 216 hot dog buns. So if everybody jumps in and helps out, we will get it done. Just see him back there and work details

out with him. Thank you again for being here. Let us have a word of prayer and we will be dismissed.

Father, we thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. We thank You for all that You do for us. We thank You, Lord, for the message today and for the messenger. Thank You, Father, for the young men and young ladies in this church that take the stand and love the word of God and can preach the word of God and teach the word of God. I thank You for Zach and Jenny and for what they personally mean to me and Lord for what they do the work here in the ministry with the high school and taking care of everything in the church. Lord, so many of these young men and young ladies do so much here and I thank God for them. For all that they endeavor to do for this work to make it a success for You. We thank You now and praise You and give us a good afternoon today as we go out and share the gospel with hundreds of people and feed their flesh but also feed their soul. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name for His sake we ask it. Amen. God bless. I will call you back up here in just a few minutes. Thank you.