

I. Introduction to Proverbs and the Concept of Integrity

Well, I am excited this morning to be back in the book of Proverbs. We have been out for the last couple of weeks. Of course, last week we had our Bible conference over New Year's, and the week before that we had our Christmas message that we did. So we've been out of Proverbs for a couple of weeks, and I've been really enjoying going through it.

I went through Proverbs myself personally my first time, probably 15, maybe 20 years ago, and I went through it verse by verse. I laid out all the notes that I have on it. I've been through it several times since then, and then adding a lot of things to it. But I've got to say that coming this time through it, I think I probably have learned as much or not more than I did the very first time I laid it out. It's just been a great journey for me, and I just have my Bibles completely filled with stuff now that I saw that I didn't see before. And it's been a great time for me, and I hope you've got a blessing out of it too.

Last time we were together, we started Proverbs chapter 19, and we only got through one verse, and that's the problem with Proverbs. There's so much in it that it's hard to do it justice by moving through it quickly.

Proverbs 19:1

Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity, than he that is perverse in his lips, and is a fool.

We talked about the key word last time we were together, and that word for the Christian life was the word integrity. You know how vital that one word is to Christianity and to all of us.

II. The Loss of Quality and Artistry

Over the centuries, things that were made hundreds of years ago had a quality to them that we don't see today. In collecting military, I've never got into collecting swords like samurai swords or things like that. That's a whole world unto itself. Most people don't know that the samurai swords that most Japanese soldiers carried into battle in World War II were made probably back in the 10th, 12th, 13th century. I don't know all of how you do it, but when you have one, if you want to find out, you do something and the whole tang comes off, or not the tang but the whole handle comes off, and then on the tang, it will have a date and it will have the maker, Fujigami, Hapahupa, or whoever it is. He made a lot of swords. There are incredible swords. You got to remember, they didn't have any of the modern day technology that we have today. You can throw, you get a good real samurai sword, you can throw a piece of cloth up and just hold it down and let it come down. It will cut the cloth, it's so sharp.

I had a military show here a number of years ago, and a couple of young kids, about 18 or 19, had bought a sword, a samurai sword, not a real one, a cheap one, and the kid pulled it out of the sheath and he's looking at it, and he says, "Man, look at this," and he runs his hand down the blade. I know I'm seeing a blood trail going into the bathroom. Those things are razor sharp. But

sword making, not only in Japan but in Europe, in Spain, there was an art for them, and those swords are worth many, many, many thousands of dollars today. But now it's all cheap, isn't it? You can go to Walmart or go to Swords or Us, and you can buy something for \$19.95 that looks just like the real thing, but it's cheap. It's not the real thing. Where they had ivory handles and real stones, you have plastic, and the metal is a cheap Japanese brand of metal, and they're just not the same.

It's true in carpentry and woodworking. Antiques way back when they built stuff, they didn't use nails, they used wooden pegs to hold stuff together. Everything was handmade, everything was hand fitted, everything was put together where it just kind of went together. A guy would make a part, he would measure, it would take a long time, but when it was done, you had something of quality. Today we go to Walmart, we buy them in the little pack of the pressed wood, with a little insert that you pop in the holes, and then you put your screws in, and voila, I got a TV stand or I got a cabinet or a book thing. It's all cheapened.

Guns were the same way. There was a time when a craftsman, a gunsmith, he'd make one gun at a time. He'd make a flintlock rifle, or he'd make, it took him months, maybe a year to make the one rifle. And today, although they're very good quality today, everything's mass produced. I thought about this as I talked about that. All that stuff was an art form that the art has been lost over the years.

But I want to tell you something else that's been lost over the years. There was an art form in preaching. Preaching was its own art form. I've seen guys, heard guys that many of you younger kids have never got a chance to hear. And I feel like you're at a disadvantage. I heard R.G. Lee a couple of times preach before he died, and he preached a message that he was famous for. It was called "Pay Day Someday." Incredible message. And I'll tell you what, he would get up and he'd preach that message. It was just, it was always something that God used.

I heard Bob Jones Jr. preach several times before he died. And though I didn't agree with Bob Jones Jr. on a stand on the Bible and a lot of things that he did, I wouldn't do. But I remember hearing him one July 4th back in Canton, Ohio, when I was in my home church, and I hadn't even known I was coming out to Kansas City yet. He preached on July 4th, and I have never heard anybody, anybody have a command of the English language like he did. I mean, I was hanging on every word that he said. He had taken the English language and developed it into an art form.

And then you have the other end of it, a guy by the name like Harold Seitler. Harold Seitler was down from Greenville, South Carolina, in those parts, and he didn't have very good command of the English language, but boy, he could sure paint hell as hot as it probably is. Preaching was an art form.

I remember John Rawlings, who was the pastor of Cincinnati Baptist Church, he's long dead now. And I used to remember as a young Christian going to Bible conferences out at the Canton Baptist Temple for adults, and they'd have all these great preachers come in. And I remember him, and he was an old guy who came up from Kentucky. A lot of them did that way. They came up through the Depression in Ohio and got saved and started churches. And I never preached one

time, he preached on the rapture of the church. And he got up there and he laid that thing out, and I mean, you could almost just hear the angels sing. And when he got down to the end of the sermon, he told a story. He told a story how that he used to, as a boy, he used to go hunting with his dogs at night when they hunt raccoons, back there in the Depression era. And he says as a young boy, he said, "My dad had four or five coon dogs." And he says, "On those cold November nights when we'd go out after the raccoons, my dad would stand there, and we'd just stop getting in the middle of the woods. He turned those dogs loose, and you could hear those dogs baying out there." And he said, "My dad knew the voice of every one of those dogs." And he says, "My dad would say, 'Well, old Blue, old Blue, he's looking. And old Daisy out there, she's on the scent.'" He could tell by the way they were barking and baying. And finally, when they all got on the thing, boy, it sounded like the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. They were going to town. They had found a raccoon. They had him treed. And he'd go down there, and he'd shoot the coon out of the tree, and those dogs would be back out again. He said he got to me about two or three o'clock in the morning, and my dad said, "It's time for us to go home." Those dogs were out there baying. And my dad had a horn that he blew. Now, when he blew that horn, those dogs knew to come right to where my dad was. And he's telling this story. And you could just see, you could feel the crisp November night. You could hear the dogs baying out there. You could feel the chill down the back of your neck. It was such a vivid story. And then when he said his dad blew that horn, and all he said, "Within five minutes, all those dogs came down there." He said this. He said, "You know what, folks? One of these days, our Heavenly Father is going to blow that horn, and we're going to go onto Him." I mean, he painted the rapture in an incredible way.

