

# Proverbs 16:12-15

Sunday 6/5/2016

Last week, we had a study on the word "bag." Who would ever think that that one little word would be so powerful in the Bible? It was based on Proverbs 16:11, by a wild coincidence, just based on your Bible, 1611. We looked at how in this life and through life, we pick up things. We pick up good things and we pick up bad things. We pick up good habits, we pick up bad habits, we pick up bad people in our life, we pick up good people in our life, we pick up things.

We looked at how God uses the concept to illustrate this great truth of a bag that as we go through life, we put stuff in this bag that we carry. The good things that we pick up, they help us. They form a good balance for us. The bad things, they weigh us down. They form a bad balance. Hebrews 12:1 talks about this where it says:

*Hebrews 12:1*

*Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.*

The weight in our bags. I told you last week, we use the term all the time, "Well, I like this guy, I like this guy, but they got a lot of baggage." What's in your bag this morning? That's what we talked about last week.

Then I took you and showed you another aspect of it based on the principles found in the Old Testament book of Haggai, a bag with holes. This was illustrated by the nation of Israel who forsook the building of God's temple. God brought them back in Ezra and Nehemiah after a 70-year captivity. He brought them back to the land and gave them the commission to begin to rebuild the temple. They started building that temple, and you remember, like so many of God's people, they began to do something for God and then they stopped. When Haggai comes on the scene, they have been dormant now for 16 years and have ceased to build the temple of God.

I showed you how, as you come down through those verses, Haggai said, "You know what? Nothing now satisfies you. You drink all you want, you're not satisfied. You get all you want to eat, you're still not satisfied. You have all these great possessions, but yet you're still not satisfied." He comes down and he makes the great concept, "Your life is like a bag with holes. Everything you put in, you've lost, and now your life is empty." It's a picture of our lives today without God and the things of God, and how empty it really, really, really becomes.

## I. The Puzzle Passage of Proverbs

Today, moving along here, we want to look at Proverbs 16:12-15. Let's read it here:

*Proverbs 16:12-15*

*It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness.*

*Righteous lips are the delight of kings; and they love him that speaketh right.*

*The wrath of a king is as messengers of death: but a wise man will pacify it.*

*In the light of the king's countenance is life; and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain.*

This passage and passages like this are fun for me. I enjoy them. Some people in life like to do crossword puzzles. I think crossword puzzles are a great thing. I think it uses your mind and it makes you think, and it's great to learn words. I think they're a great thing. A lot of people you see them sitting doing a crossword puzzle. All the newspapers have them in. You can go buy books and they come in different hardnesses: easy, medium, and really hard, just like taco sauce: mild, medium, and really hot. A lot of people do those.

My mom was a thousand-piece picture puzzle putter-together. She loved to put them together. We would go over to Waldo's Pizza. When you go in the men's room to use their bathroom, you'll notice that somebody put all of these pictures in there that are made up of thousand-piece picture puzzles. Then you glue them over or gloss them over, and they stay together, and the whole place is filled with it. People like to do things like that.

The craze today for young guys, and I envy you guys, I go over to Danny and Jamie's and you get some game on the video thing down here. I can't do it. I keep bumping. You guys run through things with these, just your fingers doing those things, man. I can't do that. But to me, nothing is more fun and exciting than getting along with your Bible and unlocking what I consider are puzzle passages. This is a puzzle passage. You would read what I just read, and most people would read that and say, "Okay, move on to the next. What's here?" This is a puzzle passage. For me, it's these kind of passages that are just incredible to unlock, much like doing a crossword puzzle, much like doing your video games, much like putting a thousand-piece picture puzzle.

You know, in every one of those things that you do, there's a secret to it. I look at the picture puzzles, a thousand pieces. Man, what do you do? How would you ever get that? Every night on New Year's Eve, my mom used to start around six or seven o'clock in the evening, and by one o'clock in the morning, we'd stay up all night, watch Guy Lombardo, watch the big thing come down and blow up in New York. It was always a fun time. I would wake up every morning on New Year's morning, and my mom would have that puzzle together.

I asked her one time, "Mom, what is the secret to that?" She said, "Well, what you do is you dump all the pieces out and you get the corner pieces. You separate them and you start putting the framework together. Then once you get the framework together, then you start working from the framework in, and as the picture develops, the pieces make more sense."

Years later, when I got saved, I thought to myself, "That's exactly the way you work with the Bible." This is when we do your Discipleship One, Discipleship Two, what I do on Thursday night, what I do in the people ministry, what I do when I teach you the Bible. I'm giving you framework things. I'm framing the Bible for you. I'm putting it into context for you. So down the line, as you put the picture puzzle of the Word of God together, because God's Bible manifests a picture that God wants you to see, it becomes easy. There's a secret to crossword puzzles. I don't know what it is, but there's a secret to it.

