

# Proverbs 14:31-35

Sunday 2/28/2016

Last time we got into the Bible, Zach preached last week and did a great job. We appreciate the message that he brought for us. But the last time we were together, you'll remember, we had a great example of how to do a word study in the Bible. There are lots of ways to study the Bible. Once you get the Bible fundamentals down, you're going to find that there's actually a number of ways that you can glean and really learn and add to those fundamental things that you do learn. Word studies is one of them.

A word study is nothing more than systematically taking a word through the Scriptures and just allowing it to build a principle in your life and show you what it has. Last time we were talking about Proverbs 14:30, we were talking about getting a sound heart and how important that is. This is the process for each of us of getting to the point in our life where Matthew 22:37 says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."

I'm going to tell you right now, there's no harder thing to do in life than that. Without a doubt, for a child of God, as much as we love God, as much as we thank God for what He did, the hardest single thing for a child of God to ever continually do is to love the Lord thy God with all your heart, with all your mind, and with all your soul. This is building your heart toward God so that you never get away from God or the things of God because your heart is now fixed. There's a process to do that. We talked about that process last week.

The Bible says in Isaiah 26:3 that we should have perfect peace. A lot of God's people today, they have no peace. A lot of them have peace when nothing is going bad, but when everything falls around them, they have no peace. But the Bible doesn't talk about just peace here; it talks about a perfect peace. A perfect peace is not a peace that is necessarily going to be all okay, because sometimes it's not. But a perfect peace is the ability to understand, whether it goes good or it goes bad, that God's in control. That's the peace. That's a perfect peace. The Bible says in Isaiah 26 that it comes from having your mind stayed on God.

*Isaiah 26:3*

*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*

This is being fixed, having a sound mind toward the things of God.

## I. The Seven Stages of Spiritual Growth

I walked you, if you remember, through six basic stages of a study that builds on the foundation of the day that you got saved. Around here, we follow this model. We follow this process. We don't necessarily announce it, but it's what we do. It's the format that we follow. I brought you through that the first thing you have to get is sound doctrine. You have to know why you believe what you believe. Sound doctrine comes from learning the Bible.

When you get sound doctrine, sound doctrine affects how you think. So it produces:

1. Sound doctrine
2. Sound mind

When you get sound doctrine and a sound mind, those things translate then into your relationship with God and it becomes:

3. Sound faith

You now know why you believe what you believe. That's all inward stuff. That's stuff that takes place inside you. When the stuff inside you is sound, what comes out of you is sound. So the fourth thing we talked about was:

4. Sound words

Then we talked about the fifth thing:

5. Sound speech

Then the sixth thing we talked about was getting:

6. Sound wisdom and discernment

And then that leads us to the seventh thing:

7. A sound heart

That's the process of getting to a point in your life where you and your relationship with God is never, never, never going to come into question in your own work with Him. It doesn't mean you'll be perfect. It doesn't mean you'll do everything right all the time. It doesn't mean you won't make some stupid mistakes in life. What it means is that you now are fixed where you believe and you know why you believe what you believe.

In reality, how much easier or understandable could the way to making a lasting relationship work for God be, really? I mean, making the things of God clear and easy to understand and grasp and then apply them to your life. It doesn't get any easier than that. Just a simple word study that builds on the last one and brings you to a great ending in your life: a heart that's sound with God.

One time years ago, I love scary movies, scary things. I used to go to these haunted houses. I always liked it because it's one of those things where it's an experiment for me. Everybody in there is a human being. There's no such things as monsters. There's no such things as all the things that you see. Everybody knows that. But when you go into a place that's totally dark and there's no light and you hear things moving around and people are touching your hair and you're running into things and people are jumping out and scaring you, it really scares you. The stupid part of that is you pay \$20 to have that happen to you.

One time I had a night vision scope that you could see in the dark with. I'm always trying to outsmart the people who are trying to outsmart me. So I go into this haunted house and I'm in this maze and it's completely dark. You can't see anything. There are things hanging from the ceiling and there are people dragging chains and people screaming all around me. The people in

front of me, they're having a heart attack. I'm sitting over there in a corner and I turn my starlight scope on and I'm just watching around and I'm thinking to myself, "Oh man, if I had this thing mounted on something, you'd all have a bad day." I'm looking over here and I'm watching this guy peeking out. He doesn't see me. He knows I'm in there someplace and these people are on the floor, prostrate, you know, they're all having a heart attack. I'm looking over here and there's the way out. Then there's some woman over here with a chainsaw. There's stuff hanging from the ceiling and all that stuff in there.

I get done and I tell myself, "This is the dumbest thing I ever did. I just paid \$20 to get scared, brought something in that took the scare completely out of it." I thought about that years later. The world's in darkness. There's a lot of things out there that the devil will try to scare you with. You realize that God gave you a starlight scope. Unless you penetrate the darkness of any situation, that takes the fear out of it. It's the principles in His book right here. This is the book that turns the lights on in the darkness. When you understand that, you realize how easy it is.

In my ministry, I have built a number of fail-safe systems. I never tell anybody about it. It's my own deal. But I learned many, many years ago that if you're going to have a ministry, there's some things you better build into it that are going to make it foolproof and make it like a fail-safe system with what you do. For me, some of them are for me personally, and then some of them are for you. They're all for me at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

One of them is simply, on the day that you stand before the Lord Jesus Christ at the Judgment Seat of Christ, you'll never stand before Him and give the accounting of your life and blame me for making the Bible unreachable. You'll never blame me for you not knowing the Word of God. You'll never blame me for making it hard that you couldn't grasp it, or every time I taught it, it was so confusing and complicated that you couldn't get it. You'll never blame me. You'll never take the personal responsibility of being in a place that you could have all that you want and where it's laid out as simply as it really is, and you chose not to want it.

