

I. Introduction and The Personal Application of Scripture

If you have your Bibles this morning, I want to invite you to turn to Proverbs chapter 19. We are going to move through this chapter today. We are going to get some things from verses. We have been coming through it almost a verse at a time, and we have needed to do that with some great material. This week we focused on verse 11, and I showed you how the great principle of God passing over our transgressions through the story of David and Mephibosheth. Now you have a better understanding why I said to you that this verse is probably the most powerful verse in all of the Bible. It really deals with our understanding and appreciation of our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

You remember I talked about and I laid out the fact that the Bible says we have three infirmities, every one of us, and they are the things that we struggle with: the infirmity of the flesh, the fact that we do not know how to pray, but most importantly the fact that we always forget what God has done for us. The key for us is to get to the point in our lives where we also pass over the transgressions of others based on our understanding of how God has passed over our own transgressions at the cross.

I talked to you about the personal application of Scripture, how that the Bible has a historical application, it has a doctrinal application, it has an inspirational application, but it also then has a very special application which I call the personal application that is just straight to your heart. God has given you something going straight to you and not coming through anyone else. Nothing will change your life more than the continuance of the day that God saved you.

I look at the Apostle Paul and I got thinking of him this week. His life was never the same once he met the Lord Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus in Acts 9. It changed him forever. Here he went from a guy who persecuted God's people to a guy who established every New Testament church throughout Asia and Asia Minor. He is one of the most incredible individuals all down through the history of the world, certainly in church history. No matter where Paul went, no matter what he did, no matter who he spoke to, whether it was a common ordinary man or like when he stood before Festus or King Agrippa, or he stood before kings, you will find there in places like Acts 21, Acts 22, Acts 23, Acts 26, and Acts 28 that whenever he starts to talk to people about the Lord, he cannot help tell them about the day that he met the Lord Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus.

I am telling you something: if you want to keep your life where you stay with God where you need to be, if you want to get to the point in your life where you do not lose your perspective, lose your edge so to speak, just get in your life the fact that you will never forget what God did for you the day you got saved in your heart and your life, the day He passed over your transgressions. Yet it is so easy for us to lose sight of that, all of us.

I have to say that in most cases today that our relationship with Christ is not very valuable to us. You know why? Because we do not really understand the cost for us to have it. When we do not

understand the cost for us to have it, then we will never really have to pay any price ourselves. So we will never really appreciate taking any stand for anything for God after we got it. We will not see the value of it. Because with the value of understanding what God did also comes the value of what we need to do for Him. We come to the point where we forget that.

I said last week, in my prayer out of last Sunday and what we do here is if I just to get a few people—I mean obviously I would like everybody, but many of you already have, but it is not a reality in the world that we live in today—just one or two people, one or two young men, young ladies, one couple, couple of couples that will just come to the place in their lives where they will allow the Word of God to change them forever. It all goes back to the day that God saved you.

II. Historical and Doctrinal Context of Proverbs 19:11-12

Now today I want to move on here in Proverbs chapter 19 and we are going to pick it up in verse 12. I am going to show you how last week's verse—and remember now I gave you the personal application last week—but now I am going to take that same verse. I am going to add it in to verses 12 through 17. I am going to show you how it fits into the context historically and doctrinally. I want you to be able to see that.

I was telling the folks in people ministry yesterday that my goal for you is to get you to the point where you really know the Bible. I try to do everything I do to help give you that ability. I try to provide every tool for you. In the forty-some years of my life and my ministry and my time in the Bible, I have learned some shortcuts to some things that will save you some time that will help you learn the Bible. I think it is my responsibility to pass those off to you and to help you. I understand, just like anything, many people are not going to do anything with it. But again, I am looking for the ones who do. Out of a crowd of 200 or 250, whatever, if you get five people to do what is right, you are doing good today. But those five people can change the world.

I mean, you look at Paul, one man, God changed the world. You look at Moses, one man, God changed the world. You look at Martin Luther, one man, God changed the world. You can be the defining factor in what God does in the rest of the world until Jesus comes back if you allow God to do it. But it is up to you.