## II. Historical Context: Solomon and Kingship

In these verses, we see instructions given to a king. When I saw that years ago, that intrigued me. It's some really good stuff here. I always start with the historical because that's easy to establish the framework, and then it's easy to move in from there. So from a historical perspective, the book of Proverbs was written by the wisest king that Israel ever had, Solomon. We know that. God, through Solomon, intended Proverbs to be good instructions for all the kings that were going to follow: his own son Rehoboam and Jeroboam, and all the "Boam" boys. They were the next set of kings after the kingdom got split.

Solomon, without a doubt, is the most unique man in all of the Bible, I think, from my own personal study of him. In 1 Kings 8:1-66, which again just happens to be the chapters in the Bible, he goes through his great prayer of dedication before he builds the temple. It is absolutely one of the greatest, incredible prayers in all of the Bible. One of the things to study in the Bible is prayers in the Bible. When we start July, when we start getting ready for camp, the first message I'm going to preach to you parents is the prayer you should have for your children, prayed by the greatest parent in the Bible. Now, I know that's 4th of July weekend. You're going to have to cancel your plans to stay here to hear that. You don't want to miss that.

There are some great prayers in the Bible. I think David's prayer, restitution with God, is an incredible prayer. All through the Bible, there are some men and some women who just illustrate in their prayer. In Solomon, when he prays, there are four great petitions in his prayer. His prayer is to ask God for the people of God, not for riches, not for honor and glory, not for possessions. But his prayer is about, "God, these are your people. I know who you are, and I know what you want to accomplish as their king, dear God. Give me the wisdom and the understanding and the discernment to be a good king to such great people." That's some powerful prayer.

I believe that through the writing of the Books of Solomon, Proverbs in particular, I believe that God intended Proverbs to be the litmus test, to be the book that all the other kings could look to to get the instructions from God to take care of his people. When he comes down to the end of his prayer, and by the way, when he starts out praying his prayer, he's standing. When he finishes the prayer, he's fallen to his knees. Incredible prayer. Incredible prayer. At the end, he says in 1 Kings 8:59-61:

*1 Kings 8:59-61*

*And let these my words, wherewith I have made supplication before the LORD, be nigh unto the LORD our God day and night, that he maintain the cause of his servant, and the cause of his people Israel at all times, as the matter shall require:*

*That all the people of the earth may know that the LORD is God, and that there is none else.*

*Let your heart therefore be perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day.*

Wow, that's incredible. That is absolutely incredible. In one book, Proverbs, as I started to see that and I began to work my way through it, I began to see that in the Book of Proverbs, he

makes 12 direct references to kings and how they should rule based on the wisdom that he has for them. It's just incredible stuff.

### III. The Five Wisdom Books and God's Mind

In your Bible, you know that we have what we call the five wisdom books. You know that. Yet when I looked at those five wisdom books, they give us a complete balance of God. We talk about balance all the time, how important balance is. As a Christian, you need to have a balance with God. God is a very balanced being, and you need to have a balance in your relationship with Him. The five wisdom books of the Bible will provide you that balance at some point in your life. Maybe not today, maybe not tomorrow. It depends on where you're at and where your growth process is. But at some point in your life, you need to get these five books down to support that balance.

You got Psalms. You know what Psalms is? Psalms is nothing more than the heart of God. You got Job. You know what Job is? Job is nothing more than the sufferings of God, Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary. In the Book of Ecclesiastes, now we begin to get into the mindset of God. In the Book of Ecclesiastes, you find the mind of the Spirit. In the Book of Song of Solomon, you find the mind of Christ. Yes, in the Book of Proverbs, where we're at today and have been for quite a while now, you find the mind of God.

I've always looked at Proverbs as the book God gave Israel so that the leadership could lead them by God's mind the right way. Along with that, I've always looked at that as the book of God that He gave us, you and me as leaders. If you're a leader in this church and you're somebody who has responsibility, then the Book of Proverbs, I've always looked at it as the book that God gave us, you and me, as leaders to lead the people of God with His mind through the New Testament.

In Israel's history, their first 10 kings were great studies. When Israel begins to come out of the Book of Judges and comes into the Book of Samuel, you find that the first king that Israel gets wasn't God's choice, it was Saul. Saul was the people's choice. Saul was never one of the men that God wanted them to have. Of course, Saul, his life speaks for itself. But when God began to get His kings in, the first two kings that Israel has that are God's men are David and then Solomon. Their two lives are incredible.

Here again, now you begin to see the consistency of that book of how it always lays itself out. David reigns for 40 years. David is not allowed to build the temple. You know why? Because David is a warrior. David wipes out the last of the nations that are in the land that belong to the nation of Israel. Because he's the warrior king, because he's the man who smites the rest of the nations and wipes them out, he's not permitted to build the temple because he's a type of Christ at the second coming of Christ, and the nations that he wipes out is a picture of the Antichrist being wiped out.

But the next king, Solomon, comes on the throne. Solomon builds the temple. Solomon reigns for 40 years. But during Solomon's 40 years of reign, there are no wars. David is a type of Christ at the second coming, wiped out all the adversaries. Now Solomon shows up, a type of Christ in the millennium, and he builds the temple. That temple is found in Ezekiel 40-48, which is going

to be built in the millennium. They're tremendous studies. These two men are the greatest leaders that Israel ever had.