## II. Understanding New Testament Christianity

Last time we were together, you'll remember, we talked about one of the most important aspects of New Testament Christianity: the ability to understand and use your liberty. This is the difference between a personal preference and a doctrinal conviction, building a false spirituality and a non-biblical foundation. I talked about how much of what we see today in people's lives is Christian and it's spiritual. Therefore, it has the illusion of being something with God because it's Christian, they're saved, and it's spiritual. They're spiritual people. But I'm not interested in what is Christian and what is spiritual. I'm interested in what is doctrinal and what is biblical, as they go back to the Bible. This is the importance of a doctrinal foundation that everything else is built on, understanding and having the ability to know your Bible.

This church, to the best of our ability, will always follow the Bible examples and models to build on. The Bible is a book of complete models. It's an incredible book that's put together. All the examples that you find form in the New Testament the models for you and for me. The New Testament, for instance, is simply built around two books. I call them bridge books, like a bridge

you go over, walk over, drive over, you know, Golden Gate Bridge or Brooklyn Bridge. The New Testament is built around two bridge books. One bridge book, Acts, takes you into the church age. The other bridge book, Hebrews, takes you out of the church age.

When you understand that the whole New Testament is basically fundamentally built around those two bridge books, one bringing you in, I mean, you've got Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in the book of Acts. They're all historical books. They really have nothing to do with the church other than Acts begins the work of Paul. But they're bridge books. Acts brings you from leaving the nation of Israel, coming into the church, from the Old Testament to the New Testament. It's a bridge book.

Once you get into that, you have the books of Paul. The books of Paul are absolutely so vital. They're so instructional, yet they're so simple if you just follow the outline. As I said, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in the book of Acts are all very clearly historical books. We begin to get into the writings of Paul. Each one of these books forms a model for us as a church. This is what we follow.

- Romans: The Doctrine of the Church
- 1 & 2 Corinthians: Contrast Books
- Galatians: Justified by Faith
- Ephesians: Intimate Look at the Church
- Philippians & Colossians: Mission vs. Laodicean Church
- 1 Thessalonians: Five Great Models
- 2 Thessalonians: How to Avoid Deception
- 1 & 2 Timothy: Model Ministry and Minister
- Titus: Model Stewardship
- Philemon: Bond Slave

These books of Paul, and he's the apostle to the church, they will lay the doctrine down on the foundation of your salvation for everything that you do and you should believe. You should put that outline I just gave you by tomorrow. You ought to have that in the front of your Bible there at the New Testament where you always have a lot of room. Then you ought to go through each book and you ought to lay out those books and put them there that by each one of them what it means and get the chapters that I broke down for you. That's what you ought to do. These things will fix you. It will fix your position in Christ and your ministry in Christ. When you get these things down, this is what leads to a sound heart. It starts with sound doctrine. These great doctrines are the building blocks of your spiritual temple. I'm going to show you Thursday night a systematic way that you do it. This is the reason that Paul tells us in 2 Timothy 3:16 that all

scripture is profitable, given by inspiration of God and is profitable. The first thing that is profitable for is doctrine. I don't know how a guy could miss that.

### III. The Threefold Command

Now watch this. Look in your Bible in 1 Timothy 4:13. Paul tells us through Timothy, this is why Timothy is such a great book, to do three things till the Lord comes back. Three things.

*1 Timothy 4:13*

*Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.*

Now I want you to notice he didn't say pay attention. He said give attendance. You're to do these things. You're to be in attendance with these things. He says, "Till I come, give attendance to reading," number one, "to exhortation," number two, "and to doctrine," number three.

Now we have been coming through the book of Proverbs and we know now that there's three basic things that we want to get or we should get out of Proverbs. Let's match them up and see if the Old Testament really does work with the New Testament.

8. The first thing we know that we're supposed to get out of the Old Testament reading it is knowledge.
9. The second thing we're to get is wisdom.
10. The third thing we're going to get is understanding.

All right. Let's see how it works here. He says it's here to read. When you read the Word of God, you get knowledge. The second thing he says is exhortation. That's taking the wisdom that you get and the knowledge you get by doing something with what God gave you as you were reading it.

Yesterday we had our singles ministry and I love spending time with these kids. They are, we have the best time on the planet. It's a time where they can get one on one with me. I use all of them in the ministry helping me different places, doing different things. It's a time where we have for an hour and a half, two hours, whatever we want to do. We just talk about how the ministry works. We talk about, they asked me every question. Yesterday was just an incredible day. With what was going on in Clinton last night and what was going on up in Nebraska and what was going on out in Wichita and what is going on with everything that everybody else is doing. It was just, to me it was a weekend of the icing on the cake. To look at all of my young men and young ladies out there doing exactly what Paul said.

Every time I have a different young person, gal or guy, that does the devotion. I use it as a training ground because I know what we have here. I know what we have here. Maybe you don't see it, not your job to see it, not your pay grade. Maybe you don't see it, maybe you do. I do. I understand what we have here. I understand the quality of the men and women that God brought here. I'm going to tell you something. If you think it's an accident that you just wandered in here today, you're out of your mind. If you think it's an accident that God brought it in your heart to come here and be part of this, you're out of your mind. This church has something that you need.