Today, we have big screen TVs up on the wall. You don't even have to take your Bible anymore. You can just read it off the deal. You don't have to pick up a hymn book anymore. You can just read it off the deal. Where once Christianity was an art form that had integrity of truth to it, today it's become a thing where it's mass produced. Everything's quick. Everything's in a hurry. The personal element is gone. When we take up an offering here, we pass the plate. In many churches, you can just have it taken right out of your paycheck at work. They have a direct deposit for your tithes. And a lot of guys like that, but I want to tell you something. If you do that, you do not understand the New Testament concept of giving. There's something about you holding that offering in your hand and then dropping that thing in that plate and saying to the Lord, "Here, this is for You for all You've done for me," versus just letting it be taken out because of the fact it goes out like your gas bill, your car payment, and everything else. Nothing special anymore. Nothing special anymore.

And in all these things, there was quality of workmanship that have given way to a fast, cheap imitation world that cheapens everything by trying to mass produce it. The famous slogan, "Made in China." If you like North Face stuff, which is great stuff, look at the label, "Made in Bangladesh." Everything's made in America anymore. And everything that is made, the art is gone. Now it's just a cheap imitation of everything that it once was.

And it's the same way with Christianity and building Christians. We try to mass produce them today. Gone is the time, other than here, anyhow, and other places obviously too, but I'm speaking about us. Gone is the time where Christians were hand-fitted to the Word of God with

what their needs were. Gone is the time where a pastor looked at a person, saw their needs were different than this person's, saw their situation was different than this situation, and then hand-fitted what they needed to their life. We have people in our church that come from all walks of life that have all kinds of process of things in your life. And yet I'm telling you right now that God never recognizes anywhere in the Bible a child of God that is not involved in ministry. I don't care what you got going, what you're doing, you need to be involved in ministry. The key is getting hand-fitted with what your schedule is to what God wants you to do.

III. The Importance of Integrity

And in Christianity today, the missing element is integrity, integrity of truth. Integrity is so key to our relationship with God and our fellowship with Him. You know, in the book of Job, when the devil hit him with all that he hit him with, and Job lost everything that he had, Job held on to the one thing that the devil could never get from him when he took his family, he took his house, he took all his property, he took all his money, and ultimately took his health. He got everything but the one thing that the devil never could get because the only way the devil can get it is for you to give it up. He couldn't get Job's integrity.

Job 2:3

And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.

Job hung on to his integrity. Job knew that when the devil could take everything out of his life, he couldn't stop him from taking his house, he couldn't stop him from taking his kids, he couldn't stop him from taking the sheep and the oxen and all of his riches, but the only thing that Job had a say in is the same thing that you and I have a say in is I will not lose my integrity.

Job 2:9

Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.

You know folks, sometimes in life all you're going to have left will be your integrity. That is the truth that you walk in and it just stand for. The world can take everything from you, obviously cannot take your salvation, but it can take everything else from you, but the thing only you can give up is your integrity.

Proverbs 19:21

Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.

Integrity will preserve you when nothing else will. Why? Because integrity has to be built on the principles of the Word of God. Now when you have the principles of the Word of God in your life, you'll have integrity. When you don't have the principles of the Word of God in your life,

you won't have integrity. Oh, you may be an honest person. I'm not talking about integrity that you won't steal something from work. I'm talking about integrity with the Lord. And in Job's life, the last thing he had was his integrity when he had lost everything else. And in the world today, in the Christian world today, integrity is the first thing that goes if we ever had it, and we hold on to everything else that we think is important when it isn't.

So remember, we defined integrity the last time we talked at 2 Corinthians 4:1-2, where it talks about renouncing the hidden things of dishonesty, not being truthful, not being honest, dishonest in your dealings with people. We're talking about not walking in craftiness. That's hidden agendas, saying one thing to someone's face and then doing something else behind their back. Following the Word of God deceitfully, not following the principles of the Word of God. I told you, and it's a great concept, the number one aspect of the Bible will be to manifest the truth about anything that you have to deal with, any situation you find yourself in. This is why when we get out of fellowship with God, when we lose that integrity with God, the first thing that has to go is the Bible because the Bible always revealed to us. The Bible will always reveal to us through preaching, through teaching, through your own time in the Bible. The Bible will always manifest the truth about us. Now let's face it, sometimes we don't want to hear it. And it's easier to get away from it than it is to hear it.

IV. The Soul Without Knowledge

Now today we're going to look at Proverbs chapter 19, and we're going to move into verse 2. I want to talk to you about some things today that I think will be a really help to you. I really do.

Proverbs 19:2

Also, that the soul be without knowledge, it is not good; and he that hasteneth with his feet sinneth.

Now the reason I went back and talked about integrity, what we talked about last week, because we had been off of it for two weeks, was because of verse 2 says "also that." In other words, integrity, what we talked about last week, goes right along with what we've got today. So we want to see that. This is a really good proverb that I think we need to spend some time on. And a couple of things I want us to see here, some really helpful material I do believe.

Now the first thing I want you to see, and this is just in good housekeeping order, is it says "the soul without knowledge." And I want to explain that to you. In the Bible, in the Old Testament, the body and the soul are used interchangeably. Not in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, the body, the flesh, and the soul were stuck together all through the Old Testament. So he will use the term body or soul interchangeably. Many people get confused on that because they think that the soul can have knowledge. They think that there's a difference between them in the Old Testament. So when they'll see them used interchangeably, it can get confusing. In the Old Testament, a man's flesh and his soul were stuck together. They were one. And this is why when he died, he could not go to heaven. He had to go to a place prepared of God temporarily. We know it as Abraham's bosom, till Christ came down and shed His blood. The two were stuck together. This is why the Bible says, "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." People look at that in the

Old Testament and try to make it a New Testament application. And it's not a New Testament application. So keep in mind, in the Old Testament, you're going to find the word body and soul used interchangeably because in the Old Testament, they are stuck together.

Now, let's move into the New Testament. In the New Testament, an unsaved man or an unsaved woman, their body and soul is still stuck together. This is what makes them a sinner. This is what sends them to hell. Their soul is connected to the sinful flesh. For God to be able to take you to heaven, He's not interested in your flesh. We know from the Book of Romans that in your flesh dwells no good thing. God is interested in your soul. So God had to come up with a way to separate your soul from your flesh so He could have fellowship with you. So in the Bible, in the Book of Colossians, we have the Bible talking about an operation of God made without hands, of putting off the body of the sins of the flesh from your soul.