When Solomon writes, when Solomon comes to the throne, he gives Israel and us, the church, a book called Proverbs that will give us exactly God's thoughts on everything in life. It starts with Solomon and then it goes down through the next 38 different kings: 19 kings with Judah, the southern tribes, 19 kings with Israel, the northern tribes. 38 kings over the next four, five hundred years have access to the knowledge and the wisdom and the instructions that God gave Solomon to be for kings. Most of them forsook them.

## IV. Twelve Directives for Kings

In Proverbs, he makes 12 references dealing with kings and how they are to rule over the people of God. These are really good. Let's look at them briefly here for a moment.

1. In Proverbs 14:35, he says that a king should pick the advisers around him that are going to give him good counsel. He says a king should have men around him who give him wise counsel in the decisions that he has to make.
2. The second thing, in Proverbs 16:10, he addresses the kings again. He tells them to always use the Word of God for the basis of their judgments and their decrees.
3. In Proverbs 16:12, again, he tells the kings to set the example of right for the rest of the kingdom or the country.
4. In Proverbs 20:8, he says, "Now you watch out for the safety of your people and you keep those out that would hurt them."
5. In Proverbs 20:26, he says, "You swiftly punish those that would subvert the kingdom and to hurt others."
6. In Proverbs 20:28, he says the king is to have a reign balanced with mercy and truth.
7. In Proverbs 21:1, he says a king is to keep his heart close and right with God, who is the ultimate model of our kingship.
8. In Proverbs 22:11, he says a king is to keep people around you who love God and love the things of God. There's your association.
9. In Proverbs 29:4, he says, "Always follow the Word of God and not to make deals. Don't compromise. Don't make deals and compromise the principles of God to further your kingdom." He says, "You know what? What God established is, God will sustain."
10. He says in Proverbs 31:3-5 that wine and strong drink will pervert the judgment of a king. He says wine and strong drink are not for kids. There's no Bible in a beer in the concept of God's program. He says it impairs your judgment. Most of the problems that you and I have gotten into that had long-range effects were decisions that we made when our judgment was impaired. I promise you.
11. Lastly, he says in Proverbs 25:2, a king needs to have the ability to discern in matters of judgment.

## V. The Solomon Principle: Discerning Truth

I teach our people in the people ministry, when dealing with people, we base and build most of what we do on the teachings of Solomon. The first principle I gave them is what I call the Solomon Principle. The Solomon Principle, without a doubt, is the absolute greatest single principle to understand and have in your arsenal when you deal with people. It goes back to 1 Kings 3, way back at the beginning of Solomon. It's an incredible story. You know the story. It's a story that he's sitting on the throne and they bring two harlots into him. He's sitting on the throne as a king, making his judgments, discerning this, discerning that, giving his decrees, and whatever he says goes.

So these two harlots come in, and they have a baby. They come up before him, and he says, "What's the deal here?" The one lady speaks up and says, "You know what? We both had children. In the middle of the night, she rolled over on her baby, and it died. Then while I was sleeping, she took my baby and said it's her baby. I don't have a baby. You're king, that's my baby." The other woman said, "Oh, that's not true. See, this is where Judge Judy always comes from. No, no, Your Honor, that wasn't true. No, no, no, no. It's just the other way. She rolled over on her baby. When I was asleep, she took my baby."

Now, Solomon has to make a decree. Here's the problem he faces:

12. They're both hookers. They don't have the best character traits in life. They're both sinners.
13. He doesn't know either one of them.
14. He doesn't know who's lying. All he knows is he's got a story that both claim to be true.

I remember reading this the first time years ago, and I thought this was the dumbest thing on the planet. Because you know what Solomon's answer is? Solomon says, "Okay, I don't know you and I don't know you. I don't know who's lying here. Somebody's obviously lying here. Gee, what do I do in a situation like this? Oh, I know. Hey, bring a guard in here with a sword. What are you going to do? Cut that baby in half, give her half, her half, and be on your way and be happy."

The moment he said that, the mother who it was really the baby's mother, because it was her baby, was motivated that she would rather allow her child to be raised by another woman that was lying than to see that baby die. The other woman, who it wasn't, said, "Yeah, cut it in half. That's good." Immediately, he knew who the mother of the baby was.

Now I saw that early in life, and I thought to myself, "Hmm, that could have went south. I hope in my situations in dealing with people, I'm never faced with that." Though there's been times in dealing with Mary and I, I would like to have shot them both. But that doesn't work either. But then I saw it. I saw the greatest principle taught in Proverbs for dealing with people. You know what? When people come in to me and it's a "he said, she said," when I don't know them, even if I do know them, I don't know who's really telling me the truth. There's always two sides to every story, and you know as well as I do, when I tell you my side of the story, I'm going to tell it for my benefit, not yours. That's just human nature.