Now you may not want it, you may not even agree with that. It doesn't matter to me. The Bible says the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. You are here today for a reason, for a purpose. Now you may walk out of here today and never realize it. That's on you. But I know what we have here, and I know when the young kids are coming up, this is why I'm so excited to do camp. Camp is going to be something special this year. That's going to be special for the kids, it's going to be special for the parents. We're going to do something this year that we've never done before.

I always have somebody do it. When I listen to guys preach, or girls teach, whatever, preach, whatever, I don't care. Some churches, you know, "Oh, you have women preachers." You bet we do. We don't have any women pastors, but we've got some women preachers. A guy said one time, "Well, I don't think you should call women preachers." I said, "That's because they preach better than you do." I always look for three things. I'm not going to tell you what they are. I told them yesterday. We had a great lengthy conversation about it. But I look for three things when I listen to a guy preach, or a gal. When Zach preached last week, I listened for those three things. Bob preaches when I'm gone, I listen to his sermons. I look for those three things. Danny preaches, I listen to those three things. Sometimes I'll come over and sit in your devotions and listen to you. I'll look for those three things. I'm never critical about it. Just because I know that they're developing things, but I see somebody has all three of them and they're just a young guy or a young gal. Wow.

Delano gave it yesterday. First time he ever, and Delano, I thought you and I, you've only been in this church not quite two years yet. You didn't know nothing about the Bible when you came, did you? I was blown away yesterday. I'm blown away every week. Everybody who's done it has just blown me away. I mean, I expect it from Bob or Zach or Danny. They've been around forever. They can preach as good as I can. I expect it from them. I expect it from you older guys that have been around here. But when I get a guy, a younger guy that comes in there that's never done it in just two years, less than two years' time, I mean, I'm telling you, he preached on 1 Samuel 3. He preached on the verse there that says, "And Samuel let none of his words fall to the ground." What a great verse. He just had all three of those things, and he used the greatest example I ever heard in my life. In fact, I'm going to change it that you said it because I'm already working on it, and I'm going to use it wherever I go.

He said that him and Mattie were coming out of a restaurant the other day. He took her out for dinner. Him and Mattie were coming out of the restaurant the other day, and he went to get his car keys out of his pocket, and he picked them out, and he walked a little bit farther, and he realized that something else had fallen out of his pocket. He looked around, and a quarter had fallen out of his pocket. He's about 15 feet away now. So he says he ran back over, and he picked that quarter up, and then he explained that a quarter is a quarter, man. He put it back in his pocket. Then he said this. He says, "When I picked that quarter up, the Holy Spirit of God said, 'You know what? You were so quick to run back and pick up that quarter that dropped on the ground, but you dropped my words on the ground, and you never go back to pick them up.'" Well, that'll preach. That'll preach. That will preach. You may be not around here, but if you ever hear me down the line some other place, I'll give you credit for it, Delano. I really will. There's

some great men and women in this church. Less than two years. And brother, I'll tell you what. He's on his way. And many of you are. I don't mean to single him out when there's a bunch of you, but I'm saying this. You can get it here if you want it. Don't you give me this garbage about how hard it is? Don't you give it to me at all?

So he says here to exhortation, that is simply taking what you read and what you learn and then doing something with what you read. Then he says give attendance to doctrine. That's getting understanding. See how all those things work? One of them's knowledge, one of them's wisdom, and one of them's understanding. You get knowledge by reading. You get wisdom by exhortation, and you get understanding by doctrine. In other words, we as God's people should be in attendance. You read the Word of God, you preach the Word of God, and you know the Word of God until the Lord comes back.

#### IV. Proverbs 14:31-35 - Judgment and Wisdom

Now okay, we'll look here at this last section in Chapter 14, and we're going to finish out this chapter today. Here again we will see some great truths that God has laid up for us. I want to read now Proverbs 14:31-35. We're going to tie it into what we already talked about here.

*Proverbs 14:31-35*

*He that oppreseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor.*

*The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death.*

*Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding: but that which is in the midst of fools is made known.*

*Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.*

*The king's favour is toward a wise servant: but his wrath is against him that causeth shame.*

Bryce, would you stand up? I picked you today because you've got a long heritage of a great Bible-believing preacher in your family. So stand up and ask God's blessing on our service this morning.

[Prayer by Bryce]

You love that book, don't you, Bryce? Amen, buddy. I love you too. So does your wife. I think she does. She's not looking at me, Bryce, she's just... No, I'm just kidding. Doyle Hopper, was this great grandfather or grandfather? Great grandfather. Great preacher. Great Philadelphia preacher. Heard him preach many times.

Look at verse 31: "He that oppreseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor." We have talked about our responsibility to the poor, so we won't do it again today, under Proverbs 14:20-21. But you want to remember how there is a blessing and

honor in our lives for taking care of the poor. It's very clear in the Bible that God has a real love and care for the poor. So we get honor from God from helping them and being there for them.

Now as we look at the poor here in chapter 14, we want to look at it doctrinally and I want you to get this down and remember this in your Bible. Whenever you find a reference in the Bible to the poor, the needy, or someone who's oppressed, it will always doctrinally represent the nation of Israel. I want you to get that down. You can put it right there by that verse in Proverbs as we hear today. You see Israel who had it all and then lost it all and now will go through history as the poorest people on the planet to be oppressed by literally everybody. And yet the blessings of God to them that help them. Of course this goes back to the great principle in Genesis 12:3 where God told Abraham, "I'll bless those that bless thee and I'll curse those that curse thee."