I told them yesterday, when it comes to the Bible and understanding the Bible and what I call a working knowledge of the Scriptures, the ability to not only use the Bible, but let the Bible use you, I think that what it really comes down to is that for you to get to the point in your life where you understand about 80, 85 percent of the time where you are at with that Bible, no matter what book it is, no matter what chapter it is, no matter what verse it is, that you are able to look at that path. You cannot do it 100 percent. Nobody can. But you ought to get to the high 80s or 85 percent where wherever you go in that Bible most of the time, you look at a passage, you look at a book, you look at a verse, you look at a word, and you can know where that verse and that word or that passage stands doctrinally, historically, inspirationally. It will open up the Scripture for you.

Those three applications are not taught today anywhere. Most Christians do not believe it. Most pastors do not believe it. I know Bible colleges do not believe it. Most churches do not believe it.

But that is their problem. It does not change the fact that that is the way that God systematically put His Bible together. My goal for every one of you, the way my style of teaching, my style of laying out the Bible, my style of everything that I do, is to help you get to that point in your life when you look at the Bible, you look at the Scriptures, and about 85 to 80 percent of the time you know where you are at and what ground you are standing on, doctrinally, historically, and inspirationally. Because there lies the keys to the Scripture. If you get those down, the rest of it will fall into place for you.

Now, as I said, I want to read today for you. I am just going to pick it up in verse 11, I am going to go ahead and read verse 11 again, and I am going to pick it up in verse 12 here when we do the teaching, but I am going to show you how they go together. Last week's verse was verse 11.

Proverbs 19:11

The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.

Now we are going to pick it up today.

Proverbs 19:12-17

The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion; but his favour is as dew upon the grass.

A foolish son is the calamity of his father: and the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping.

House and riches are the inheritance of fathers: and a prudent wife is from the LORD.

Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.

He that keepeth the commandment keepeth his own soul; but he that despiseth his ways shall die.

He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.

Let us ask God's blessing on this morning. Father, we do thank you and praise you for the Lord Jesus, and we do love you. I pray, Father, you will take the Scriptures today and help us to look at it yet from another angle and put it all together that these good people, precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, there a little, will begin to establish a relationship with the Word of God of understanding it. Lord, we love you, and we thank you for all you do for us. Pray your blessings upon us now today. In Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.

Now, historically, our verse from last week, Proverbs 19:11, it said, "The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression." Now, I gave you that in a personal application straight to you, but I want to put it into context of these other verses today so you can see how it flows along with what the Bible is saying. That reference in Proverbs 19:11 is, in the context, God making a reference to the nation of Israel. He is saying that it is to God's glory not to destroy the nation of Israel. He is going to pass over all their transgressions. He will deal with them in the tribulation period. He will chastise them. You will find that in the

book of Hebrews. But when He brings an end to all the other nations, and He will, He will pass over Israel and fulfill His promises to them.

This is what Proverbs 19:11 is saying in our context. Way back in Genesis chapter 12, in Genesis chapter 15, and in fact it is Genesis 15:18-20, we find where God made His covenant with the nation of Israel through Abraham. He said to Abraham, up to this point—and we know that the theme of the Bible in the Old Testament is the kingdom of heaven, we know that. We know that from Adam and Eve, Adam was given the kingdom of heaven, and the devil came and took it and he lost it. Noah had it next, and he lost it. So, everyone that God gave it to, to reign over it and to have, the devil showed up to take it back. We know why that is. We talked about that Thursday night in Bible study. The devil wanted to get back the kingdom that he once had and the fact that he lost it.

When it came to Abraham, it all changed. When it came to Abraham, God said to Abraham, "I am going to do something with you that I have not done with anybody else. I am going to make a covenant with you and the people that are going to come from you, which is going to be My nation. And the covenant is going to be this: I am going to give you the kingdom of heaven, and I am not going to take it away from you in the Old Testament. I am going to stay with you. The devil will never get that kingdom from you from this point on."

"Now, if you do not do what is right, I am going to whip the fire out of you. I am going to use the other nations to come down and chastise you. I am going to hold you accountable, and I am going to chasten you when you do not do what is right. But the covenant is going to stand with Israel that I will never take that kingdom from you."