Now, I might just tell you this right now. This is an absolute foreign teaching today in churches. I'm sorry. I wish I didn't have to say that. If you want to find out what kind of pastor you got, if you want to find out what kind of guy is teaching you the Bible, just ask him to take you to Colossians 2 and explain the great miracle of spiritual circumcision. He will look at you like you're a three-headed monster. They don't have a clue. If you understood the concept of spiritual circumcision, you would never think you could lose your salvation. It is the fundamental basic doctrine of the Bible that explains what happened to you the day you got saved. You ask the average Christian, "What really happened the day you got saved?" "Well, I was born again." "Well, I was washed in the blood." "Well, I trusted Christ as my own personal Savior." That's not what happened to you, what transpired from the second you were a sinner to the next second when you prayed, "God save me," to the next second that the Bible says you're now a new creature and righteous. Explain that process. Nobody knows today. Well, it's even worse. Nobody cares. You would think something as important as our salvation, you'd want to know everything about it. Why? When you buy a car, you kick the tire, drive it around, look under the hood, you do everything on there. If you're going to go on vacation, you get online and you look out. What the hotel rooms look like, you look at the attractions all around there, you check everything out of where you're going to go. But when it comes to salvation, you'll just take whatever a man says, you'll never investigate it for yourself, and you'll sit all of your life never being able to explain the process that took place the day you got saved. That's where we're at today. I'm sorry.

And he says in Colossians chapter 2, the day you got saved, this spiritual circumcision took place that God with a knife, the operation made without hands, separated your soul from your flesh. And now your flesh is still sinful, but He separates the soul. He seals it with the Holy Spirit of God, and never, never, never, never again can you ever use the term soul and body as interchangeable. You see, when you go to heaven, it ain't going to be your flesh. It's going to be your soul. When you fellowship with God, it isn't in your flesh, it's in your soul and your spirit. Your flesh is corrupt. In your flesh dwells no good thing. God could never have fellowship and take us to heaven as long as it was stuck together. So in the Old Testament, they are. In the New Testament, they are in an unsaved man or woman. But the moment you get saved, God separates the two. And the two never can touch each other again. It's an incredible concept. So I want you to understand that "the soul without knowledge," that term, is talking about a man's body without

knowledge. And I think that's probably one of the greatest fundamental doctrines anywhere in the Bible. I got to be honest with you, and I love you. But if you can't figure out what really happened to you the day you got saved, let me just ask you, how are you going to figure anything else out? It all starts with your salvation.

Why are God's people today? And I told you, I told the kids yesterday, I am so out of place in the world that we live in today. I am so out of place in this 21st century Christianity. I am so out of style, out of step with God's people and the way they look at that Bible, the way they approach that Bible, the way that they approach the things of God. It's almost like the book of Judges. There's no king in Israel today. And everybody's free to make it up however you want to make it up. It drives me nuts. You got people out there that are preaching in the pulpit this morning. I guarantee you, men who are preaching in the pulpit this morning that if you put them down and put Colossians 2 in front of them, they wouldn't know what to do with it. Now how is that okay? They're going to talk about people getting saved. They're going to give an invitation to people that are going to come down and get saved. And if they had to explain the process, they couldn't do it. And you're okay with that.

V. The Danger of Haste

Now the next thing I want you to see, the second part of that verse, "and he that hasteneth with his feet, sinneth." I want you to understand that the soul and body are interchangeable. They're not the same in the New Testament. That's vital. And then I want you to see the second part of that verse. And this is where we will spend the remaining part of our time. It simply says, "he that hasteneth with his feet, sinneth." Now the Bible takes the position that when you do something, make choices, get involved with something, and you do it hastily, it usually gets you into trouble. There's been times in my own life that somebody has tried to sell me something and I was in a hurry to go somewhere and it sounded like a good deal, so I just said yes and then found out later it wasn't a very good deal.

Psalms 25:5

Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.

You know there's nothing wrong with waiting on God. You know once you get saved, I'm going to tell you this is probably true for all of us. The hardest thing that we have to do after we get saved is to wait on the Lord. But we want it now. Our whole world is about now. Everything we do in life is almost geared up that you can have it instantaneously. It's incredible.

Psalms 27:14

Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

Psalms 37:7

Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

Psalms 37:34

Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.

You know the best advice I could give any young Christian, any old Christian, any middle age Christian is when you're faced with a major decision or an issue in life, wait it out. Wait it out. There'll be times in a situation that we want to act hastily. We want to do something. I've had people come up to me and say, "Don't you know this is happening? Why don't you do something?" I don't do something because I don't have all the facts. That's why. Too many times I've jumped in there and it wasn't the way it was supposed to be. And you know the book of Proverbs, like the whole Bible, will be filled with examples and principles and in samples that will show you and me how to correctly deal with all that comes our way. And it'll all come back to just waiting on God. God will reveal the truth in time. He always does. The problem is we don't want to wait for Him to reveal it. Many times we think we know what the truth is when we really don't.

Waiting and being patient. We take the concept in the people ministry, and I've talked about it many, many times in dealing with people, the concept of responding versus reacting. And the thing that most of us do when a situation arises in life, we react to it. Somebody says you're ugly, you say you're ugly too. We react to that. Like a knee jerk reaction. And of course that will always never be a good process. That's how husbands and wives get into conflicts and get into fights. That'll lead to divorce down the line someplace. That's what happens. One of them will say something to the other one, have a bad day, the other one will take it personal or say something back before you know it. You got something that's akin to the Normandy invasion. And both of you get entrenched and you go to war. You lob hand grenades at each other. And of course that's what we all do. The real issue for you and for me is not to react to something but to respond to something. You see when you react you do it in the flesh. When you respond you do it with biblical principles. Biblical principles will always give you the insight of whatever situation you're in. Somebody says something to you that maybe is not pleasing to you. Instead of taking it personal the first thing you do is let the principles absolve that and simply say, "Well, maybe they're having a bad day. Maybe some things didn't go well today." And so instead of even if you think it came straight to you that doesn't mean you have to give it back to them. Bible says a soft word turns away wrath. And you have to respond to it.

You see one of the great things that biblical principles do in your life, and this is why I try to get you to get them and live by them, because they build integrity. And integrity is something that we all need and most of us don't have. So what it does is integrity through the principles that we're going to allow you the ability to let the principles be a filtering system for you. It's like it goes through several layers before it gets there. Most of you guys who hunt or you like to shoot, you see how they test a bullet or how it expands by shooting it into a block of gelatin. And you can stand to the side and it's clear and a guy will shoot it and you watch the bullet hit it and you'll

watch the bullet travel so far and that jello is like flesh and it shows them when it's done how far it penetrates, how it deforms and flattens out to give you the desired impact of what you want. And that biblical principle is like that gelatin. The bullet never makes it out the gelatin. The gelatin wraps itself around the bullet, slows it down and brings it to a stop so you can examine it. And the biblical principles will take the bullets that are fired at you in life, it'll slow it down, ease the impact, stop it so you can examine it and know how to deal with it. So we respond instead of reacting because when we get in a hurry, when we don't wait, be patient.

