

Proverbs 15:13-15

Sunday 3/27/2016

If you have your Bible, we're going to be in Proverbs here in a few minutes, but I'd just like you to go ahead and turn to Colossians chapter 2. We will be there first for a few things, and then we'll move on. Today, of course, as you're all aware, today is Easter. Across this country and around the world, people are gathering together to have an Easter service. They meet early in the morning and have a sunrise service. That's a fun tradition for a lot of people; they like to get up early. Others line their churches with palm branches, palm leaves, lilies, and all those different things. It's a day that Christianity, since Constantine around 300 AD brought it in, has set aside to celebrate the resurrection of Christ.

Traditionally, most people go to church on Easter to hear an Easter sermon. I do have an Easter sermon this morning, and I am going to preach it to you, but it won't be the Easter sermon that you're probably expecting or are used to. To me, I'll tell you what is better than a sermon on a risen Savior. We probably have 250 people here today, maybe a little bit more than that. But let me tell you what is better than a sermon to you today on a risen Savior. What is better than that would be 250 lives who every day of your life demonstrate the life of a risen Savior inside you.

We go to churches on Easter to get pumped up until Christmas. Most of God's people do what they want to do between those two points of entry into the church. Now, I don't have a problem with that if that's what you want to do; it's between you and the Lord. But let me just say something to you: I'm not interested this morning in just blowing you up and talking about the day He came out of the tomb so you can forget about it tomorrow. I'm more interested in giving you something out of the Word of God that will impact you, that maybe, just maybe, will have you go out of here today and want to live a life of the risen Savior every day of your life. That's what I'm looking for.

So allow me a few moments here to kind of bring last week together with this week, and then I think you'll see where we're going today. Last week we defined for you one of the great mysteries of the Bible: three key elements to man and his creation by God. We looked at that when God made man, and I gave you the verse in Genesis 2:7 as a definitive verse on it, where the Bible says that God made man out of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. I wanted to walk you through in our study and take the time for you to lay out the understanding of your body, your soul, and your spirit, and how incredibly important those three aspects are in your life.

It's always been amazing to me how God's people, who I believe are truly saved, yet have absolutely no clue of how that salvation they claim they have ever took place in their life. I mean, what really happened the moment we trusted Christ as our own personal Savior? What really transpired in that time period, that instant-second of that transformation from out of the darkness into the light? I mean, what really happened to you that changed inside you? The Bible says that once a man is in Christ, he's a new creature in Christ Jesus. This is the resurrection story. The fact that He resurrected, and after He came up from the dead, He had the keys of death and hell, means that you and I never have to fear death again. When you got saved, the resurrection story transpired inside you. Now, if you're truly saved today, you never have to

worry about dying in a spiritual sense. The Bible says you're seated in heavenly places right now in Christ Jesus, even though you're in this church service this morning.

It's always been amazing to me how God's people will celebrate Easter, they'll celebrate Christmas, they'll celebrate all the Christian holidays, they'll make special days, special meals, special plans, special times with family. They'll all thank God for the fact that God came down, and yes, He died on the cross, went in that tomb, and He resurrected the third day. Yet they still don't understand or even could explain what really happened inside you the moment, the split second, that you got saved. What changed about your body? Anything? What changed about your soul? What changed about your spirit?

I can almost guarantee you, and I'm just talking now, I can almost guarantee you that you have pastors across this city this morning who are preaching on the resurrection, who are preaching on Easter, and they're holding that thing up and laying that thing out, and that's great. But you know what? If you put them on the spot, the men that are standing in pulpits today who are preaching about God's salvation, and just simply ask them, "Pastor, what really changed inside us?" They wouldn't have a clue. For me and for you, the number one aspect is salvation of our souls. I know that's not the theme of the Bible, but that's the theme of my life and certainly ought to be the theme of yours if you're saved this morning. For you and for me, the number one aspect is salvation, the salvation of my soul. Yet we couldn't even explain what happened to us at that moment of salvation.

Oh, we know about how to fix cars. We know about how to do this, how to hunt, how to fish, how to do all the things that we do. Some of you can get on a computer and just turn that thing inside out. But when it comes to the most important day of your life, that yes, is built on Him coming out of that tomb, we're oblivious to it. We know the terms. I call them the Christian talking points. We know the terms: "Oh, I was born again. I was saved. Oh, I was washed in the blood. I've been redeemed." You see, those are terms that we use to tell others or to explain that you're saved, but they don't explain what changed about your body, your soul, and your spirit in that instance of your salvation—the process.

I talked to a Church of Christ preacher one time. I've talked to them all my life. I got to say that the Church of Christ mentality is probably one of the most passionate mentalities about the Bible. I mean, they're as lost as a goose. They believe that you've got to be baptized to go to heaven. If you believe that this morning, you'll never get to heaven that way. But they're so passionate about it. I've talked with them all my life. I remember talking to a Church of Christ pastor, and we were talking back and forth, and he said, "Oh, you've got to be baptized." I said, "I have been baptized." And he said, "Oh, no, no, no, no. You have to be baptized in a Church of Christ baptistery." I said, "You mean a Methodist baptism is no good? A Baptist?" "No, no, no, no, no. If you're going to go to heaven, you can only get the blood of Christ applied to you through a Church of Christ baptistery."

Now I had him right where I wanted him. I wanted him to say that. Because then I threw him a Bible, and I said, "Okay, take me in the Bible and show me that process. Take me in the Word of God and show me the process of God's magical trick of giving you the blood of Christ through

the public water system in Kansas City in a baptistery that has the same water I took a shower in this morning. Show me that process. Don't sit there and tell me. Don't lay out this gas about what it is. If that's the true salvation, then here, take me in the scriptures and show me God's magical act of how He applies the blood of Christ to your sin through a public water system in a baptistery." You should have seen him scramble. He didn't know what to do. He didn't know where to go. You know why? Because there was nowhere to go. I mean, imagine what a joke. What a joke. Having a religion and a Bible that you claim to believe, but it doesn't even explain the process of how you got saved.