Now look at verse 31. This will be a reference to the Jew going through the tribulation period and how God uses people to help them and bless them or curses them based on their not helping the people of God. You know the greatest example in the 20th century of the tribulation period was World War II. Adolf Hitler was the greatest 20th century type of the Antichrist. He persecuted the Jew severely throughout Europe. But most people don't understand that many of the Germans did not go along with Hitler. Many of the occupied countries certainly didn't. There was a lot of people, even though Hitler was trying through his final solution to eradicate the earth of the Jewish population, there was a lot of people who, Germans and of all nationalities, who actually helped the Jew.

If you will go to Holland you'll find there two great examples of that. One in the city of Amsterdam itself is the home of Anne Frank. Anne Frank was a Jewish girl that some Dutch people were helping and hiding the Jews as the Nazis were rounding them up. Of course they got betrayed in the end and she went into Auschwitz concentration camp where she died tragically a couple of months before the concentration camp was over and opened up and people were set free. Go down a little ways to Haarlem in the Netherlands and up the street there you'll find the little watch shop of the Ten Boom family. The Ten Boom family were Christians in the Netherlands and they had a love for the Word of God. They knew that when the Germans occupied Holland that they were starting to round up the Jews. They protected them, hid them, tried to smuggle them out. Of course they got found out too. You can still go to both houses today if you go to Amsterdam or down to Haarlem, just a short train ride 20 minutes down the road there, and it's an incredible thing. It's something that everybody had experience at one time in their life. What happened was that they got all put into a concentration camp. Her father died, her mother died, her sister died in a concentration camp. She survived. Later on she hooked up with the Billy Graham crusade and for years and years and years before her death she went with him on an evangelistic trip talking about how the Lord delivered her. She wrote a number of books. \*Tramp for the Lord\* is one of them. There's just some incredible things that happened.

So this is the model that you see. You're going to find that during the tribulation period not everybody goes against the Jew. There are some people who try to help them. In Matthew 25:31-46, and I want you to turn over there now, you'll find a judgment in the Bible. You'll want to get your notes in on this if you don't have it yet.

*Matthew 25:31-46*

*When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:*

*And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:*

*And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.*

*Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:*

*For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:*

*Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.*

*Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?*

*When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?*

*Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?*

*And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*

*Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:*

*For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:*

*I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.*

*Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?*

*Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.*

*And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.*

See, they're looking at it and they're saying, "Gee, Lord, when did we do that to you?" Now watch what he says. Verse 40, "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren," the Jews, the nation of Israel, "ye have done it unto me." Verse 41, "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

You can see by this passage that this has nothing to do with the church age. Yet there's many people out there that try to make this a passage in the church age where man loses his salvation. Of course that's simply somebody who does not know the scriptures. If you go through your Bible you'll find in God's systematic theology that there's seven judgments in the Bible. This one here is called the Judgment of the Nations. This takes place when the Lord comes back at the second coming of Christ. Right by there, Matthew 25:31-46, right there, right now, Judgment of the Nations. That's the judgment of the nations when Christ comes back based on them either helping the Jew or not helping the Jew. They're called the sheep and the goats in verse 32. One goes to the lake of fire, the other one goes into the kingdom. In the Bible, as I said, you find seven distinct judgments. This is part of the systematic theology that I'm going to show you coming up on Thursday night. This is one of them that, like I said, where the nations get judged at the second coming of Christ is how they help the Jew. This is what doctrinally Proverbs 14:31-32 is talking about. So you want to get Matthew 25 referenced there in Proverbs and then write a little note, "Judgment of the Nations."

Now look at verse 32, the next verse. "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death." Again, dealing with the nation of Israel at the second coming of Christ, it's simply saying this. When the Lord comes back, He puts an end to the Antichrist. The Antichrist gets killed, Revelation 19 and 20. He's no more a threat to Israel. Now that he's gone, Israel has every reason and right to look for the practical hope now of the millennial reign of Christ. That's what he's talking about in a practical way. It's real simple. I mean, somebody's after you and they die. You don't have to worry about it anymore. That's simply what he's talking about in that sense.

Now look at verse 33. "Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding: but that which is in the midst of fools is made known." This is a great verse. It's a great verse both doctrinally and it's a great verse both inspirationally. It says that Israel will be either foolish or wise. We see that the book of Proverbs is about a wise man and a foolish man. We see it all through the Bible. You'll know which he is by what he does with the Word of God. Right now he's a fool. But when the Lord comes back and establishes him, he's going to be wise.

There's some great examples of that in the Bible. When Christ was born, the Bible says in Matthew 2 that there were some wise men from the east came to find Him. Everybody else in the world, they didn't care. But these guys were Bible students. These guys are a great example of what you have today. They're from the east, that's Babylon where Daniel was written. They had the book of Daniel, at least the book of Daniel. From the book of Daniel they could have figured out almost to the month when Jesus Christ was going to be born. They're coming to find Him based on the understanding and the wisdom they got from the scriptures. They're ready when He comes. They go and find Him. They're coming. You don't have to go find Him now, Christian. He's coming to find you. Are you ready? You got the same book the wise man had back there. You should not be caught unawares. You should not be caught unprepared. That book tells you the times and the seasons. You have no reason on this planet not to meet Him with a full reward and yet most of God's people will not. You know why? Because they're fools. You can tell

whether a man is wise or a woman is wise or foolish simply by what they do with the Word of God.