Now let's face it, that's a concept that's foreign to America today. I think it would be most likely very safe to say that everything in our lives that goes south and causes us problems will start right here with this principle. We get too big a hurry. We want things now. Making a vital decision in a hasty manner, and I'll be honest with you, some things you get away with, some things you can't. It's like everything else in life, some things you get away with, some things you can't. Now when you get away with the little things after a while, five or six or seven of them in a way, you deceive yourself thinking that you're indestructible and you get away with anything. That's when you get nailed. That's what happens. And of course it's so true. You know people get in a hurry to do things will make the situation not only bigger but worse.

You know I found out that when you're dealing with issues and dealing with problems, the best scenario is to keep it as tight, small a circle as you can. You know a couple of weeks ago I gave you a great verse in Proverbs 18:13, and it says, "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him." And I've learned over the years no matter what situation you have to deal with, there are two sides to every story. And many times we hear the side that we want to hear that we like to hear. Many times we hear one side of it and never stop to get the other side and then we form our decision hastily based on that. That can lead to disaster. Never make a decision with only hearing one side of the story because there's always two perspectives. Get the facts before you decide to do something. Act on something because there may be something there that I mean I would like to think that everybody never told me their side of the story was telling the truth and everything that they said but I know that's not true. You say now how do you know that? Because I don't do that. If I'm going to tell you my side of the story and I'm going to get caught in something, I'm going to tell you how it's going to benefit me. That's human nature. And I've learned over the years that when somebody wants to lay something out and tell something they got an issue with somebody yet you listen to it, you understand it but you got to let the Word of God manifest the truth of it. And if somebody is not willing to do that then you're in a bad situation. And you'll find the verse is true almost in every aspect of life, not just Christianity.

VI. The Value of Patience in Life

My mom and dad, they come from Maryland originally. Back of my heritage is coal mining families in West Virginia and especially Maryland. My mom and dad moved to Ohio during World War II. That was in the 1940s for those who don't remember when World War II was. I was someplace the other day a couple weeks ago, I think it was the few displaying my World War II helmets for Chris or somebody. And oh I know who it was, it was the cable guy came

over to put an alarm system in and I had to go downstairs so I warned him. I said, "Well, I got a pretty extensive World War II collection down here so your mannequins don't freak you out." He said, "Oh, I love it, I collect them." I got some patches for him and gave them to him a little bit later. So he's down there looking around and he says, "This is great." He says, "Were you in World War II?" I said, "No, I missed that one, but I did cross the Delaware with Washington in that boat." Now if anything ought to make you mad it ought to be that. I've been in restaurants before with a lady, a kind waitress. I said, "Man, this bill wasn't right." She said, "Oh, I added a senior assistant." I said, "Did I ask for that?" The best one was when you and I went there, you and I went in to eat last week or someplace and I went in and got the table and she said, "Well, we're all full." She said, "You can sit in the bar." She says, "You're both over 18 actually."

They moved up here to go to work because there was work in Canton. Canton, Ohio used to be the steel mill capital of the world. They had Timken roller bearings, they had five or six plants. Republic Steel had eight or nine. I worked for Republic Steel for a little while when I got out of high school before I went in the Army. My dad worked there for like 21, 26 years or something like that and he died. I was a little kid growing up. It was during the Cold War and I was always afraid because I'd hear on the news where Canton, Ohio was the steel capital of the world. They produced more steel than any place in the world at that time back in the 60s. I was reading in Life Magazine in places that the Russians had targets. They wanted to nuke out if we ever went to war and Canton was number two. You don't know how as a little guy I was scared that we were going to get nuked every time I went to bed at night. Life Magazine came out with a – because most of you don't even remember this. Remember they used to have the bomb shelter signs, remember, in schools in the basement? They even stored food down there. Remember in the big cardboard barrel? We had air raid wardens. They never read air raid – they really thought that there was going to be a war with Russia. I remember in Life Magazine that they talked about how you could build a bomb shelter that would give you a chance to survive a nuclear war. It was like \$50,000 you could build a bomb shelter that was giving you a 100% chance of a nuclear attack ever again. If there were people digging up their backyard, I'm not kidding you, building these bomb shelters. Then they had one for the lower budget that if you could build one that you'd have a 50 to 75% chance of surviving it. Then they said if you can't do any of these, go to the northwest corner of your basement. I knew that northwest corner of that basement so well. I had my little food down there, my little bedroll down there. I knew where I was going to head. But it was a tough time.

My mom and dad, when they moved up here to go to work, my dad drove a 1947 Chevy car up to 1960 before he bought his first new car. They lived in an apartment for 15 years before they ever bought a house. You see back then, there wasn't credit cards. There wasn't easy money that you could get in massive debt. If you wanted something back then, you had to have patience, work hard for it, and save for it. I remember the first car my dad ever got was a 1960 Bonneville Pontiac. He loved Pontiacs. We had a guy up there in North Canton by the name of Bill Willis and he was my dad's friend and he's long dead now too. My dad bought all his cars from there. He was a nice guy. I remember my dad come home with that white big old, now it looks like a gunboat. They're huge. I don't know where they have. But my dad looked at that thing, man. He drove a 1947 Chevy all of those years, saved his money, worked hard, worked two jobs

sometimes. My mom worked two jobs. My mom worked at a restaurant and then she sold Avon and she did all kinds of things. Most of it illegal.

But before my mom died, I got this bug in me to find out everything I could about my family because my dad was dead and I knew that my mom was going to be gone and all those things were going to be lost. So I remember I took her out one day and she was still doing pretty good at that point in time. I said, "Mom," we walked, we drove around the old neighborhood and I said, "Tell me about all this. This is Timken. This is where you worked." I knew when my dad worked because we used to go pick him up and it's all gone now. It's all done. Timken is still doing, Republic Steel is gone. Just empty buildings there. And she had told me that they lived in an apartment. I mean, I lived right there on Alden Avenue all my life and I thought that's where they lived. And she took me down and showed me an apartment that I didn't even know that they lived there for like 15, 16 years before they ever bought a house. There's a lot of things I didn't know. And she would tell me about how that dad would work two jobs and how he would work extra time and do this and do that. They would save money because they wanted to get nice things, but they were patient. They waited. We don't have that today. We really don't. We live in a world where everything has to be now. We live in a world where everything has to be on our standards. And you know, my mom and dad, they just always, always, always, always took their time. I mean, it was incredible. They were patient. They waited.

And I'll tell you something else. Not only does that verse fit in every aspect of life in a worldly sense, it fits in our life as a Christian sense. You see it in people getting married today for shaking the process of a biblical engagement in a biblical marriage to get in a hurry. You know, we just finished a book and I think it's probably one of the best things that we ever did. And it's called, we're going to use this as the standard for marital counseling from this point on, but it's called "The Seven Pillars of Marriage." And I came through it and I taught it someplace. I think I taught it to the people ministry or whatever. But it's based on, this is the cover of the book. And it says "The Seven Pillars of Marriage." Marriage is built on seven pillars in the Bible. And if you look at the cake pretty quickly there closely, it's got, you know how on the cake you got a bride and groom. Well, these bride and groom is on the cake and they both have handguns and they're shooting at each other. I thought that was very appropriate with what we mostly do in the people ministry.