So, Solomon's faced with a traumatic problem here. He doesn't know who's telling the truth. Many times when you're dealing with people, and she tells you one thing and he tells you

something else, you don't know the truth, but you got to have an answer to the problem. You know what you do? You do the same thing Solomon did. Solomon put them under a sword. In Hebrews 4:12, that sword is a sharp two-edged sword, the Word of God. When you have two people come in and you don't know who's telling you the truth, you just simply say, "Okay, folks, let's just come to church. I'm going to put you under the Word of God." You do this as the husband, you do this as the wife, and you know what? You'll find out very quickly where the problem is. The sword will always produce the truth. It did with Solomon, and the sword of the Word of God in any given situation, when you get under the authority of the Word of God, will always show where the real problem is. That's Proverbs.

The Bible says when he did that, all of Israel wondered at the wisdom of Solomon. He's the wisest man that ever lived. He wrote to the kings of Israel 12 direct concepts. I want to tell you, those 12 things are great advice for any leader in any dispensation who has responsibility over the people of God. If you can't see that structure in this church, you're a blind man.

## VI. The Wrath of a King and Its Balance

Now look at Proverbs 16:14:

*Proverbs 16:14*

*The wrath of a king is as messengers of death: but a wise man will pacify it.*

In a historical context, we're dealing with the awesome power of a king. His sovereign rule, and sovereign means absolute, and through history and the Bible, it's been filled with him. You have Pharaoh, who was king of Egypt. You had Nebuchadnezzar, who was king of Babylon. You had Sennacherib, who was the king of Assyria. You had Cyrus and a little later on Darius, who were the kings of Persia. You had Alexander the Great, who was the king of Greece, and of course, when the Roman Empire came into being, you had the Caesars. They had absolute power and control over life and death and everything in their kingdom. One word from the king and you're dead. Catch him on a bad day, you're in trouble. Catch him on a good day, you might be okay.

A great example of that is the book of Daniel. In fact, in Daniel 3, with Nebuchadnezzar, boy, he's throwing them in the lion's den, throwing them in a fiery furnace, he's killing anybody he wants to kill, at his whim, literally. You get into our modern-day history, the history of Europe, the history of England, you see the same thing. Henry VIII, I don't know how many wives he had. He killed most of them. He was the king of England, and he wanted a boy to be on the throne. He married Anne Boleyn, and Anne Boleyn, he dumped Catherine of Spain for Anne, wanted to have an heir. She got pregnant, gave him a girl. You know what he did? He had her killed, just like that.

The Tower of London, I told you a couple of weeks ago, reading a story and studying the Tower of London. Incredible. Started out as the palace for William the Conqueror, wound up becoming the greatest prison and execution site on planet Earth for the kings. Anybody they didn't like went to the Tower. Executions were just a run of the day. Incredible. You think about Queen

Mary, called Bloody Mary. How many millions and thousands of Christians were butchered for her? It's incredible.

Now the verse is showing what it needs in a king's life, the importance of a good balance. Though you may have sovereign rule and power and absolute say, you need to temper that and your decisions with a balance. A good king will have a group of people around him advising him and advise him to look at all aspects of the situation before you make a judgment. They had a law in Persia called the law of the Medes and the Persians. You know what the law of the Medes and Persians was? It meant once they passed a law, it could never be taken off the books. You could never revoke a law. It was an absolute law, and there were a lot of things that were done and put into play that caused a lot of problems down the line someplace because they couldn't retract it.

A good example is in 2 Kings 5 with Naaman, who is an army captain who is a leper, and he's told to go down in Washington Jordan seven times, it'll be clean. When he found out that the man of God was coming to make him clean, he was looking for some great religious experience. When he found out he had to go down in the dirty old river of Jordan and dip himself seven times, he's in a rage. It was a little maid, who we don't even know her name, came to him and said, "Your Majesty, now if the prophet of God would have asked you to do some great things, would you not have done it? Absolutely. Well then, why not just do the little thing and be clean? Your Majesty, it isn't about what he asked you to do, Sire. It's about, do you want to get clean?" There's a little girl, we don't even know her name. You know what she did? She balanced out the king of Syria. She balanced it out. She took his wrath and put it in a bag and put it on a UPS truck and sent it someplace else.

Now in a practical sense for you and for me, for me particularly as a pastor, through the Word of God, I know the pastor of any church, he has the final authority, he has the final say, he has to make the final call, that's the way the Bible sets it up. But he would be a fool to think of himself like a king and lord over people. In fact, the Bible, not many do, but the Bible says in 1 Peter 5:3, talking to a pastor, it says:

*1 Peter 5:3*

*Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.*

God says, "A steady just lording over everybody," and many do. I've known pastors down through my time in the ministry that examined every tape you ever listened to, that you didn't listen to anybody that knew the Bible better than them. I knew pastors that controlled every aspect of your life, wouldn't allow you to think for yourself. My job here is not to keep you from thinking for yourself, my job here is just to get you to think. A pastor is an absolute fool if he doesn't utilize the people that God gives you. Hey, in this church, there are some of the sharpest minds on planet Earth, and you're not going to use them? You're not going to find out their viewpoint on something? If he's smart, most are not, he will realize that he may have the final say, but you have to put men and women around you that look at the same thing you see and see what you don't see.