This concept is so critical. There are people out there today, bless their heart, that they actually believe that they can lose their salvation. They actually believe that. They actually believe that there's something after they get saved, there's something they can do, there's some sin they can commit that God will take back their salvation. Do you know why people fall for that lie? I'll tell you what, it's real simple: they do not understand what really happened inside your body, soul, and spirit the very second you got saved. Because if they did, the idea of losing your salvation is the most ridiculous thing on this planet once you understand the process of how you got saved. A Charismatic Church would be out of business overnight. What a joke. Imagine having a salvation that the Bible doesn't explain the process for it to happen. Listen, I'm a Bible believer. I know I'm saved because I can walk you through the complete process of exactly what happened and transpired inside you and inside me that mystical moment when I put my faith and trust in Christ. I can walk you through and show you what changed about your body, what changed about your soul, what changed about your spirit, all because of the resurrection.

I've been in the ministry quite a while. In my life, I've met a lot of wannabes. Men and women who pretend they want to know the Bible or even pretend they do know the Bible. One of the first questions, and I have a series of questions in the front of my Bible that I use for people just like that who claim that they know the Bible—we'll find out whether you do or whether you don't—but one of the first questions I will ask a man who claims to have a handle on the Bible is to explain that process of what transpired inside you the day you got saved. Now, last week I gave you the first part. This week I'm going to give you the second part. Then we're going to look at a great passage in Proverbs that goes right along with this. Stay in Colossians; we're going to get there in a second.

I. The Process of Salvation: Spiritual Circumcision

When a man is unsaved, he has a body, soul, and a spirit. But the thing that you want to remember about an unsaved man or woman is that his body and his soul are stuck together. This is why you'll find references in the Bible and the Old Testament—I've told you this before—that you find the word soul and body used interchangeably in the Old Testament. You know why? Because they're stuck together in the Old Testament. This is why the Bible says, and I gave you the verse a couple of weeks ago, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." You know how a soul sins? Because it's stuck to a sinful flesh. So an unsaved man or an unsaved woman, if you're here this morning and you're in an unsaved state, man or woman, here's your condition: you have a body, you have a soul, but that soul is stuck to your sinful flesh, therefore contaminating your soul. You

also have a spirit. That's the breath of life that's in you, but it's a dead spirit. It cannot connect with God. All it can connect with is the things of this world.

Now, that's the state of an unsaved man. Once you become a Christian, at the moment of salvation, here's what God does. Remember now, you've got an old nature if you're a Christian, and you've got a new nature. We talked about it last week. The old nature is what you struggle with. The new nature is God, and where the victory lies for you. But that old nature and that new nature come into play at the exact moment of salvation, because here's what God does. Remember, an unsaved man, an unsaved woman: flesh, soul, and body stuck together. The moment you get saved, God comes down and He separates the soul from your flesh. He takes the flesh and puts it over here, and it stays sinful. He takes your soul and He puts it over here. The Holy Spirit of God comes in that soul and seals it, never to leave. Now, that is what makes your old nature the flesh, your new nature in Christ Jesus. That's what happened the day you got saved. Along with that, He quickened your spirit. Now your spirit comes alive. Why? Because you have the presence of God's Almighty living inside you.

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Why doesn't it say soul? Because your soul is already sealed, and your soul constantly, 24/7, glorifies God. It's your flesh and your spirit you've got to work on. Now look at Colossians chapter 2. I explained the process. Now I'm going to show you the process in the Bible.

In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

There is the verse that shows you what happened. He cut away. He circumcised your flesh from your soul. The Bible says it's an operation. It's an operation of God. The Bible says it's a circumcision made without hands. It's a spiritual thing. What changed about you the moment, the instant, you got saved is the Holy Spirit of God came down. He circumcised and cut away your flesh from your soul. He sealed your soul. He quickened your spirit. Now you are a new creature in Christ Jesus. All things are passed away; all things become new. That's how it works.

Now let me ask you a question: can you lose your salvation? Okay, I just explained the process by which you get saved. He separates the flesh from the soul. Here, take me in the Bible and show me where He reverses the process and shows the two back together. See what I'm talking about? How ridiculous some things people believe because they don't know the Bible.

II. Old Testament Models, New Testament Principles

The Old Testament is incredible. One of the things I try to do here is show you how the Old Testament models or the Old Testament pictures of things illustrate the New Testament principles. In the Old Testament, which is the physical kingdom, physical promises, physical land, Moses was told to circumcise all the male children. Somebody says, "You know, wow, I wonder why they did that." The theologians will come in and they'll tell you, "Well, it was for health reasons. They were in the wilderness out there, and they didn't have all the cleanliness and all other things. So it was an issue that they were told to do that because it was a health issue that would have kept everything from going wrong in a medical sense." Now, I guess they just never read the Book of Leviticus that talks about the absolute insane cleansing process that Israel had to keep, even though they were in the wilderness. But just don't even bring that into it. We don't want to confuse the issue with a lot of facts.

Here's the bottom line: He didn't give them circumcision in the Old Testament because of health issues. He gave them the physical circumcision in the Old Testament because when He did that, that set them apart from all the other nations. The term in the Bible is "the uncircumcised Philistines." He did that to set a nation of people apart from the world in a physical sense. Now, in a spiritual sense, the Bible calls it spiritual circumcision. Circumcision in the Old Testament was a physical operation done on a male anatomy that had to do with his birth and with his seed. In the New Testament, it's a spiritual operation of God done in a man and a woman's body that has to do with a new birth and the seed of the Word of God being inside you. The Old Testament literal picture of it is an absolute picture of the spiritual one that you go through at the moment of salvation.

They did it on the eighth day. I've heard the theologians chime in, "Well, that's because they waited till the eighth day because the baby's blood coagulated, and it was better to do that so the blood wouldn't bleed too terribly and all that." You know what? Maybe that's true. But I'll tell you why it was the eighth day: because in numerology in the Bible, number eight stands for new beginning. When that baby got circumcised on the eighth day, it's a picture of your spiritual circumcision that made you a new creature in Christ Jesus. So that works. It's not hard. Not hard at all. This is why last week I took you to 1 John 3:9, that terrible passage that we have to alter, that "he that is born of God does not commit sin." Now you better understand your soul doesn't sin. Now you understand the second part of this: that the process of your salvation took place through a spiritual operation of God, a circumcision not made with hands, that put off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ. Now you're a new creature in Christ Jesus, still got the old nature, but He separated your soul from your flesh. That's the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament. That's the difference between you here today that are saved and you here today that are not. That didn't come into effect until He walked out of that tomb with the keys of death and hell. So Easter is a little bit more than just Easter bunny colored eggs, Jesus coming out of the tomb, seeing a shadow and running back in, and you have seven more months of tribulation period. It has to do with you and me having a living Savior inside us every day of our lives and people seeing the resurrection of Christ in you and me. Happy Easter.