Nicodemus is another one. He was a Pharisee. The Pharisees hated everything about Jesus Christ. But he was a believer. He was wise among a company of fools. You see it with Lazarus, Mary and Martha and many of the Jews who believed on Jesus Christ while majority of the nation of Israel did not. Some were wise, some were foolish. In a practical way it will be me and you. Our reputation will always precede us. You and I are known by what we do. These are foolish, good or bad, based on who you follow in life sometimes or based on what you follow in life sometimes. Because you see it all the time. In ministry and dealing with people. Look, I've seen just about every person come down the road that there is to come down. You can't be in a ministry 45 plus years, be involved in what I've been involved in and dealing with people when God's called you to do and not see it.

In ministry there will be people who really, God's people who really don't want the Word of God or to do the work of the ministry. I'll tell you, people like that won't stay around long in a Bible believing church. They really won't. It's too hot. They just won't. It's too easy to go someplace else and be satisfied someplace else. You know it never ceases in all the years I've been in the ministry, they're always blaming on us. You'll start to disciple somebody, oh they're hot to get disciplined, aren't they? About halfway through they don't want to be disciplined anymore. Instead of just saying I don't want to be disciplined anymore, they're going to blame it on you. Now what they don't know, and I've had people come to me and say, "She didn't disciple me very well." And I said, "You know what?" Or "He." And I said, "You know what? I've disciplined 25 people in this church and hit everyone and ran out of the ballpark. Now you're going to tell me you're the exception to the rule? I don't believe it. I think there's something wrong with you." "Well I just don't know how you could say that." I just said it. Let me say it again so you get it.

I have people that come to me and say, "I really want to learn the Bible. I really want to learn the Bible. Oh, I want to learn the Bible." You don't want to learn the Bible. You want to learn it convenient wise, your way. You won't do the work. You won't make the sacrifices. You won't do what you need to do. Let me tell you something. When I got saved and I saw what that book was, I wanted it more than anything else in life. There was nothing going to stop me. I altered my whole life. Everything about it I changed for one reason. I wanted to learn that book. If you have that desire inside of you, you will learn it. If you don't have that desire, you'll make alibis all your life and you'll never learn it.

I was like a little kid one time that had a great wise man in his village. Everybody went to this wise man to learn the wisdom. A kid envied that man and he wanted to be just like that man. When he got to be about 17 or 18, he went up to the man and knocked on the door and said, "I want to be just like you. I want to be a wise man. I want to take over your mantle when you're gone and I want you to teach me all the secrets. I'll do whatever you want me to do." Wise man said, "Okay, I need a replacement anyhow. I'll tell you what, 3 o'clock this afternoon, meet me down here by that lake down here." Kid went home. Boy, he's excited. He's thinking, "Man, there's going to be some ceremony here." So he shows up at 3 o'clock and the old man is down there, out in the water about up to here. He backs up and he tells that kid to come on in. Kid says,

"Yeah, man, I'm here to learn. I want all the secrets that you have. I want everything that you got. I want to, I do, I'm here, I'll learn. God, just tell me what to do." And he says, "I'm telling you, come on out here." Old man, tolerant that little guy, come up here and the kid was in the water right about up to here. He's looking around and thinking, "What's this all about? I guess it's some secret ceremony, you know."

By that time the old man got his hands on him, shoved him under the water and held him under. The kid is kicking and screaming and the old man is just holding him down and just won't let him get any air. He didn't get a mouthful of air anyhow, because he was about ready to say something and his mouth was open. He's down there choking to death. Old man pulls him up, pulls him to the beach, lays him down on the beach and just stands like that, kids puking, throwing up, coughing. He gets up there and he says, "What is wrong with you? He says, "I thought you were a wise man. I came to you to learn the secrets of the universe. You pulled an idiotic, stupid stunt that has nothing to do with anything." The old man looked at him, he says, "You want wisdom and you want knowledge? Well listen, when you want the Bible and you want knowledge and you want wisdom like you just wanted air when you thought you were going to die, only then will you get it." You want the book? You want the book? I'm not asking you to answer. Don't incriminate yourself before a holy God. He's writing notes. Paul's up there probably saying, "Man, I wish I'd have used that. That's a great illustration." You want the book? You want truth? You want to learn it? Well until you want it, like you want the next breath out of your body, you'll never get it. You'll never get it. That Bible says, Proverbs says, "It's made known." It's made known. He's known by what you do or what you don't do. It's known that you're a wise man. It's known that you're a fool.

I told you Thursday night, the reason why a lot of people won't learn the Bible, now anybody won't learn the Bible when they want to get into it because once you get into that book, you realize there's some things in your life you've got to change. There's some stupid goofy stuff you believe. There's some stuff that you're doing. There's some stuff that you've carried around for a long time. You've got to dump it. Just the way you are to get to that book. Zach, you preached a great message last week. You were dumber than a stump in the Bible when you came in here. Bob, you did a great job every time you preached, but you were dumb as a fence post when you came in here. Danny, you always do a great job wherever the world you're at. I think he's over in the Methodist church taking up the offering. I'm not sure. Daniel, you did a great job. John, you do a great job. All of you guys do a great job, but you know what? You didn't get there just because you came in and sat. You got in here and you get something because you wanted it. You wanted it so desperately. You wanted it so badly. You couldn't stand it. That's what it takes. You were willing to change the goofiness. You were willing to change what wasn't right. You were willing to throw this out, keep this. You're willing to reevaluate every aspect of your life, not in light of what you want, but in light of what that book says, doctrine. That's how you get there. That's how you get there.