You know that's true in a marriage. Sometimes husbands run their wives just like most pastors run their church. They never realize that the wife that they have, if she's saved and she's a good woman, that she has absolute invaluable intel into any decision you have to make. Just because of your arrogantly prideful mindset, void of that, is going to cause all kinds of problems in your life. God gave her to you for a reason. She'll see things from a different perspective that you won't see. She'll have a different take on something that you do. When you want to come in and shoot everybody to the ground and kill everybody or do this or do that or do that, it'll be her, like that little maid with the king of Assyria, the captain Naaman, that brings it all into balance.

To a pastor, as Solomon to the kings of Israel, I say this: don't get so full of yourself that you think you don't need others to advise you, but you do. We have the power of what we say as Christians to build up somebody or destroy somebody through gossip, slander, discord, deceitfulness, the sins of the saints, so to speak. Listen, down through history, there's been a lot of secret messages and a lot of secret meetings that got a lot of people killed. Down through Christianity of the church, it's the same way. Secrets behind your back, deceptions have gotten a lot of people killed spiritually.

You know how you spot a deception? The definitive verses in the Bible on deception will be in Genesis 3 and Genesis 27. Those are the two places you go to understand what a deception is. But here's rule number one on deception: the reason why somebody will go behind your back to get something done without coming to you face to face, now listen, this is very important, the reason why some people will go behind your back to do what they do and won't come to you face to face, because they know if they come to you face to face, the facts of what they're doing will not be supported by that book. You better write that one down. That is exactly the way it works. That's rule number one of a deception. People will do things behind our back because they know face to face what they're doing will never stand the test of this book.

We as Christians have been given the custodianship of the most powerful words in the universe, the Bible. Psalms 33:6 says:

*Psalms 33:6*

*By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.*

*Psalms 33:9*

*For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.*

You and I have been given custodianship of those words, and with them, we can either use them to send a message to destroy somebody, or we can be wise and pacify our wrath with the grace and truth of that book that God gives us and send a message of mercy to help somebody.

## VII. Doctrinal Application: The King's Countenance and Latter Rain

Look at Proverbs 16:15:

## *Proverbs 16:15*

*In the light of the king's countenance is life; and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain.*

Now there are some things, if you don't have down here, you need to get these down. From a doctrinal standpoint, this verse, as mostly all of Proverbs, is dealing with the second coming of Christ, as we will see as you go through the book of Proverbs as we're going through it.

### *The Light of the King's Countenance*

*The light of the king's countenance, wherever you find that in the Bible, will always be a reference to the second coming of Christ. When you go to Matthew 17:1-5, which is commonly called the Mount of Transfiguration, there Jesus Christ, as a human man, goes beyond the cross and gets transfigured as He will be at the second coming of Christ with the glory of God. The Bible says He shines white as the light. You'll find it again in Revelation 1:14. You'll find it again in Daniel 7:9. Revelation 1:14. In Malachi 4:2, in the context of the second coming of Christ, my goodness, He's called the Sun (S-U-N), not Son (S-O-N), the Sun (S-U-N) of righteousness. Wherever you find it, He's likened to a white light. You know why it's white? Because it's pure light. It's pure light. The light referred to here in verse 15 is the light of salvation of the earth at the second coming of Christ.*

That light is impacted and that countenance has impacted so many people in history that even to this day, once England was a great nation that believed the Bible and held the Bible and preached the Bible, we got our King James 1611 from that country, where God used that nation not only to get it to us but to get it around the world. You know, to this day in British Parliament and British courts, they wear white wigs. You know why they wear white wigs? It goes back two, three hundred years that they realized that the people in government, the judges, and the people in Parliament had to give righteous judgment, so they wore a white wig to represent the white light of hair like wool of Jesus Christ in the second coming of Christ, so that they always remember to make their judgment based on a book. You think anybody in England knows that today? That book's incredible.

### *Favor as a Cloud*

*Look at the next part, "favor as is as a cloud." Now a cloud in the Bible is a great word study, always will be key to the context of any passage. The definitive passage, now I've given you two definitive passages here as we go through this, these are very important to get these down. The definitive passage on a cloud will be Acts 1:9-11. This is where Christ ascends up, and you're told there that when He goes up in the cloud, He's going to come back in a cloud. So every time you find a cloud in the Bible, it's going to pretty much set the context at the second coming of Christ. You'll find it in Mark 14:62, Revelation 1:7, Joel 2:2, Zephaniah 1:15, and Ezekiel 1:4, all the way through the Bible. So now we've got a cloud.*

### *The Latter Rain*

*Now look at the last part of the verse, "the latter rain," formerly known as the former and the latter rain in the Bible. Now the definitive chapter on this will be James 5. He explained it in*