III. The Heart, Spirit, and Correction of Man

Last week, you remember we looked at three key words that were found in the passage we looked at last week. We talked about the heart of man, and that's where we got into the body, soul, and spirit. I wanted to bring that to full circle today so now you understand it. Then we looked at the way of man, the way he goes in his life based on what he does with his spirit that's inside of him. We talked about the correction of man. We talked about the fact that, oh, as God's people, we love the blessings of God. We love the good things of God, but you'll never have a real working relationship with Christ until you love the correction of God in your life as much as you do the blessings of God in your life. Learning to enjoy correction from the Lord.

Now today, we will look at yet another set of verses that also will apply to what we already know about man's heart and his spirit and his body and his soul. So I want you now to turn back to Proverbs chapter 15 where we left off last week. I want to read just three verses. Then we'll look at them, and we'll take it, break it down, and make the application.

A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.

The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge: but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness.

All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast.

John Gowans, would you stand up and ask God's blessing on the message this morning?

Father, we just thank you for this word that you've given us. We just thank you for the book of Proverbs and all the wisdom that you've regained from studying the word and applying it to our hearts. Father, we just ask that you give God the words to say now and help us, Father, to apply it to our hearts. We thank you for all this and praise you this morning. Amen.

Now in Proverbs 15:13, you begin to see again the connection between the heart of man and his spirit. Last week, I showed you that there were two aspects of man's spirit: it was his heart or his heart attitude, as we call it, and it was his mind or his mindset. Wherever you let your spirit of your mind go, that will determine where your attitude of heart is.

And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

Renewed in the spirit of your mind. You have to renew that. There's a daily renewing, as 2 Corinthians 7:1 told us last week, by the promises, the principles of the Word of God. You have to renew the spirit, the spirit of your mind. You have to renew every day and reaffirm what you're thinking, where you're putting your mind, what you're letting it get involved in. Because wherever your spirit of your mind goes, that is where in time the attitude of your heart goes.

When a man's heart is joyful, merry, happy, and excited about the things of God, his spirit is full, and it shows in his face. It shows in his face, his countenance. You know, a great study in the Bible is the study of the word "face." It's a great study in the Word of God. The Bible says that the glory of God is in the face of Jesus Christ.

For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Now this answers a little question back in Ezekiel chapter 33 when Moses had an encounter with God and he wanted to see God's face. God says, "No, no, you can't see My face. I'll let you see My hinder parts, and I'll let you as I pass by. I'm going to put you in a cleft of the rock. But you can't see My face." Nobody sees that face, that glorified face, until the Lord comes back.

You know, people's faces, it's called countenances in the Bible. They're great to study. One of the things that you learn to look for in preaching as you get a little experience, you read your crowd. You read your crowd by reading faces. You can tell when somebody's with you and somebody's not with you. You can tell when somebody—now look at you all smiling now, I gave it all away—you can tell when somebody enjoys what you're saying because their spirit is kindred with your spirit in the Word of God, or you're coming up against a brick wall, so to speak. The Bible says that a man's countenance in the Bible will express what he's in his spirit.

There are two great examples here again, going back to the Old Testament. There are two great examples of that in the Bible. The first one is in Genesis 4:6 with Cain. You know the story, Cain and Abel, they brought sacrifices unto the Lord. The Bible says that God had respect unto Abel's offering. But Cain's offering wasn't quite up to snuff. He didn't accept that. Cain is upset. God comes down and talks with Cain and He asked him a question: "Why is thy countenance fallen?" He saw in his face, he didn't like what God had just done. He didn't like the preaching that he just heard. He didn't like the fact that God came down and said, "Abel, you did a great job. I'm going to accept that. Cain, I ain't going to accept yours." You know, there are messages just like that that a preacher will preach that the Holy Spirit of God will come down, and some of you will say, "Bless God, you're doing what's right." Others will say, "You know what, you know you're not doing what's right." You know what people do? Some people act like Abel. Some people act like Cain.

You know, it wasn't—I don't know what the big deal was—other than Cain's attitude of heart, his spirit. Because God said to him, "What are you upset about? What's your countenance fallen for? You saw what I did and what he did. Now you've got some great fruits and vegetables. Trade them to him for a lamb, give the lamb, and I'll accept it." But you know, in dealing with people, there are some people, no matter how easy you make it to do what's right, they just don't want to do what's right. I don't know how much easier you could get. I'll say to you this morning, "Are you upset? Are you mad about something? There's an easy process to fix it. Why won't you?"

I preached a message one time, a lady came up and she said to me, I had told them about unsaved people. I said, the Bible says in John 8:44, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." And I said, "If you're here this morning and you're unsaved, your family name is devil spiritually." Well, after the sermon, she came up and got all over me. She says, "I don't appreciate you saying that." And I said, "Well, I'm sorry, but that's just what the verse says." And she said, "Well, I don't appreciate that." And I said, "Well, I gotta be honest with you. I didn't appreciate it either the first time I heard it. So you know what I did? I got so upset when I heard my spiritual family was the devil, I changed families." If you're upset about it, what's the deal? Change families. She didn't want to. She didn't want to. You always tell where somebody's at by the look on their face. Some people are easier to read than others, or some people, I mean, it's like just written all over them, "I've just been hit with a truck." The truck of truth.

The other example is found in Exodus chapter 34, and it's Moses. These two examples are great examples of a man or a woman's countenance. Because in Exodus chapter 34, Moses goes up to be with God. The Bible says that when he came down from being with God, his face shone. They could see him coming two miles away. Somebody said, "Is that a UFO?" Or "What is that?" Somebody got their binoculars out and said, "That's Moses. His face is on fire. He looked like he ate the Ever Ready Bunny or whatever that battery thing is." He comes down there and he walks into camp. His face is glowing. Everybody says, "What happened, Moses?" "Well, let me tell you what happened. When you get to be with God, your face glows." You know the great thing about it? Moses didn't even know it. I always worry about people who walk around saying, "See my glow? Am I glowing? Just glowing makes me look fat. Am I glowing?" Moses didn't even know he was glowing. But you know what he had to do? He had to put a veil on his face.