So you bounce around from church to church and you wind up nowhere. You go to the first church in the refrigerator. You go to a church where the people are so soured up, they look like they've been baptized in dill pickle juice. Finally you find some lukewarm, dead church to go to.

Now, I want to tell you something. I'll just throw this in personally. I like that. I really do because there's one thing that is never going to happen here. I'm going to teach. I'm going to work with everything I have to give you sound doctrine, a sound mind. I'm going to do everything within my ability to give you a sound faith, sound words, sound speech, wisdom and discernment. I'm going to do everything I can to give you purpose in life. I'm going to love you. I'm going to give you stability. I'm going to give you hope. I'm going to give you peace. I'm going to give you women understanding. But what I am not going to do is make you comfortable here because when you get comfortable, you get complacent. I want you going out of here one of two ways today. Happy, praise the Lord, that's when I need it or it works for me. I mean, imagine a church, imagine a pastor having any church where people who won't learn, won't grow, won't love the book, won't dedicate their self going to his church and feeling comfortable. I'd blow my brains out.

You'll always spot a wise man by who he hangs out with. You'll always spot a fool by who he hangs out with. In both cases, verse 33, they're made known by what they do. Doctrinally Israel, inspirationally, you and me. Proverbs 12:15 says, "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise."

## V. Righteousness Exalts a Nation

Now look at verse 34. "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people." That's a great verse. Here again, get into your Bible first and foremost. We find that in Proverbs, it'll be the nation of Israel. You'll find that God takes the nation of Israel through seven basic stages to get them to the place of exalting them. He brings them from Abraham and when they get exalted, it's under David and Solomon. God exalts the nation of Israel to the greatest nation on the face of the earth. Then they fell apart. So secondly, it'll deal with any nation. Primarily, it's the nation of Israel as we find it here. But secondly, it'll be any nation.

A biblical study of history revealed that in modern time, modern history, that would be from the crucifixion on, the two greatest nations on earth were England and the United States of America and both held the Word of God to its highest standard and were exalted. But in accordance with the Word of God, you don't beat the book. When the Bible went out of these nations, the nations went out. You saw it in England and now you see it in America. Now this country has lost the blessings of God and we are a people. As a people, we feel the reproach of the sins of this nation. Great lesson in the Bible in Psalms 9:17. It says, "The wicked shall be cast into hell, and all the nations that forget God." Something you better learn, God judges nations just as surely as He judges individuals. Matthew 25, I already gave it to you.

Now I've told you before in dealing with people, there will come a time in a person's life when they pass the point of no return. I hate to say that. I can hear from the peanut gallery now, "Oh, God's promises, oh yeah, God's promises." You live a life of defaming God's promises and giving God a sharp stick in the eye, you'll bury yourself so far down. It won't be God that won't be able to pick you up. It will be you not being able to pick yourself up to let God pick you up. I've seen people all my life that their whole life is ruined. I've seen people, men and women who got their life into alcohol, life into drugs and just never would come to God with a thing and always would

just do their own thing and got in it farther and farther and deeper and deeper. I'm going to tell you something, any sin in your life that you keep putting that coat on every day of your life for 20, 30 years, after a while, you're never going to take that coat off. That Bible says a threefold cord is not easily broken. You take a little piece of thread like that that you sew with and you can pop it. You put it around your finger twice, you can pop it. You take that one little piece of thread and wrap it around your two fingers a hundred times, you'll die trying to break it. Yeah, the first time you do that sin, you can break it. Second time, third time you can do it, get away with it. Oh, the 10th, 12th, 13th time you get away with it. 20, 30 years of it, you ain't going nowhere. Pass the point.

It's true in people, it's true in nations. Israel got to the point where she couldn't get back. America has got to the point she's not going back. I hear guys all the time, "Oh, I believe there's going to be another great revival in America." That's because you're an idiot. "Oh, I believe there's a great swelling of God's people." That's because you know nothing about the Bible. This country hasn't seen a revival like the revival of Billy Sunday, J. Frank Norris for over 50, 60, 70 years. You look at God getting a few grapes off of disease-ridden vineyards like a revival. You don't even know what a real revival is. Somebody says, "Does your church ever book a revival?" Absolutely not. "You mean you don't have a revival?" Well, we have them twice a year. You probably need them. We have one in April, we have one in October. That's nice, scheduling revival with God. "God, we're going to live like hell all year, but two times a year we're going to have a revival. You be there?" How stupid people are. This church doesn't have a revival. You know why? Because a real church needs to live in a state of revival. Want revival? Go to Clinton last night. You want revival? Listen to that guy. You want revival? Go up to Nebraska. You want revival? Go to Wichita. You want revival? Go out on the street with those guys. You want revival? Just get in the book.