*great detail. You always want to also want to see Joel 2:23, Job 37:6, 2 Chronicles 6:26, 2 Chronicles 7:12, Psalms 68:8-9, Revelation 11:6, 2 Samuel 23:4, Hosea 10:1-2, Jeremiah 14:22, Isaiah 5:6. It will always represent the last three and a half years in the tribulation period doctrinally.*

In Revelation 11, Moses and Elijah, the two witnesses, show up. They do in the tribulation what they did back in the Old Testament. Moses turns the waters to blood, you find it in Revelation. Elijah calls down the fire from heaven, you find it in Revelation. Elijah, on the other hand, back in the Old Testament, back around there in 1 Kings 17, he turns the place where it doesn't rain for three and a half years. He's up against King Ahab and his wife Jezebel, a type of the Antichrist and his religion, Babylon, Mr. Religion. So he shuts down heaven that it doesn't rain back in 1 Kings 17 for three and a half years. So when he comes into the tribulation period in the last half, when he's up against the Antichrist and the whorish woman, he shuts it up again. The last three and a half years that are of the tribulation period is called the former and the latter rain. It rains for the last time, former rain, and then for three and a half years it doesn't rain at all, and then at the latter rain, at the end of that three and a half years, it ushers in the second coming of Christ. Former and latter rain, I'll explain in the definitive passage of James 5. So when you find the latter rain or rain in the Bible, you always want to pay attention. Context most generally is going to be the end of the tribulation period.

You see, the tribulation and the second coming is like a rainstorm. Isaiah 55:10-11. What it is there, it says you got the thunder and the lightning. "I saw Satan fall from heaven as lightning." The Lord comes back, you got the thunder, the clouds, the rain, and all that stuff. Then at the end of that great storm, you find a rainbow in the sky. Only two times you find a rainbow in the sky: one's after Noah's flood, which is the type of the second coming of Christ, the other one after the second coming.

Isaiah 55 says that at the end, when that rain comes down, the millennium comes in, it's just like a beautiful rainstorm. All the grass is greener, the air is clear, it's purged out everything except the water at the second coming is the Word of God.

## VIII. Practical Application: The Light of God in Our Hearts

In a practical application, this countenance here, this light of His countenance, is the light of God that shines in our hearts at the time of our salvation. This is the practical application. I gave you the doctrinal, here's the practical. 2 Corinthians 4:3-6:

*2 Corinthians 4:3-6*

*But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:*

*In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

*For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.*

*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.*

There it is. There's the countenance of His light in your heart, Jesus Christ coming into my heart at the time of my salvation. Now the great example of this is in Acts 9 with the conversion of Paul. When he's going down the road there and he gets confronted with the Lord, the Bible says the great light shined about him. That's the picture. That's the light of the countenance of Christ in my heart. When I have it in my heart, it'll do two things, and you want to get these down. When you get illuminated by the gospel light of Christ, when He illuminates your heart into your life by His countenance, it will do two fundamental things in your life.

15. First of all, it will illuminate all the things in our lives that we've been hiding. Hebrews 4:12 says: Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Hebrews 4:13

Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. You know what that book does? When God gets into your heart and that light shines into your life, the lights come on. He discerns my thoughts and the intents of my heart. The lights come on, and He manifests the things in our lives. Now this is why people get saved and start to get into the Bible and then quit coming to church. It's like going into your kitchen in the middle of the night and turning on the lights and watching all the bugs scatter for the dark. Your life and my life was filled with cockroaches before we got saved. They were feasting on everything, and you know how hard cockroaches are to kill? They're armor-plated. A science study said one time that if the world was new completely and everybody was dead, the only thing that would survive would be cockroaches. When you go in there and you turn the light on, brother, the bugs scatter. When you get the light of the countenance of God enters into your heart, the lights come on. Oh, the bugs want to scatter. When I got saved, there were some things that I had to change. You know the difference between the Christianity I grew up in 50 years ago and the one that you all have to hold your nose to go through today? It's the fact that Christians today get saved and they think they don't have anything to change. Do you realize when you got saved, God separated you from the world? In the Bible, it's the word "sanctified." That means He separated you from the world. When you got saved, you got sanctified. You got set aside. We've got a Christianity today that doesn't understand anything about sanctification, and they want to be a Christian, but they want to do all the things the world does. The lines are blurred today, and their parents justify it. I've had parents that their kids did this and did that, and, "Oh, it's my little guy, it's my little girl, don't you pick on them." No, it isn't about them. It's about there's a hard line of sanctification for a child of God. You're no longer in this world. Why are you living like one? Why do you drink the things that are of the world? Why do you smoke the things that are of the world? Why do you talk like the world? You're supposed to be different. That's the Christianity I grew up in. I had a lady one time, she was going on and on about her kids and how they were hanging out with the wrong crowd and hanging out with this and hanging out with that. I got so sick of it, I just asked her, "Ma'am, let me ask

you a question. Who taught them their value system?" They think there's nothing they have to change. When you got saved, you got sanctified. You got set apart. In this sense, there are three aspects to the Christian life: you're saved, you're sanctified, and then you serve. There's no serving God without being sanctified by God.