Now, there's a great lesson here. My goal is not to teach this to you today, but there's a great lesson here. You know why he had to put a thing over his face? Because when you get with God and you glow with God, it will scare people who have the wrong countenance. Moses had to tone it down. I mean, people were offended. "Moses, I'm trying to sleep. Turn the lights out." He'd go into a crowd to a party and everybody would be wearing sunglasses. When you get the countenance of God in your face, you shine. You smile. It's in your eyes. There's a joy, joy, joy down in your heart. When you don't, like I said last week, if any man loved God, it's known. The reverse of that is if any man doesn't love God, it's known. And the countenance. "Why has thou countenance fallen?" Countenance of disappointment, countenance of rejection.

IV. The Broken Spirit and the Rule of God's Word

Now, look at the second part of Proverbs 15:13: "But by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken." As I said last week, the emotion of man or his passion, his desire, his strengths, his weaknesses will all be in his spirit. We like to use the words "inspirational." We like to use the word "inspired." If you go out and go to a Redbox or one of those places where you can rent a movie, there are all kinds of inspirational movies that they have made that are made for the purpose of giving you an inspirational impact. I mean, Rudy, the little guy that played for Notre Dame back in 1976, terrible ball player. Yet he hung out with the team for three or four years, got to play one game. They made a movie about his life. That movie inspired how many people? I watch it all the time. If there's—I don't care what is on—if there's a couple of movies that come on, I'll flip over and watch. One of them is Rudy. I'm sitting there just like everybody else, "Rudy, Rudy!" At the end, I mean, when he makes that last tackle, I cry. Then I did a little research and I found out that most of that's not true in the movie.

You know, another good inspirational one was Rocky. I mean, I have people all the time at the gym and they'll take their earphones out. You know, they're on, you know what this playing in the vehicle? I mean, I was 40 years ago. He's old, fat and bald now. And they still listen to the music. How about Hoosiers? 1951 Indiana basketball team. You know what? I used to love that movie. Then I found out most of that isn't true. Unbroken. We all went to see Unbroken. Remember that one? That guy, Louis something, he got Olympic runner. And got taken Japanese and spent all that time in the prison where they tried to break him. That was an inspirational

movie. Really was. I watched one the other week called *The Challenges of Mount Everest*, about the guys who time and time again try to—I mean, I wouldn't mountain climb for anything in the world. These guys, and they do it. They get up to 18, 19,000 feet. Don't even wear oxygen. Man, I fall off the stepladder just climbing up to change the light bulb.

But it's a spirit that drives man. Remember Charles Lindbergh? He didn't invent cheese. In 1927, Charles Lindbergh single-handedly in a single-engine plane flew across the Atlantic from New York to Paris, France. It was a great inspiration to flight, and everybody to this day knows Charles Lindbergh. His plane is in the Smithsonian Institute. He was world famous after that. It stood for a man and his endurance of his spirit to do that at that time in the world. Nobody thought it was possible. I don't know how many people tried it and died. You know what he called his plane? Spirit of St. Louis. Man's spirit. Man's spirit. Man's spirit will be the driving force that either goes you the right way or goes you the wrong way.

Listen, the disasters of this life, the heartbreak, the disappointment, the disillusionment, the tragedies of this life—they will always come because we, you and me, align our spirit and our emotion to love the wrong things. Some of God's people, I deal with it every week. They're in a terrible, terrible, terrible mess. Sometimes you can work your way out of it, and sometimes you can't. But I'll tell you in either case what got you there: lending your spirit to either right things or the wrong things.

Proverbs 25:28 is a great verse. We use it in the people ministry all the time. It's one that is key in understanding people and what they go through.

He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.

Your emotions, my emotions, our spirit will always get you into trouble if it's not under rule. The rule that it has to be under are the principles of the Word of God. When there is no rule over your own spirit, over your emotions, it will lead you to react to situations instead of responding. It will put you into a compromising situation that you should never be in. It will get you to invest your life in the wrong things. It will get you to say and do things that you'll regret afterwards. It will get you to give your love and your affection to the wrong things or maybe the wrong person.

You know, suicide is a terrible thing, but suicide is nothing more than an extreme emotional decision. Someone has gotten so distraught in life. Someone has gotten to the place where they think that there's no other way out. Someone has got themselves in such a stronghold, a bind, that they're absolutely lonely, they're depressed, all things within the spirit, that they actually think that the only way to get out of what they're under is to take their own life. Boy, nothing was ever farther from the truth. Let me tell you something: when you take your own life, you don't end it all. You just start it all one place or the other. My mama used to say, "Never make major decisions when you're upset, you're emotional." Because emotional decisions are never good ones.

V. Building Walls of Doctrine

The Bible says like a city broken down without walls. Let me explain what that means. In the Old Testament, they had cities. Around that city, they always built walls. Those walls were to protect the people inside that city. You get a little more detail on it: they had towers on there with watchmen who watched. But the wall was the city's protection. It kept people who wanted to do things or hurt people in the city from getting in. Jerusalem was a city that was a walled city. The original wall is completely gone. There's a wailing wall over there now that is not part of the original, but it's part of the one that was built a little later on in time. But when the city of Jerusalem was besieged back there in 2 Chronicles chapter 36, this is what they used to do. Nebuchadnezzar came down and he just completely surrounded that city, starved them out. Two and a half years for that one. Just waited.

But walls in the Bible are very important. When they go back after the 70 years captivity to Jerusalem under Cyrus, the first thing that Ezra and Nehemiah does, guess what? Rebuild the wall. Get that wall back up. Because they knew that the walls were their protection. A couple of weeks ago, I talked about Isaiah 28:9-10 in your life, where it talks about how do you teach doctrine. It simply says, "line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, there a little." I told you that each, every doctrine in the Bible that you learn, every doctrine in the Bible that you learn one at a time, is like a block. The day you got saved, you laid a foundation, which is Jesus Christ, 1 Corinthians chapter 3. The rest of your life, you're taking Bible doctrine to form up like building blocks and you're putting them on that foundation all the way around you. Do you know what you're doing with those blocks of doctrine? You're building a wall of protection around you.

You know why some people get caught up in every heresy to come down the line? I get 100 emails a month by the goofiest people. I don't even answer them anymore. I get the goofiest stuff you ever saw in your life about, "What do you think about this?" Or "I found this," or "I'm sending you this. Would you look at this?" It is the goofiest stuff you ever saw in your life. You know why that is? Because they don't have any walls. No doctrine to bounce it off of. The building blocks of biblical doctrine, one at a time, will build a wall around you that keeps the bad heresy from ever creeping into your life.