Last time in the people ministry, I showed them one of the greatest, greatest, greatest things about where we're at in our country, found in the Old Testament. People have never learned from history, never learned anything from history. In 2 Kings 17 and 18, you don't have to turn to it, just listen to me. In 2 Kings 17 and 18, you have the nation of Israel, the 10 northern tribes, going into captivity under Assyria. Israel as a nation had went past the point of getting right with God. God had spent, listen to me, 900 years sending her prophets. They treated him despicably. They beat him up. They killed him. They murdered him. They threw him in. They just took him terribly. Finally God says, "That's it. I'm done." He sends down in 721 the king of Assyria to take him into captivity. A little bit later on, he sends up Nebuchadnezzar to take the southern tribes into captivity. Israel ceases. They went too far. They thumbed their nose at God just one time too many.

Yet I want you to see something. Oh, you don't want to miss this, but you will. After all of this, and after they're right on the brink of going into captivity, I mean the terror threat of being overrun by another nation is all through Israel. They elect two great kings. The first one we have is Hezekiah. Hezekiah was a good king. Hezekiah was somebody who wanted to bring the nation of Israel back to God. He didn't do it, but he wanted to. Then you have the next one, Josiah. The Bible says to both Josiah that he was the greatest king that Israel ever had next to David. That's

David and then Josiah. There was no other better king than Josiah. He wants to do everything right. He does everything. He loves God. He loves the Word of God. He does. Oh, you ought to study his life. It's an incredible life for every young man and young lady. But in their captivity, they went. There comes a point as a nation, as an individual, when you pass the point, it all returns.

In our 2016 election, this country wants a good president. We're tired of the Democrats. We want a president that we think is going to be God honoring, God-fearing. Turn the crowds around. Turn everything back to God. Too little, too late. It never worked for Israel. It won't work for us. By the way, there isn't one Republican candidate that could match Hezekiah and Josiah on their best day. Notice the comparison of Israel when she went past the point of no return in America.

- Isaiah 29:12: Israel has a head knowledge of God but no heart knowledge.
- Jeremiah 23:20-30: God gave them a perfect book but they'll let somebody take it from them.
- Isaiah 8:12: The great things in the Bible have now become strange things to them.
- Isaiah 59:14: Truth has fallen in the streets.
- Isaiah 5:20: Evil now has become good and good is now called evil.
- Hosea 4:13: There's no truth, there's no mercy, there's no knowledge of God in the land.
- 2 Chronicles 15:3: It's been a long time since Israel had a teaching priest.

Now they've traded relationship with God for Baal worship. In 2 Kings 23 it's laid out so graphically all around the temple of God. On one end you have the homosexuals, on the other end you have the temple prostitutes, on the other end you have the bestiality of the animals that were used for sexual purposes and all the money that was raised when that came into the temple of God. There was no going back for Israel and there's no going back for America. The politicians today will be whatever they need to be, they'll say whatever they need to say to get elected. They all claim to be Christian. I've never heard one of them stand up and hold up his Bible and say, "I love the Word of God." If I was running for office and I was holding a town hall meeting, you know what I'd do? I'd hold a Bible study. They don't. A real Christian would build his whole campaign on the Word of God. They don't. They use the evangelicals, they use the stupid Christians and they use religion just like they use everybody else.

## VI. The King's Favor and God's Judgment

Look at verse 35. "The king's favour is toward a wise servant: but his wrath is against him that causeth shame." Again, doctrinally, this is a reference to the nation of Israel. But inspirationally it can be to us, our church, you and me as New Testament Christians. People miss today and do not understand the real threat that America faces. More importantly they don't understand why. We're worried about terrorist threats. Every day on the news we hear about somebody stealing uranium someplace going to make a dirty bomb. We find every day that there's plots and plans to kill everybody in America. We've seen a terrible terror activity all throughout our country. Our tireless FBI and the CIA and all the great guys that try to protect us just wear themselves out.

But the problem with all of this and the truth of the matter is not radical Muslims, nor is it Al Qaeda, nor is it ISIS. If that were the case, it would be very easy to stop them. But they're not the

problem. They are the symptom but they're not the problem. The real issue in America is a holy God who founded this nation for His purpose and gave this country the two greatest gifts earth's ever seen, one His Son and two the Word of God. In America, as Israel has, we have left both. Now it's not our foreign enemies as we suppose that's against us but the hand of a holy God that has turned against us because we as a foolish nation who have brought shame to the cause of Christ and have lost favor with God.

Every president when he gives a State of the Union speech or whenever he gives whatever speech, they all end the same way. "May God bless America." Yet not one president that ever said it ever understood the two things that it takes to have the blessings of God on any country. Nobody gets it. NBC, ABC, CBS, Fox News, nobody. Proverbs 28:5 says, "Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all things." I get it. I understand it.

Simply put, applying verse 35 to you and me, the king's favor. The world and Christianity and churches will fall apart around us. But we will have the favor with God as a wise servant if we stay with the book. The blessings of God are nowhere to be found outside His Word. The great lessons of history in this world need to be learned. When Israel went into captivity, he had men like Ezekiel, Daniel, both wise servants who did God's work, yet both went into captivity. God didn't spare them the captivity because they were good, they were wise and they followed God. They went into captivity like everybody else. But what they had that everybody else didn't have in the captivity was the favor of God. That's why it doesn't matter what happens in this country as long as you have the favor of God in your life. You better get that. You better get that. You better understand that.

Why if somebody dropped a dirty bomb in this city and I was eaten up by radiation and my family had all died and all of you had died and I was the only one left and I was aching and racking with pain and I didn't have anywhere to go and I had radiation poison all over my body and I was so sick that I couldn't walk, you know what, I'd lay down in a gutter with my hands across my chest and I'd go home and meet God with just everything the way it needs to be. Favor of God. Favor in your family. Favor in your personal life. I've watched God do some amazing things with some of you. It's because you have the favor of God in your life with what you do with the Word of God.