16. The second thing about the light of His countenance is now I have the ability to see my journey through life illuminated by His Word. Psalms 119:105:Psalms 119:105

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.Psalms 119:130

The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.This world is in darkness. Our life is in darkness in this world, and the devil has laid a thousand obstacles in my path in the darkness to make me stumble and fall. You know, in Vietnam, you were more worried about the booby traps than you were the enemy you were up against. They were masters at that. There is nothing in this world that is more divisive and more cunning and more fearless in fighting than the Oriental. Back in Custer's day and back in the early times, when there'd be 500,000 cavalry troops out there and they were fighting the Indians, an Indian warrior would ride right up about 50 yards from him in defiance, and he'd take a spear and throw it in the ground and run back. During World War II, they'd line up in a banzai charge, 5,000 of them, and they'd just keep coming in waves and in waves and in waves. They were stacked like cordwood when the battle was over. Nothing like the mind of the Oriental in war. You want to pick a battle, you better pick something with Japheth, because Ham will eat your lunch.In Vietnam, they were incredible masters of deception and booby-trapping things. They made Al-Qaeda and ISIS look like amateurs. They'd take bamboo, and it didn't cost them a dime. They'd cut bamboo stakes, and bamboo when you cut it at an angle is razor sharp. They'd dig a hole in the trail and they'd put eight or nine or twelve of them down in there just under the surface, and they'd cover it up that you couldn't see it. When a patrol went down, you stepped on a punji stake, and it would go through any combat boot that you wore. Sometimes they'd put a bottom on it and two sides, and when you stepped on it, not only did you get them up through your foot, but they clamped on both sides to put punji stakes through both sides of your legs. They dipped them in urine and human urine and all the other waste material so you'd get instant infection. They were masters at it. They're the ones that invented the little cluster bomb called the Bouncing Betty that you'd walk down a trail and hit a trip wire, and that little bomb would come up waist high right in front of you and explode. I don't have to tell you how tough that was on you. Blew half your half, blew you in half. Incredible.They booby-trapped trails with large punji sticks, and they'd pull them back. When you would step into it, it would swing out and impale you or come up and impale you, and you would be standing there impaled in that trail. Americans were so afraid of the booby traps that they would go down the trail and they'd be empty, and they thought it was good. The VC learned and let them go down, and when they came back the same trail, then they had it booby-trapped. Incredible minds. Americans got so fearful looking for the booby traps, but they never saw the ambush that was waiting for them.You put your perimeters on at night, and you put concertina wire, razor sharp barbed wire, and big tangles, and you surround your perimeter with it. You take a little thing like a Claymore mine. A Claymore mine, those are that big, it's filled with ball bearings, about 300 of them, and you set it there, the face toward the enemy, and you link them together and link them

together electronically. When they start coming over the wire, you can set those off and put out about 10,000 steel BBs and just wipe out a whole company. Those little rascals in the middle of the night would sneak up through the barbed wire fences on their stomach, and they never rattle a can, they never make a sound, and they take our Claymores and turn them around and facing us, and then they'd attack. When somebody would set off the Claymores, they'd blow back up in our faces. Incredible. You had to develop a keen eye to see them before you set them off. I want to say this: the devil will do the same thing in your Christian walk. He'll booby-trap your trail in the darkness. He'll put all kinds of pitfall, deathfall, deadfalls. He'll put all kinds of punji stakes. He'll do everything he can. He'll turn everything you try to do to defend him right around back to you. Booby-trap your trail of life. That Christian, a combat veteran Christian, not somebody in the military, but in God's military, just like a Vietnam vet in combat, through the Word of God, the light of God's Word, he will develop an eye to see them snares and tripfalls before you step on them. Now that's why the devil hates the Bible. That's why he desperately wants to take the Word of God out of your life, because once you lose the light of God, brother, you're on your own, and you certainly, as I'm standing here, will step in it and blow yourself up or get yourself impaled in the things of this world. Every situation we have gotten ourselves in that has brought heartache to our life, every circumstance that led into the divorce, every problem that led to losing our kids, every situation and problem we got in our world started because we stepped on a landmine that the devil placed for us. When God gave you the light of God's Word, you should have saw what was there, because it's a light that shines in my heart that separates me from the world and shows me exclusively what's of God and what's of the world. But when you blur it together, when you bring the world in with Christianity, when you think that what the world does is okay for you to do, the light's no good. It only works when there's a contrast between light and darkness, and that old light guides my walk, your walk with God, one step at a time as God orders it through life.

## IX. The Christian as a Servant, Not Yet a King

The book of Proverbs is written for kings, historically the kings of Israel, but inspirationally for you and for me as a joint-heir of Jesus Christ, instructions for a king to rule and give God's people His truth through His grace. Someday we will reign with Him as king, joint-heirs.