This church has a wall around it. I spent so much time teaching you right Bible doctrine. If you don't think it's right, hey, you feel froggy, leap my way. Doctrine is doctrine. We teach it everything down the line. You know why? Because this church needs to have a wall of protection around it. After what, 14 years now, we have it. Because I learned over the years in ministry, you'll have people who come in who have weird ideas, bad doctrines. You don't always know it when they first show up. But as they stick around for a while, you start to see the craziness that goes on in what they believe. Many times they'll want to come and start the Bible with me and come over, and that's great. Then they don't get what they want there. So then they'll find somebody else, some other gal to do it or whatever. They'll go from that. The thing I love about this church is the wall that we have. Because many times they won't like what I say, so they'll go to somebody else to find out if they'll say what they say, and all they ever find, wherever they go in this church, is a wall. The same wall that I have. A wall of doctrine. They just run into that wall wherever they go. That is the best thing that ever happened to a church.

One of the things that you get into with big churches, mega churches, that's hard to build a wall around that. Too much goofiness floats in and floats out. That's why the Bible model in the Old Testament is a church around 400 or 500 people. That's in the Bible. Because you can maintain a wall around that. Every one of you, through Bible studies, through Sunday morning, through the people ministry, through the one-on-one, through the singles ministry, you come to learn the Bible. I have an ulterior motive way beyond that. I'm building walls. Walls to protect this church. But your family needs to have walls around them too. The devil's after your kids. The only thing that will protect your children is putting a wall around them, a Bible doctrine.

Now let me clarify that. Many parents make the mistake that they're just going to isolate their kids from all of the world. They just keep taking the position, you know, and I've seen it all my ministry, "Well, I'm not letting my kid do anything that has to do with anything in the world. I'm going to isolate them totally from the world." That is the worst decision you could ever make in your life. But parents do that because the alternative is too costly. You should never isolate your children from the world. You know why? Because you can't. In the delusion of your mind, you think you can, but when they hit high school or they leave your home and get into a job, they're going to fold up like a broken accordion. You know why? Because they've had no experience with the world, and the devil is going to snatch them just like that. You say, "Oh, you won't be in their life every time after a period of time." You don't isolate your children. You insulate your children.

That wall around the city, it kept everything out, didn't it? But you look at it, it had gates. There are some things you let in. Now, parents, let me tell you something. Don't take this wrong. And I don't care if you do. It's Easter. Quit worrying about your kids getting so dirty when they play. Do you know that there's health value in your kids eating a little dirt? Right. You know, they don't get something in their body when you just keep them in a little bubble that they're always clean. Now, I understand you don't let them track mud in and all those things. Some of us big kids still do that. But when I was a kid, I got whapped good by my mom because we made mud pies and then ate them. I remember she took me to the doctor way back when, and the doctor told her—I was little, but I remember the doctor told her—"Hey, look, it's okay. It ain't going to kill him. In fact, his body works better. It works better when you get..."

I used to have a friend of mine who used to go down to Oklahoma and round up rattlesnakes. I've always wanted to do that. I think catching rattlesnakes would be a fun thing. This guy gets some big rattlesnakes. But you know what he did? Now, rattlesnakes can bite you. And they will bite you. If you don't know that, just pastor a church for a while because they'll have some in there. But he went to someplace and got little venom shots of poison. Little venom shots of poison over a period of time build up his resistance that when he got bit. He only ever got bit one time, and he did a stupid thing. He held the—he had to put him in a burlap bag, and he held the bag down here, and a snake bit through the bag and bit him in the leg. But it didn't bother him. Because he had enough poison in him. He had enough poison in him that offset when the real poison came in. You cannot protect your kids from everything in the world. You thinking that you can is an illusion. You have to work with those kids, indoctrinate those kids, build a wall of doctrine around those kids, and you insulate those kids. But if you think that you're going to keep the

devil away from your child, this is one of the big mistakes people made when they sent their kids off to Christian school. We have a number of people here that went to Christian school. Steve Bracken went to Christian school. Some of the other ones, you did. Parents were under the idea that when you sent your kid to Christian school, when they walked in the front door, there was a big sign over the door that said, "Devil can't come in here." It was actually preached from the pulpit that if you sent your kids to a Christian school, they'd turn out good. Let me tell you something: so many of those godless kids you ever saw on the planet were in Christian schools. You know why? Because it wasn't true. You can't, the only thing that you can do for your child is to indoctrinate them and insulate them. You can't isolate them. Sooner or later, the world is going to get to them. The devil will see to it. The devil will see to it. A wall of protection, doctrine.

VI. Seeking Knowledge vs. Feeding on Foolishness

Now look at Proverbs 15:14. It says, "The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge: but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness." Here's a man who through his spirit will give it to the things of God because in his heart he wants understanding. He wants truth. Now, a man who really wants truth and understanding will have a certain spirit about him or a woman. I deal with people all the time. Done it all my life. That's all I do. I'm telling you, a man or a woman who wants understanding and wants truth will have a certain spirit about them that you don't see in just a ravaged individual. In fact, I'd say that dealing with people, people have three different kinds of spirits when it comes to learning anything about God.

- A Teachable Spirit
- An Unteachable Spirit
- An Uncaring Spirit

When you have somebody that has a teachable spirit, that's all they want to do is learn. They don't have any preconceived ideas about anything. They're willing to throw out any goofy thing that you tell them is goofy. Their spirit is lent to one thing: getting truth and getting understanding. Understanding, as we've already defined in the Bible a while back, is understanding how God figures into every scenario in life. And they want that.

Then you have people who have an unteachable spirit. They come in to learn the Bible and suddenly they're going to teach you. They who have never built anything, they who have never won a soul to Christ, they who had never disciplined anybody or done anything meaningful, now they really know. Unteachable. Unteachable.

Then you have those who have an uncaring spirit. They don't care one way or the other. The key to understanding, really, the key to the truths of God's word and understanding will always start with us being honest and understanding ourselves. We are the best model for understanding human nature in others when you first study it in yourself. In the people ministry, by the way, we have people ministry this coming. This will be the last one before we take the break next Saturday. In the people ministry, the key to a successful ministry and reaching people and understanding how to deal with them is not understanding them, but first understanding yourself.

Apply everything you learn to yourself first, then you apply it to other changing about you. What needs to be changed for you ever think about helping to change somebody else. It's like somebody who wants to get somebody out of alcoholism while they still drink. "I'll help you smoke, break your smoking habit." "Since I have a cigarette," it just doesn't work.