You know, marriage has to be built on something. And it can't just be built on the fact in the world today that you love each other. I mean, I would like to say that that's enough, but that isn't enough. Not with the world today and certainly not with Christians because of the Bible that lays out how marriage is relationship to Christ and the church. It has to be built on something. And in the Bible you will find that there are seven fundamental pillars that marriage has to be built on. A guy a couple of weeks ago, he called me and he asked me about something that his church was doing and he had just gotten married. And he said, "Bob, do you mind if I ask you a question?" And I said, "No, that's fine, ask me whatever." He said, "Well, I just want to know something." He says, "Here in our church, I just got married and our church, we have a process or whatever that when you get married, you can't do anything in the ministry for a year that they want you just to kind of discover yourselves and you can't get in any ministry." And he says, "I'm not

bucking my church, but he says, I just can't find that in the Bible." And he said, "I was wondering if you'd help me." And I said, "Well, it doesn't take us very long because it ain't in the Bible." I said, "I'm not going to go against what your church is saying." I says, "You know what? If that's what your pastor wants to do, hey, I respect that. He has a right to do whatever he wants to do." He says, "I have a right to do what I ever do." I would certainly not tell you that he's wrong in doing that. If that's what he wants to do, he has a right to do that. But there's a lot of things that churches will do that aren't in the Bible that you can get away with, but you got to be careful sometimes. And you see, that idea sounds good, especially to a nominal Christian when it comes to the Bible that doesn't really have a lot of Bible down. But the truth is, in the Bible, there is a process within the Scriptures that will bring you right up to your marriage, through your engagement, right up through everything that you do, and then carry you right on through in the ministry the way God wants you to do for your wife and for your husband. But when you come up short with the Bible or you don't know what to do sometimes, then you have to make some things up that work for you. And I'm not fighting that. It sounds Christian and it sounds spiritual, but it's not biblical and it's scriptural based on the Bible.

I mean, come on, marriage is an institution that is built on Christ and the church. Did you take a year off when God first saved you? Did you? When God saved, I mean, he says, "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church." So when you got saved, did you take a year off going to church? A lot of them do. No, of course not. Of course not. You and Christ went to work learning how to minister within your new life with Him. You didn't jump off the edge of the earth and do everything. You realized that you were a new Christian. You got disciplined. You got this. But you began the process of understanding that there were some things that you could do and you have to start somewhere and God saved you to minister. And of course, it's the same thing in a husband and wife relationship. It has to be within his structure, the New Testament church. And you have to carry on and begin, but at the same time, you have to balance everything out. In the Bible, there's a rule of the husband and there's a rule of the wife. Not understanding that rule before you get married will cause you some issues. And many times people get to the place where they never go through the right process. So I understand in a lot of ways, you know, people come up with some goofy stuff sometime, but I'm telling you, sometimes with people who don't get the Bible down and understand the biblical process, you're probably better off to take a year. I mean, really, then to try to mess your life up. But if you follow the Bible process and you follow the Bible, you won't miss a beat. You have to begin to minister together just as you begin to minister, begin to grow together. You can't separate one from the other. It's about getting the proper balance in your life. That's what it's about. It's about understanding that when God saved you, He saved you for ministry. The two become one. How can two people say, "Well, we got to spend time together getting to know each other?" When the Bible says the moment you got married, those two became one. Problem is they don't understand that concept. Well, and if that's true and you two become one, it takes two to make a marriage. Who makes up the other part of that marriage? The Lord Jesus Christ. It's so simple when it comes to the Bible. And the verse says, "He that hasteneth with His feet, sinneth."

I'll tell you something else. People get in a hurry on. I see it all the time. Parents allow their kids to get in a hurry to grow up. I mean, I've seen girls that are 14 or 15, their mom and dad let them

dress like they're 20. Let them be a kid. You know the fallacy of that? 40 years later when they're now 50 or 60, they're going to want to dress like a 20-year-old. And in most cases today, let's face it, our kids don't have to wait for anything. And a lot of that is because the parents maybe didn't have as good a life and parents always want to provide a better life than my mom and dad did. My mom and dad didn't have nothing. I know you probably get tired of hearing log cabin stories, but my dad actually lived in a log cabin with five or six brothers and three sisters. Their dad died when they were very young and the mom raised them all. I saw the log cabin when I was a kid, me and my sister. It was still standing and didn't have any electricity, didn't have any inside toilets. It didn't look very big enough to hold all those kids. They lived in a log cabin. No heat, firewood, no electricity, no inside plumbing, had to go to the well to get the water. They didn't have anything. They really didn't. And my dad and my mom, they always, when me and my sister were growing up, they always sacrificed to give us a better life than they had. Now I'll be honest with you about two, too. I didn't appreciate it then. I really didn't. I was stupid back then, just like some of you are now. I was dumb as a stump. I didn't recognize the sacrifices they made. I do now. See? And it was tough for them. So I understand why parents do it, but I'm just telling you, it's not always a good thing to do. Giving your child things that require responsibility before they have the responsibility to handle them is never a good thing. You know, we need to wait. You need to wait on some things. Dressing a girl or a guy up like he's 20 when her hormones are still when they're 12 or 13, not a good deal. Not a good deal. I've seen girls walk around and were probably 12, 13 or 14 wearing high heels with lipstick. Looked like they were painted up for a possum festival someplace in Arkansas. Can't even walk in the shoes. You know what, kids? It takes practice walking in them high heels. I tried it. I didn't do it.

The days of earned responsibility is gone in most cases today. Guys get a fast car way before they have the respect and responsibility of the power that they have in their hands. I know that's true. When I was 18 years old, I was working at the Hoover Company. My first car was a 1958 Ford, four door Ford. I got it from Bill Willis. He took it in on a trade in. It lasted about six months and then the engine blew because it was a used car. Bill Willis being a good guy that he was, he said, "Well, I'll give you the money back from the car you bought and here's a 1964 Tempest." Well that was nice and it was a newer car. A Tempest? Come on. Do I look like a Tempest guy to you? A Tempest. A little Tempest. So I took it because whatever. I mean it had a little automatic in it, you know, a little thing, a little Tempest. Just a cute little Tempest. I drive to school with all the guys with their Chevelle and all the guys with this and all that and I've got a Tempest. A little Tempest. Nice little Tempest. White. Convertible. Nice little Tempest.