Our church, our ministry, in one respect, I'm just kind of like an insurance salesman. Everybody hates insurance salesmen but then everybody hates Baptist preachers so I'm right in vogue. I stand here today and offer you the greatest insurance policy anywhere in life against what's coming. My insurance policy will protect you against fire, flood, hurricane, hail damage, tornadoes, natural disaster, act of God. Read Revelation 6-19. I'm kind of like the Allstate guy. You're in good hands, but when you have the Word of God, you are the hands. I'm like the Prudential guy kind of, except here you don't get a piece of the rock, you get the whole rock. Your policy, you the policy holder, have all the fine print of your policy right there in the Word of God that God has given you. All I do on Sunday morning, Thursday night, one on one time together is read the policy to you and explain the fine print. You come into me and you're all upset and you're worried about something, I just take you to the insurance policy and show you why you don't have to worry. Covered. Covered. Amen.

"So Bob, I'm really worried about this." It's covered. It's covered. It's covered. "Well, you know, I got a deal." It's covered. It's covered. "Well, I got a bad cover." It's all covered. Let me show you the fine print. It's covered. He'll keep you in perfect peace as long as your mind is stayed on Him. It's covered. It's all I do. I show you how you're covered. The best thing about it is no deductible. No premium. It's already paid for.

Everybody knows something's coming. Our way of life is we know it's fast coming to an end. It doesn't matter if the Democrats get in or the Republicans get in. Didn't matter when they got Hezekiah and Josiah. But you need to see and understand that it's not the Democrats or the liberals or the Republicans or the Tea Party. It's not the Muslims. It's not some deep dark conspiracy. It's not the Jewish bankers. It's not the Illuminati. It's not the Masons or some other satanic organization. It's not the Da Vinci Code, but simply a holy God who's had enough. He has enough just like He did with Noah and the flood. Noah preached for 120 years. Then God says, "I had enough." God came. God had enough like He did in Genesis 11 where after the flood they didn't learn anything. They tried to build a tower whose top is going to go back to heaven. God comes down and changes it and says, "I had enough." In Genesis 18 and 19 when the Sodomites have taken over Sodom and Gomorrah and at the filthy raunchy place, God simply says, "You know what? I've had enough." In the book of Judges when they kept getting out of fellowship and going into all the idolatry 14 times, God sends them into captivity of another nation. You know why? God says, "I had enough." In 721 and 606 with Assyria and Babylon, God said about His people, the apple of His eye, His nation, His wife, "I've had enough." And He sent them into captivity.

Today in America, God's had enough. He's had enough of God's people trampling His Word under their feet. He's had enough of people taking the Word of God and taking the places out that exalt His Son and putting the devil in. He's had enough of God's people who give God a lip service but no heart service. He's had enough of God's people who just gave them the most precious gift on this planet. And we let every word drop to the ground and do nothing. He's had enough. It's time God's people wake up and understand that we caused this just like Israel caused it. The faithful remnant spread out across this world will go through this judgment like Daniel and Ezekiel did during the captivity. Ezra and Nehemiah after the captivity, Obadiah and Haggai, Malachi, Zechariah, they had the favor of God in the midst of what God were judging a nation. God had favor with people who had favor with Him. But they go through it with the favor of God.

One of the greatest verses in all the Bible to put all of this into a context found in Jeremiah 27:6-8. God speaking, He says this:

*Jeremiah 27:6-8*

*And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him.*

*And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and kings shall serve themselves of him.*

*And it shall come to pass, that the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the LORD, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand.*

Now will you look at that? A godless, pagan, Baal-worshipping king who hated God and God's people and God says in verse 6, "Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant." God, if you read on down, gives him everything on earth to him and he becomes God's servant to chastise the people of God because God had enough. To God's people, God had become a reproach from God.

Now the moral of this lesson, Proverbs 14:31-35, is simply this. America as a nation has gone too far and will never get back. God's people, many of them have went so far away from God they're never going to get back. Some of you will go past the point of no return in your foolishness. Whether with the world or even in your stupid religious stuff. You become a reproach to God and a captive to the things of this whole world. You'll never be able to get back.

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 10:11-12 concerning the nation of Israel.

*1 Corinthians 10:11-12*

*Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.*

*Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.*

You know what he's saying? He's saying the things that happened to Israel, they're for you to learn because we're just like them. Then he says, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth." That's a good one. You think you're standing. You think you're standing. You're a fool. You think you're standing. You give God what's left over of your life. You give God nothing. You give God only as it goes to your own prideful way of life and you think you're standing. He says you better learn the lessons of Israel. I wrote those for your admonition and your ensamples. "Wherefore because of what I said in verse 11, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." America's got herself puffed up that she's the greatest nation on the planet. She knows everything there is to know about God. Everybody's a Christian. She thinks she stands but she's going to fall. A lot of God's people the same way. They got themselves so puffed up. They think they know everything about the Bible and the Word of God. You know what? You're going to fall. You're going to fall.

Well, that ends chapter 14. This Thursday night I'll begin to bring you through and show you. For those of you that want to learn, if you don't want to, you can stay home. We'll start to go through and put some things together. Maybe help you with your Bible a little bit. Let's pray.