I teach them four basic things. A lot of things before basic.

- First of all, you got to know our limitations.
- Second, we got to know what our weaknesses are.
- You have any weaknesses? Do you know? You got to go home this afternoon and list them out. Be honest with yourself.
- Then you have to know your strengths and you certainly have to know your boundaries.

There's a lot of things that I don't do well. But I've learned over the years. Most pastors have to pretend that they do everything well and don't get anything done. I know there's a lot of things I don't do well, and I realize that that's the reason God gave you me. I don't know, gave me you. Gave us each other. I'll surround myself with people who do things well that I don't do well. That's a team concept. That's the way it has to work. We, through our spirit and heart attitude, seeking understanding of who we are and how we build ourselves up, most of God's people will never face, admit, or deal with their weaknesses, and we all have them. Their whole life, they try to go and do the work and deal with all the things that they do, focusing on their strengths, but never focusing on their weaknesses.

I told the kids yesterday, when I was in high school, junior high or elementary, we got report cards. I think they came out every twice a year or three times a year, I don't know, but mine was never good. They do a whole different grading system now, which I don't think is very good. There's something about getting F's in red ink that just really got your attention. They were in a little gold card and you had to pull it out. That was the most agonizing moment of my young life, the time it took to get that card out of that thing and look at it. I remember one time in particular, I got three F's, two C's, and two B's. That's what I said. Nice to know I've not been the only one in that scenario. Here's what I would do, foolishly. I had to take it home to my parents because back then they had to sign it. It wasn't like you signing it because they had your parents' signature on file. So I had to show it to them. But I would do the same thing as so many of God's people do. I'd take it and I'd say, "Well," my mom would say, "You have three F's." I'd say, "But mom, I got two C's and two B's." See, I try to get the attention off the F's by focusing on the C's and the B's. In other words, "Mom, don't look at my weaknesses. Look at my strengths." How foolish that was. Because going on that way was never going to pass school. You see, in doing that, we never move past a certain point in our life because we can deceive ourselves in thinking that, "Oh, I don't have to deal with the weaknesses. I'm just going to focus on all my strengths." You do that and you'll deceive yourself.

Look at the last part of Proverbs 15:14: "But the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness." I love the word "feedeth." Feedeth on foolishness. Last week I told you there were four openings in man that feed his spirit and his old nature or his new nature: the eyes, the ears, the nose, and the mouth. With them, you'll do one of two things. You'll either feed the flesh after the old nature, or you're going to feed the new nature. Whichever one you feed is the one that's going to control you, take you wherever you go in life. The Bible says that I'm left in a very, very, very hostile environment after I got saved.

You know, I love the old books and the books in the Old Testament of the Bible, not because they have such a great historical concept, because they really do. But I love them because of the fact that every one of them, either the book itself or within the books, have incredible stories that illustrate New Testament truths and principles. I just love them because not only do I love the historical aspect about the Kingdom of Heaven and the beginning of the nation of Israel, but those stories, the stories in the books of the Bibles, the characters, they all illustrate some New Testament doctrine that when you get the doctrine in the story, man, you got some things.

A couple of weeks ago, I think it was last week, maybe the week before last, I don't remember. I told you about how that when you got saved, God gives you a measure of faith. Remember that? I think it's Romans 12:3, that when you get saved, God gives you a measure of faith. Now, I just didn't pull that out of the air someplace. That's taught back in Genesis. You find out with Abraham. He's the model for that. Did you ever notice Abraham? God took him out and showed him the stars of heaven. The Bible says that Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. He had enough faith and enough grace by measure to believe what God said about salvation. But then when God says, "Get out of the country and go by yourself," he didn't have enough faith to leave. He took Lot with him. Then what? Two chapters later, God says, "I'm going to give you the promised seed. It's going to come through you." He had enough faith to believe about salvation, but he didn't have enough faith to believe the promise. So he took Hagar. He goes down there in Egypt, and the king says, "Whoa, look at his wife. I'd like to add her to my harem. Is she your wife?" See, he had enough faith to believe God about salvation, but he only had enough measure. He didn't have enough to get to the point. So he lied and said, "No, she's my sister." Now, Ephesians fills in the rest of the story and tells us that when you have that measure, it increases and it increases, and you grow up to the stature of Christ. That's what Abraham did. He believed God for salvation. He couldn't believe God through a process. But by Genesis chapter 22, he's now added some things to his faith. Now he can take his son and trust God and lay him on the altar and would have put that knife through his breast if God wouldn't have stopped his hand. It's a process.

You want to study about the warfare of the believer? Joshua. You want to study about the apostasy that's in Christianity today? Judges. These books are incredible. They're incredible. I think the book of Exodus is my book. Because when He went back to heaven and I got saved, He left me in a hostile environment. I don't know of any other book in the Bible that lays out for me the whole Christian life and shows me that even though I am in the wilderness of sin today, and you are, and whether you know it or not, there's nothing in this world that will satisfy you. You can't drink the water; it's bitter. You can't eat the food; it's slop. Everything the world has for you

now will not satisfy you, and you or me are in a predicament because we are alive and well in the wilderness of sin, as Israel was. The whole book's a great study. Chapters 1 through 11, they're in bondage down in Egypt. Under a man named Pharaoh, a type of the devil, Egypt, the type of the world. They put him under tremendous bondage. They cry out and say, "Oh, I cannot stand the bondage of this whole world in Egypt." You remember the time in your life, Christian, when you were under the bondage of this whole world? You remember when the oppressor of Pharaoh and the world had his foot on your neck and just squeezed the life out of you? We cried out, as they cried out. You know what God did? God sent him a deliverer. That deliverer was Moses. When you and I cried out because we couldn't stand the oppression of the world anymore, God sent us a deliverer.

Exodus chapter 12, they get delivered from the world by the blood of the lamb. Now they start into the wilderness of sin. The water's no good. The food's no good. It's a barren wasteland. It's a picture of you and me after we're saved, that there's nothing in this life, in this world, that will ever sustain us again. Oh, you find in chapter 13, after their salvation, a picture of our separation. They get baptized in chapter 14. In chapter 15, they get a song just like you did. A new song in our heart, even praise unto our God, and many shall see it and fear in the Lord. Chapter 16, they get their Bible. Chapter 17 is a picture of their prayer life. From chapter 18 to 40, now they're in it. The wilderness of sin for 40 years. Yet God sustains them through everything.