One day I took it in there to get something fixed and Bill Willis said, "Come over here." He said, "I want you to take a car home. I've already worked out the financing. It won't cost you any more than you've already got right now, but I want you to take it home. If you want it, ask your dad. We'll work out a deal." I said, "Okay, what is it?" He said, "I'll show you." Took around a corner. 1964 GTO. 389 tri-power. Tri-power is three two car. Yeah, whatever. Those things that get the jacks go down. I stood there and looked at it. A muscle car. I looked inside. Hurst, four speed. 389. 355 rear end. Whatever that means. I got in that car, drove it home. Man, I'll tell you what. When I came out of that parking lot, there was a lot more power in that Tempest, man. I got down on the freeway ramp. I said, "Let's see what she's got." Well, I went from first gear to

second gear to third gear to fourth gear. That baby was just going. I looked in the rear view mirror. Two tires burning rubber. You know what that means? What's it called? Posi-traction. Wimpy cars only burn one tire. My Tempest didn't burn any tires. In fact, that was the only car I ever had and never had to replace tires all of its life because it didn't go fast enough to wear out the tires. Boy, that GTO was something, man. Red. Convertible. Blacktop.

So I'm driving that for a while and man, I'm in it, but you know, time moving on. I go over to get that fixed. Bill Willis says, "Hey, Bob, come here. Got something I want to show you." He said, "No, I worked out already on this. Your payments aren't going to go up at all. I'll give you back what you paid for this. And here I want you to take this home and just see what you like." I said, "What is it?" Walked around the corner. 1967 GTO. Metallic blue. 400 engine. 325 horse. Compression ratio. 14 to 1. Whatever that means. I mean, I stepped in that baby and I got on that thing and I remember. It was there. Turned it on. Then I got out of the parking lot, went down to my exit ramp to get on the thing. Nobody was around. I just sat there for a minute. You could hear that thing going. I put that sign on first gear and boy, I stomped on it, man. I'm telling you what, it went up to that deal, man. And I hit second gear and it felt like I had just been in Apollo 9. That pushed me back in the seat. So, of course, I'm not satisfied the way it comes from the factory. I got to put me 11 inch Mickey Thompson tires on the back. Eight inches on the front. Cragar mags. I mean, I got to put headers on it. I got to take a beautiful exhaust system that they designed. It cost millions of dollars, cut the pipes off and put glass packs on it. It rumbled. I look back at how stupid I was. We'd go to street lights and for whatever reason, from street lights to street lights, we just burned the rubber off tires. And God help us if we pulled up to a light and a Chevelle 396 pulled up next to you. You know what was going to happen. He'd give his a little ramp. You give yours a little ramp. He gives a little more. You hit yours a little more. You'd watch that light go from red to green and boy, you were next block. You were drag racing down the road. Stupid. Totally stupid. I look at guys doing that now and I'm driving down the road in a freeway and somebody blows past me and it's so loud you can't hear it. I'm thinking to myself, that is so stupid. And then I remember myself, that's what I used to do.

Down in Paola, Kansas when I worked down there, I used to go over to the graveyard and do my paperwork because it was quiet and it was, you know, peaceful. And I'd always see these young kids that were buried and every year there'd be a, and I finally asked one of the workers down there on the street crew, you know, I got to know all those guys. And I said, "What is going on?" I said, "I come up here in this graveyard." And I said, "These young kids," and he said, "Oh yeah, you know what, a big problem down here is hill jumping." And I said, "Almost every spring we lose two or three kids." You know what hill jumping is where you get a fast car and down in Paola the hills are like this. And they'll get going 80 miles an hour and come up a hill and come off the ground. And then hopefully come back down. Most of the time not on the road. And I used to go there, you know, and I used to see all those kids' graves, you know, fresh there, the little pictures on them, you know, and all their buddies bringing their ball glove or putting pennies on there or bottle of beer or whatever, you know, which, you know, they're little memos or baseball because they obviously played baseball. And I thought to myself, and he told me, he said, "You know what, kids today think that they're indestructible." They can do those kinds of things. And you know what, it's not so much that kids think that they're indestructible. They

probably do. It's the fact that at that age, I know I didn't. They didn't have any respect for the power that they could wield. I mean, you take a car, buddy, and you've got a car that's got two, 300 horsepower on it and it weighs about three or four thousand pounds, you can use them to damage with that. I mean, it does. I mean, I know, get it, I get it. I mean, you take 10,000 nuts to build a car when the assembly line afforded GM, but it only takes one nut behind the wheel to scatter over the highway. I had a fast car, but the problem was I didn't have the common sense to use it. Luckily, I didn't get into trouble with it. And the verse says that he that hasteneth with his feet sinneth.

VII. Haste in Learning the Bible

I'll tell you another place where haste makes waste, as my mom used to say, and people get into a hurry and it never get anything of any substance. And that's when it comes to learning the Bible. You know, we live in a world of demand. I sat down at night to watch television and I hit the little button on the field there, the cable TV, and it says, "On Demand." Just demand it. Whatever you want, it's yours. I drive into Burger King to get me a couple cheeseburgers, you know, and when I want to take a little break from McDonald's because sometimes you get tired of the same kind of cheeseburgers, and a lady comes on the deal and she says, "You can have it your way." See, you can have whatever you want today. And they're kind of like a little false religion because when you go and have it your way, then you go through to give you a little crown. And I can say when you go through life having it your way, that's the only crown you're going to get. You get up to the judgment seat of Christ, there'll be all these gold crowns over here, and there'll be a truckload of Burger King crowns. You'll get one of those.

I love McDonald's. I eat right. I don't eat French fries there. I just, you know, I got my carbs all counted, you know, I don't eat Big Macs. I eat two cheeseburgers. That's all I ever eat. I can live with that. That's good. I love their cheeseburgers. I'm sorry. I remember in Canton, Ohio when the first McDonald's started in 1956. We went there. Now they have one that marks over 10 million sold. There was only one sold when I got there. And I remember it like it was yesterday. We all went in there. French fries were 15 cents. Hamburgers were 10 cents. And I remember we sat there in that car and we munched those things and we thought that was so good. And we were introduced to the world of fast food, okay, because the world was changing and sitting around a table where you talked and mom labored in cooking was on its way out. Now it was fast food. Probably eight or nine years later, that fast food wasn't fast enough for the fast-paced people. So they put a fast drive-in through for the fast food to get faster. That's what we do. This whole world is that way.