You know one of the reasons that Israel missed the first coming of Christ is that very fact that they were looking for a king. 1 Peter 1 is probably one of the greatest chapters that explains why the Jew missed the first coming of Christ. God had put the references for the first coming of Christ and the second coming of Christ together, and where one He comes as the King, the second coming, the first when He comes as the Prophet. Because Israel was out of fellowship with God and didn't have the right heart out there, they couldn't get it laid out. Because of their unbelief, they couldn't separate, they couldn't discern the first coming passages from the second coming passages, so they completely missed the principle that God was trying to show them with the first coming and the second coming.

You see, the first coming He came as a servant, the book of Mark. The first coming He came as a man who was tempted on all points like we are, yet without sin, Luke. The first time He came as a divine Son of God, John. But He also came as a King to the nation of Israel, that would be Matthew. But they couldn't see His kingship. They couldn't see His service attitude. They couldn't see what was going on because they could not get the fact that instead of coming as a King the first time, He came to fulfill the will of His Father, and after He fulfilled the will of His Father, that's when He was going to be crowned King.

That's a great model for you and for me, because right now, yeah, I know you're going to be a king someday, Lord willing, and I know that we're going to be a joint-heir with Jesus Christ. But right now, we're to do the will of the Father. Right now, we're to do the will of the Father. Right now, we're to be a servant. Right now, we're to be what Christ was when He came to man. Right now, we're to be them. Right now, we're to bear the inequity of everybody else. Right now, we're to be the servant that we need to be. Right now, we are to be the ones that take the gospel, and we are to be that servant, and someday at the second coming, we'll be a king. God died for every one of you, and yes, someday, Lord willing, when Christ comes back, we'll reign with Him forever and ever and ever, and we'll be a joint-heir with Jesus Christ. But right now, we're to be a servant. Right now, we're to do the will of the Father, just like Jesus did.

Just as the nation of Israel could not figure that out and missed everything that God had for them because of the hardness of their heart, most of God's people can't see it today either, and they missed the great concept: you're not a king yet, you're a shepherd, you're a servant. We're here right now to do the will of our Father, and when He comes back, we'll reign with Him as a king.

God puts people in your life. God gives you your family. God gives you your kids. God gives you the kids that we have at our church. God gives me all of you, and I look at you as the most invaluable thing in this whole world, because within this little building right here and this group of people right here lies the ability to reach the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ. But it takes you and I understanding, you're not a king yet. Why are you living like one? Why do you go through life like everybody owes you something? Why do you go through life thinking that you know that you're this person or you're that person? Why don't you just realize and understand that you know what? We're here to do the will of our Father. We're here to serve Him. We're here to be a shepherd.

I thank God every day of my life for all of you who take people under your wing and help them come along with the Bible. That's what we're to do. So many churches are filled with people who won't even look across the aisle at somebody or talk to somebody. They got their own world, their heads in a cloud or somewhere, and they're so full of themselves, they can never come down to a level where they'll ever, ever be used of God to touch anybody's life. That's not true here. You are the greatest people on the planet. You are the greatest people in the world because you're here today almost exclusively for one reason: because you love truth. You love truth, and that makes you a good person. Oh, I know you got your problems. I know you got your issues. I know some of you can do some stupid things sometimes. Sometimes sit down, we'll compare lists again, mine is as bad as yours. But you love truth. You come week after week after week. You come Thursday night after Thursday night. You organize your whole world and your whole

life and your family around the time that God's people meet. You know why? Because you love truth, and you know how important truth is.

We take our kids to camp. This is going to be a banner. This is going to be a time like no other time we've ever had, and it's going to take every one of us praying on our knees for God to take our kids and bring them back. I asked you a question a long time ago when we had our banquet, and I asked you simply this: what would you pay to have a child that would do, guaranteed to be everything and do everything exactly right the rest of their life as far as a human could do it? Well, we'd pay whatever amount of money. You know what? You don't have to pay anything. You just got to get them to camp. We got to get on the same page, folks. I've got to teach you. You got to get inside of my mind and see what I'm going to do. I'm going to get inside of your mind a month before, and we're going to work this thing out.

When our kids come back, now we close camp on Thursday night, Norman, that's Bible study night. But I've already talked to Joe and Zach, and we're not going to have Bible that night. I want everybody to come to that last camp meeting. I want you to see what God is going to do that week. I want you to come, and that'll be our closing night, and then we'll finish it up on Sunday morning. But that'll be our last night at camp, and I want those kids and their moms and dads and our families, and I want this church, because many of you will sponsor kids to go to camp. I'm not saying anything about it yet, but you will. You'll say, "I can't, I don't have a kid, but here, send a kid to camp." You'll do, you'll be responsible, you'll all be praying, and as a church, we all need to see the victory that God does. It will change the complexion of our kids. When we come back from camp, now we've got a plan to keep it going that isn't just, "Well, two weeks later you're back in school, and now you've forgotten all about it." Not this year. Not this year. I'm not saying that won't happen in some cases, but then the majority of them, trust me, it will not happen. I'm going hunting that week. Now we're going to get some things done.

Proverbs is the great book for kings, for you and for me, and I love you so much. I thank you for the privilege of you allowing me to be your pastor and preach to you the truth, and I love you because you love truth, and I love you because you love the things of God.