I want to tell you something. You probably don't know this. You and I are in the wilderness of sin today if we're saved. Just as God gave them the things that they needed to be sustained through their wilderness journey, God has given you and me a survival kit. It will sustain us in every step of the way in the wilderness of sin. My Bible, in my Bible, there are 12 pieces of my survival kit.

➤ I got to eat. The world, in the military, they give them MREs to eat. Meals Ready to Eat. Cashing, isn't it? I'd have that tattooed on my arm. They say that the MREs have a 20-year shelf life. You can go on TV and they're worried about the end of the world. You can buy all this freeze-dried fruit. They say it has a 30-year shelf life that will sustain you when disaster happens on this planet. Well, I want to tell you something. I got the spiritual food of God, and it has an eternal shelf life. It ain't ever going to go out of date.

➤ I need food. I need water. So in John 4, the Word of God is likened to water.

➤ I like my sweets. So in Psalms 119:103, the Word of God is likened to honey.

➤ Oh, I like a good steak. So in Hebrews 5:12, it's likened to meat.

➤ I like apples, especially stealing them off the neighbor's tree. So in Proverbs 7:2, the Word of God is likened to apples.

➤ I love bread. So Luke 4, it's likened to bread.

- I love milk. 1 Peter 2, it's likened to milk.
- I like vegetables and corn. Psalms 78:24.
- I like salt. Matthew 5:13.
- So there's everything I need to survive eating and drinking. But then I got to protect myself from this wilderness of sin. So in Hebrews chapter 4, He gave me a sword.
- I got to build stuff. So over there in Jeremiah chapter 23, and over there in Judges chapter 5, the Word of God is likened to a hammer and nails. Now I'm building Christians. I've built you as you let me by the grace of God. You know the best way to build God's people and build a wall? Hammer and nails. I hammer you. You drive home and said, "Man, he nailed me today." That's how you do it.
- But I got to have light. I got to have warmth. The Bible's likened to fire.

You know, a lot of us like to watch The Walking Dead. Some of God's people say, "I wouldn't watch that." You know, I understand that, but let me tell you something. You realize that you're around the walking dead every day of your life? You realize the walking dead, they live on flesh, and all the unsaved people you go elbow to elbow with all day long, they live on flesh. Chris, were you preaching last night down in Westport? A bunch of people down there probably packed on. I better reminded you, and I knew it reminded me, somebody standing down there and just dead people walking by. Where are they going? Flesh. I got the Word of God. Flesh. You got to get saved. Flesh. Herds of them.

You know, in prison, in the penal system, when they go to execute a guy, they walk him that last long mile. They walk him down to the electric chair or the gallows, however they do it today. There's a guard that walks behind him. As they're walking down there, you know what that guard says? "Dead man walking. Dead man walking." You know what you are today? If you're unsaved, you're a dead man walking. The flesh is all you can consume. I'm telling you, fools feed on foolishness. What we feed on will determine whether we survive or we don't.

We have the modern-day preppers, you know, who are buying guns and buying ammo and buying food and stocking up water. Hey, that's cool. I'm all for that. But let me tell you something. If you're in your house and you got a wife and three kids, and 200 guys start to come and take what you got, you ain't going to last. All you're going to do is stock it up in one spot where they can get it after they kill all of you. Oh, I know you'll put you out front, give your wife a rifle out back, put one of the kids on the wall, one of the kids over here and hold them off, right? First time one of the kids gets wounded, your wife's going to leave and run to the kid. You see, they're going to take everything you have. In my survival kit, you can't take what I've stored up.

Back in Judges 7 and 18, there's a story about a man. Somebody stole his religion. Why? If the government came down and canceled Easter today and made it against the law to have Easter services, this whole country would just have a heart attack. Churches would close today. They'd riot. They'd picket. We just have church service. You see, you can't take what I have. Somebody says, "I'll fix you. We'll come in and burn down the church." This building isn't the church. I'm the church. "Well, we'll come in and steal all your hymn books." Go ahead. I got a song in my heart. "Well, we'll take all the Bibles." Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee. See? "Well, we'll kill your priest." You can't get him. "Well, we'll kill you." Praise God. To live is Christ, to die is gain. You can't get what I got.

VII. A Continual Feast

Look at Proverbs 15:15.

All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast.

Simply put, a man without the word of God has no good days, and a man with the word of God has no bad days. How far we fall short of that concept as God's people. Wow. You take America, America is on the verge of total disaster. People are worried about everything. They're worried about the health costs going up. They're worried about food and clothing for the family. They're worried about their job and losing it. Their finances, their investment, their family, their health, their economic disaster, terrorism, all over the place, their house payment, their car payment, their medical bill, their child support, their alimony. Yet you got God's people that are saved, they're on their way to heaven. They ought to have the joy of God in their heart, and they're on Prozac or they're on this because of the depression or their anxiety or their bipolar. They're daily dependent on something else other than the word of God. No matter what he does, where he goes, he cannot escape the affliction of evil all the days of his life. He can go on vacation. He can go to a ballgame. He can get Chiefs tickets. He can go here. He can go there. He can get into drugs and get into alcohol. When he comes back and it's all over, those days are right there waiting for you. His life is an endless rut, a dead end street strewn with heartache and disappointment, potholed with failed marriages, broken families, rebellious children, failed businesses, lost opportunities, a complete hopeless end.

But oh, I want to tell you, bless God for the last part of Proverbs 15:15: "But he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast." Not me, brother. You eat the slop of this old world. You feast on it. Not me. Forty-six years ago, I heard the call to a wedding feast. Forty-six years ago, I heard a preacher say, "Come and dine, the Master calls. Come and dine." You can feast at Jesus' table all the time.

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

That supper. Man, I don't worry about a thing. I'm having a feast, a continual feast. The joy of my heart completely blocks out this old world. Who cares? I'm a pilgrim in a strange land. I'm like Abraham looking for a city whose builder and maker is God. My affections are set on things above. I'm seated in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. I am certain, I reckon that the sufferings

of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us in that day. I'm eating high, man.