You go out and buy a jacket, a leather jacket, you can get one that really looks brand new or if you can get one that has a distressed look. Most Christians ought to buy those. Most Christians have a distressed look about them. You come to the place where you, you know, I remember when I was a kid growing up, the thing I hated was a new pair of blue jeans. They were stiff. They were ugly. And you wanted them to get washed out. You wanted them to, and it took probably six, seven, eight months, or you're washing them while I'm washing them before they faded out. Now you don't have to wait any time. You can go there and you can buy 506s, 504s,

515, 533, 440s. You can get anything you want, stonewashed, greenwashed, anything you want. You can get them with holes in them now. You don't have to wait put holes in them. Put them in, they come that way. You got to pay for them, but you got them. And I'm fine. I got holy jeans. These are holy jeans. I got them on. I asked God to bless me before I came this morning. They're as holy as I'm going to get. It's okay. That's where we're at today. That's the world. I'm not knocking it. That's just where we're at.

But I'm going to tell you, the reason why 99% of God's people will never learn their Bible will be based on this proverb right here. You get in too big a hurry. We live in a world where everything is given to us now. And you may get hamburgers quick. You may get your jeans fixed quick. You may get a distressed jacket quick. You may get everything you want on your cable TV quick. But when it comes to the Bible, you got to get it on God's terms. When God wrote his book by his design, he also put a design in that structure of that Bible to learn it. God has a pattern for everything that he does. If you do it his way and you get it, or you do it your way and you don't get it, it's just that simple. And again, the Laodicean mindset. There's a big difference between knowing the Bible and knowing things about the Bible. Not being hasting and having the patience to do it God's way to get it.

VIII. The Five Aspects of Patience

You know, patience is a great study in the Bible. And there's five aspects of patience that it takes for a person to be patient. First, and I'm going to explain them here in a little bit, but first of all, it takes structure in your life. Then it takes self-discipline in your life. Then it takes hard work in your life. Then it takes a visible plan in your life. Then it takes a purpose in your life. Those five things will make up patience because you got to have those five things to recognize that some things take time. The biblical process to learn the Bible is just too much for people today. That you're in a hurry for everything. And as the verse says, "he that hasteneth with his feet sinneth."

And we get here on Sunday and you're a rare crew. And most of you because you've never been anywhere else, you don't know anything else, but I want to tell you. When I preach here on Sunday, I start about 11:15, 11:10, and I get done about 12:20, 12:30, somewhere in there. About an hour, 10, an hour, 15 minutes. I'm going to go to 1:30 today, but just because I got a lot to say. You realize in most churches, if you're in to preach, you can't preach more than 20, 25 minutes. People won't stand it. I've been in churches where I had to preach and the guy says, "Well, you got 20 minutes, 25 minutes, give us something." I said, "Why don't I give you in 25 minutes?" I mean, it's just ridiculous, but people are in a hurry. He says, "Well, if you go more on that, people are going to get nervous." Let them get nervous. Maybe they need to get nervous. But we live in a world today where we're all in a hurry. "Well, we got to get home. We got to get out of here. We got things we got to do." I mean, you know what? You have all week long that the world has you. You go to church and you can't give God one hour of your time to hear the Word of God because you're in a hurry. I don't understand. I get it. And you people are the exception to the rule. I mean, you don't know any better. I ain't telling you either.

2 Peter 1:4-9

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;

And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

Now I want you to notice, he didn't say barren and fruitful and went in anybody to Christ. You know where we're barren and not fruitful today? In the knowledge of that book. Now these seven things that you're to add to your faith are going to require some time. And he says in verse 8, if you don't have them, you're barren. You're barren of the knowledge of the truth. You ever notice the phenomenon how people who never bear any fruit are always criticizing the ones that do? It's one of the most amazing things they'll ever study in life. Strangest thing you'll ever see. Why some of God's people couldn't even open their Bible and win somebody to Christ if they had to. They wouldn't know where to start and yet they're saved. They lack these things.

Verse 9 says, "But he that lacketh these things is blind and cannot see afar off and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." There it is. You don't have these seven things in your life. You're blind to what's going on around you. And I'll tell you something else. You got no goals in your life and you got no vision because you can't see afar off. And the whole reason is you've got to the place of your life. You've got such a hurry, you have just forgotten what God has done for you so you don't really matter what you do for him.

He says add to your faith. I'm going to give you something. When it comes to you and your relationship with God after you get saved and you start to get in that book, God will only add to your life. He'll add a good church. He'll add a good Bible. He'll add good people. He'll add these seven things in your life. He'll give you everything that you need and God's relationship with you will be one of adding things to you. Now, when the devil comes into your life, his main goal will not to be add anything but will start subtracting stuff from you. God adds, the devil subtracts. God gives you a church, devil takes it away from you. God gives you the Bible, devil takes it away from you. God gives you good Christian friends, devil takes it away from you. God gives you a relationship with God, devil takes it away from you. And the devil will make sure that you do not add these seven things to your faith because he wants to keep you barren when it comes to the knowledge of the Scriptures. And he will do everything he can to take from you. God will always add things to your life. The devil will take things from your life. It's just that simple. And boy, that's one of the most profound things that you'll ever get in your life.

And verse 5 says, "and besides this, giving all diligence." There are some things that we need to be diligent about in our spiritual growth. And adding to our faith, he says the first thing is virtue.

Virtue is the spiritual character that you have, the spiritual strength that you have, your inner character that you give to others. Most of you who work with people on multiple levels, you know this is true. You'll have a discipleship with somebody or you'll deal with a counseling scenario with somebody, and you'll go for an hour, an hour and a half. And when you're done, you're exhausted. You're tired. You're visibly tired. You're mentally tired. Why? Because you had spiritual insight and character in you called virtue that you gave out. One time in the definitive passage on it, it's over there in Luke 6:19. One time Jesus was out there and a crowd was all around him and a lady was sick and she reached up and touched him and he knew immediately that somebody touched him because the Bible says virtue went out of him. Virtue is what you give to somebody else. So in Proverbs chapter 31, you and I, male or female, are supposed to be a what? Virtuous woman. Where do we get the virtue from? Principles of the Word of God.

He says the second thing we're to add is knowledge. The Bible says that the beginning of knowledge is the fear of the Lord. Knowledge is knowing who God really is. Proverbs 1:7 and Proverbs 9:10 says, "the knowledge of the holy will lead you to understanding." And understanding is the goal you want to get, but understanding all that God does start with the knowledge of the holy. When you get saved, he wants to add virtue. He wants to add knowledge about who he is.

Then the third thing is temperance. That's balance, Proverbs 11:1. He wants to give a balance in your life of what you do.

The fourth thing is patience. That's long suffering. The key to patience is knowing God, because when you know God through the knowledge, when you know God, you know that God never gets in a hurry, so when you become like God, you don't get in a hurry either.

Brotherly kindness. Loving and taking care of each other.

Charity. Charity is mentioned last because that's the ultimate goal and the end result of a walk and a fellowship with him. Charity is the hallmark of integrity. Unconditional love based on Christ's love for us. No ulterior motive. Not loving somebody to get something back. 1 Timothy 1:5 said, "charity is the end of the commandment." 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 says that charity never faileth. It says charity is the greatest, because charity is the greatest aspect that we can have. It's God's ultimate number one quality. Unconditional love based on who he is to us, not who I am to others. How he loves, not how I love. He loves unconditionally. When you become Christ-like, you get a perfect love. 1 John 4:17-18. It's a love without any ulterior motive. You just love somebody because Christ loved them.

When you got saved, you entered into a process of spiritual growth. That spiritual growth is a simple process over time of adding these seven things, and God wants to add some things into your life that are based on these three things that God gave you and added when he went back to heaven. The Holy Spirit of God, that's something he gave you. The Word of God, that's something he gave you. The local New Testament church, that's the structure that he gave you. But it takes time. You can't hurry it along. When you have patience, and you understand these five areas that I talked about a minute ago that I'm going to talk about again and define them for you, you can stay on track and not get off course.

- Structure
- Self-Discipline
- Hard Work
- Visible Plan
- Purpose

You know, I gave you a while back that when I began to learn the Bible, I looked at it as a thing where, you know, God has a school that I'm going to. And I know when I went to high school and grade school, they had curriculum. They had classes. They had courses you had to take. So I sat down one time and I said, "You know what? I know seven in the Bible is a great number. Let's just take that and start with it." If I was going to, if God was going to teach me the Bible and I was going to go to his school, what would be the seven classes or the seven curriculum that we would have that I need to learn to learn the Bible? And I sat down and I thought, the first one I thought would be an English class because my Bible is in English. So I need to understand the language which I speak, which most of us don't. The second thing I'd have to do is I took in high school, which I hated, was a civics class or government because the Bible is built around the government, the kingdom of God versus the kingdom of heaven. The third class I'd have to get down is a biology class because biology deals with dissecting the body and you and me are a body, soul, and spirit. So I need to get that class down. The fourth one, the fourth one was a history class because I have to find my landmarks and know where I come from, church history. So the history class. The next one, the fifth one was a music class because Colossians 3:16 says that I'm to sing Psalms, spiritual songs and praise unto the Lord. So I need a music class. And then the next one was a, that I had to get, or the sixth one was I had to take a math class. And I hated math in school, but I had to realize that God always adds, the devil always subtracts. And then I thought one step farther, God adds and then he multiplies. The devil subtracts, then he divides. I needed a math class. And the last class that I needed was a science class. I need to understand the structure of everything that God did.

Now when I started the Bible, I had to see, I had a purpose. I had a visible plan. And I put a lot of hard work into it. I had a lot of self-discipline and I did it within a structure. In the Old Testament in 1 Kings chapter 6, it took seven years to build and complete the temple of God in Solomon's day. That building and that temple is a picture of your body. 1 Corinthians 6:19, "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." Based on that model in the Bible, based on what it says there, I say based on that model that you could be where you need to be with the book probably in seven years if you really went to work on it. If you had a plan, you had a structure, you had hard work, you had a visible plan and you had self-discipline and you had a purpose. And if you could be where you want to be within seven years if you stayed on task and you didn't get sidelined. But boy, I saw that in 1 Kings chapter 6 and then I saw 1 Kings chapter 7 verse 1 which was Solomon's problem. It took him seven years to build God's house, but he spent 13 years building

his own house. There's our problem. We spend more time on the things that we want to do than we do that God wants us to do. Kill us every time.

You know I've seen this very structure work in so many of you. Some of you stay with the plan and build it slowly, one area at a time and you learn your Bible. Some of you bless your heart, you're all over the place in your Bible. You jump from one subject to the other, from one thing to the other. You just can't settle in and just be disciplined to start here and stay here until you get this thing done. You just can't do it. Every day it's a new adventure for you. The problem with that is you never learn anything consistently. Problem with that, you learn a lot of things about the Bible, but that's not what you want to do. To learn the Bible, you have to have a systematic structure by which it comes together for you.

IX. The Sin of Omission

The Bible says, the verse says, "he that hasteneth with his feet sinneth." Now I want you to know, we think about all kinds of sins that are sinned and we try to keep from sinning and I appreciate that. But I want to tell you something, you know that not learning your Bible is a sin. It certainly is. It certainly is. And the world or in Christianity getting in a hurry will always lead to problems.

And again, one more time, the book of Proverbs covers an absolutely vital area of our lives. Martin Luther said of the book of Proverbs, "It is the most glorious book of all the books that God wrote to man." Luther said, "Giving us his perception, his mind on every issue, the holy principles on the issues of life, that man, when applying them, will never stray from them." Luther went on to say, "Each single word should be read, prayed over and read again. The book needs to fill our hearts and our minds and our thoughts with each word, for each word is solid gold." That was his aspect and his idea about the book of Proverbs. His thoughts, in most cases with Christians today, are not shared the same way. But he loved that book. He saw that book for what it was. And this is so true with everything in Proverbs. He, that hasteneth with his feet, sinneth.

When it comes to God and his word and everything else in life, your best bet to take your time, find out what you're dealing with, be patient with it, wait on God to open the thing up and go from there. My advice to you today is get a plan. Realize that there is a way that you can learn the Bible right. It's not your way. It's not my way. It has to be God's way. Quit making decisions and judgments and developing attitudes about things without understanding the principles of the word of God that help you figure it all out.

The greatest sins that happen, and I know that all sin is sin, but the greatest sins are not the sins that you and I commit. The greatest sins in this world are the sins of omission. The greatest sins are not the things you and I do. The greatest sins are the things that you and I don't do. Sins of omission. And I'm telling you, I'm telling you, a child of God who begins to discipline themselves to learn the word of God. Realizing that God, you can't get God in a hurry. Slowing down your life to the point where when it comes to the Bible, and I know there's not much you can do with work and there's not much you're going to do with the world. The world is going to

go the way it goes. And the more we get closer to the Lord Jesus Christ coming, the faster it's going to move and more everything is going to do. And technology is going to be advanced. It gives you everything you want right now. I mean, I remember a time that you had to go home for somebody to call you on the phone. I remember the first cordless phones that ever came out. You couldn't walk 10 feet from them. I remember watching Star Trek back in the sixties when they're down there on Planet Guru, someplace in the Klingons or after them. And he just goes, "Scotty, beam me up." I'm being, I can call anybody to beam me up anytime I want to now. My dog's in the front of there. We live in a fast paced world, don't we? And it's easy to get caught up in that, see? And it's easy to transfer that quickness, that fastness. And we want it right now, that on demand end of the Bible. And it may work with your cable, but it won't work with the word of God. So Proverbs is a great book. We'll hold up there and don't forget all the meetings coming up on the announcement. There is a sign up sheet out there for those of you who are interested in getting on a Lincoln team, Nebraska team. Please take the time to sign up. Also, one of the things I want to ask you is we need to also revamp our cleaning crews. We have.