I'm like old Mephibosheth back there in 2 Samuel chapter 9. You know the story. Old Mephibosheth was one of Saul's sons. He was lame on his feet. He was a beggar. He was dirty. He was crusty. He was a mess. He couldn't even get to the bathroom. He was an absolute mess. David one day said, "Is there any left of the house of Saul that I might show him kindness?" Here you had a man by the name of Ziba, who's a type of the Holy Ghost. Ziba says to David, type of Christ, "Yes, there's Mephibosheth." He says, "Bring him to me." Now by rights, Saul was David's enemy. By rights, David should have had him killed. But oh, the story is such a beautiful story. Because when I read that story every time, how David brought in Mephibosheth. I'm sure Mephibosheth thought, "Boy, he's going to kill me for sure." But he brought him in. He changed his clothes. He washed him up, cleaned him up. He brought him in to his table, loaded with food. He said, "You, Mephibosheth, sit at my table as one of my sons." For the rest of his life, he feasted at David's table.

I want to tell you something, my friend. I'm Mephibosheth. There was a day in my life when I was lame on my feet. There was a day in my life when I was filthy before God. I was the enemy of God. There was a day in my life with everything I did. Mephibosheth, the name means "breathing shame." God should have wiped me out and put me into the darkest corner of hell. But He called the Holy Spirit of God and He said, "Is there anybody out there left in the devil's family that I might show kindness to?" Ziba, my Holy Spirit of God, said, "Yeah, Bob Alexander." He took me in. He took you in, cleaned you up, washed you, seated you at His table, and we ought to be feasting today instead of eating out of the garbage cans of this old world. Happy Easter. Come and dine, the Master calls. Come and dine. For 46 years, I feasted at that table. Wow. What a meal.

You see, I'm living on the mountain underneath a cloudless sky. I'm drinking of the fountain that'll never, never go dry. Yes, I am feasting on the manna from a bountiful supply. Brother, I'm living and dwelling in Beulah land. What a meal. What good people God's given me to eat with. Zach, you remember when you were eating out of the garbage cans of this old world? We're feasting now, aren't we, brother? Delano, remember how it was? Remember how it was? Remember how it was, Bob, when you were over there and making movies for Top Gun, and now you're feasting on a table. John Christensen, remember how it was when you first came? You and your family came over every Wednesday night and we feasted on the Word of God going through church history. We feasted on the manna. You know what we did Thursday night? We had a feast. You know what we're going to do today? We're having a feast. You know what happened yesterday with the singles ministry? We had a feast. Little Christina, head of crafts and art, give her a new title. She had the devotion yesterday. She took Jeremiah chapter 18 about the potter's house that I preached a couple of weeks ago, made me look like an idiot. She does crafts. She does that. She took every aspect of a potter making a vessel from the water composition to how much you got to have. She cut that thing right down the line. It was one of the greatest expositions of making a Christian through the picture of a potter's clay I ever saw in my life. We had a feast. Guys, she's single. That girl can cook. She can cook. She can cook. We had a feast

yesterday. Amen. Remember a couple years, New Year's, years ago, you were eating the slop in this whole world. Now you're feasting. Remember your life? Now you're feasting. Remember your life? Now you're feasting. Remember your life? Now you're feasting. Phil Wills left you. I don't know where he's at, but you're feasting today. What a great time. John, remember in Okinawa in the Marine Corps? You were eating out of the garbage cans. Feasting now? We're feasting. What great friends it is to eat with. Incredible.

Some of you, why did you get up and leave the table? "I'm going to go back to the garbage cans of this whole world." Some of you never made it to the table at all. You sit here today with a Bible in one hand and a garbage can in the other. You really sit here and scratch your head and wonder why your life is upside down. A couple of weeks ago, on Saturday mornings, the thing I look forward to, and I know this is stupid. One of the things I look forward to all week long on Saturday mornings, going to McDonald's for breakfast. I know. I know. It's just something about it. Once in a while Ronald McDonald's there and it's really a blessing.

A couple of weeks ago I was sitting there eating. I looked out the window as I was eating my number two with a large coffee, black. Straight over scrambled eggs and bacon. I saw a homeless person, man, you can see the walled things where they put the garbage in. They had taken garbage out there and hadn't put it in the thing yet. Maybe it was full. I watched this old boy open up the bags and start going through the garbage and looking for something to eat. I sat there and watched him for a while and I got a burden for him. I went up and I ordered him a complete meal. Pancakes, eggs, bacon, coffee, you know, potato cakes, the whole nine yards. I took it out to him and I told him, I said, "Here, friend," I said, "this is for you. You don't have to eat and go through somebody else's garbage this morning to have a meal." He looked up and he said, "Oh, thank you." Then he said what they all say. He says, "God bless you." That's the standard line, but that's my opening. I said, "You know, I'm glad you brought up God because I want to tell you something. He does bless me. I want to tell you that He also wants to bless you. He wants you to have the blessings of God in your life." I said, "I bought you this food to tell you something, maybe to show you something." I sat down with him there on the curb while he ate his breakfast. I began to talk to him about the Lord. I told him, I said, "You know what? There was a time in my life spiritually that I had to eat at a garbage can just like this." I said, "Then one day a man came and told me that there was a great feast prepared for me. I accepted that offer. I've been eating at the king's table ever since." I want to tell you, all my life up to that point, there was nothing but every day was an infliction of evil in my life. "I give you this food today, not just because you're hungry, but with every bite, I want you to understand that spiritually, the blessings of God are all for you. There's a feast prepared for you 24/7 if you want it." I walked that man down and told him the story of Christ. I told him, I said, "You know what? If a godless, worthless sinner, saved by God's grace like me, can be a blessing to you, how much more can the God of this universe who loves you and died for you be the blessings that you need in your life?" That is so true. Just as I've given you this meal, your Heavenly Father has one prepared for you. Come and dine, the Master calls. Come and dine.

Today, just like that old guy at McDonald's, sitting at that old parking lot, nothing to his life, dirty, filthy, hungry, eating out of the trash cans of life, the choice is yours today. You can

continue to eat out of the trash cans of this world, or you can sit down like old Mephibosheth, just like me, so many people in this room, and have a feast continually at the king's table. You'll either feed on the foolishness of life, or you'll feast on God's feast of life. "All the days of affliction are evil, but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast." You know, everything's our choices based on where we put our spirit, based on understanding body, soul, and spirit. It's all through our free will, all through our spirit, all through our conscious choices. But your life, my life, will only go one of two ways. Your life, because you stay with the affliction in a garbageous world, will wind up being a hopeless end. Or if you get eaten at the king's table and feed with Him, your life is going to be endless hope. But you get to choose. Every head bowed and every eye closed.