Let me read it for you here.

Genesis 15:18

In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

In Isaiah chapter 49, verses 6 down through 8, He said this concerning the covenant:

Isaiah 49:6-8

And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.

Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages;

He said, "You know what, Israel, you are going to get it all." That is the covenant He made with Abraham. He said to him over there in Genesis 15, "Someday your seed is going to be like the stars of heaven, endless." Abraham is an incredible pivotal point in your early part of your Bible. Up to this point, the kingdom of heaven came and went based on God gave it to a man, the devil took it back. When it came to Abraham, he got the covenant for the nation of Israel that he would never lose it.

It says over in Jeremiah 30, verses 10 and 11:

Jeremiah 30:10-11

Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid.

For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure; and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.

You know what He is saying? He is saying when it comes to the nation of Israel, it is to God's glory when He makes an end of all the other nations to pass over their transgressions. So in the context, you see how it works. That is very important in your Bible that you get to the place at some point in your life where you understand passages like this, passages throughout the Bible, that you see what it means historically, you understand what it means prophetically, doctrinally, and then you understand what it means in an inspirational application and sometimes what it means in that personal application.

Now as I said, Proverbs 19:11 and 12 historically and doctrinally will again deal with the nation of Israel at the second coming of Christ. Now look at Proverbs 19:12. Let us start to put it together here. "The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion, but his favor is as dew upon the grass."

Now Proverbs 19:11, as I have told you a couple of times so far, Proverbs 19:11 is dealing with God passing over the transgression of Israel, and then we come into Proverbs 19:12 which deals with two aspects. The first part, "the king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion." That will be dealing with the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the first thing we want to look at.

In your Bible, there are two regatherings of the nation of Israel. Most people do not know this. There are two regatherings of the nation of Israel. The first one is after the 70 years captivity of 606 BC when they go back in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Then they are in the land, they are under Roman domination, but they are in the land. They are back. They are regathered back, and they are there to the first coming of Christ. At the first coming of Christ, they are in the homeland. Of course, they are under Roman domination, but they are in the homeland. God had regathered them and brought them back for obvious reasons that we do not have time to get into this morning. They are in that land up to 70 AD.

Whenever they reject the Lord Jesus Christ and we move into the church age at that particular point in time where now God, the kingdom of heaven, is not going to be established at this point. It is going to be at a later date. God turns His attention from the nation of Israel to the Gentiles. I am going to show you how that works in just a moment. Now He turns His attention to the Gentile nations. In 70 AD, Titus comes down and he destroys Jerusalem. He murders and butchers the Jews, and they are cast out of the land, and now they are gone.

The first regathering of Israel will be in Ezra and Nehemiah, and then in 70 AD, Titus scatters them, and from 70 AD all the way up to the 20th century, they are scattered everywhere. Then the second regathering takes place in 1948 in our own century, right about the time that most of you older folks were probably born. This is where He gathers them the second time, and He goes back into the land. They were back in the land for the—in Ezra and Nehemiah, He had to get them back—here it comes. You want to talk about consistency? Where in Ezra and Nehemiah, He had to get them back in the land at the first regathering for the first coming of Christ, in 1948, He had to get them back in the land for the second coming of Christ. See how it works? That is where you are at with it. It is important to understand these verses. Proverbs 19:11 is telling us that God is passing over Israel's transgressions, but then Proverbs 19:12 jumps right into the wrath of a king as a roaring lion, and that will be the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Revelation 5:5, the Lord Jesus Christ is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah. In Proverbs 20:2, the Bible says:

Proverbs 20:2

The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion: whoso provoketh him to anger sinneth against his own soul.

You will find in your Bible that Christ is portrayed through both comings, the first coming and the second coming, two different ways. You will find that in the first coming, which is recorded for you in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Then you will find the second coming, it is recorded for you there in the book of Revelation and basically 98% of the Old Testament. At the first coming of Christ, He comes as a lamb. You want to understand this. At the first coming of Christ, He comes as a lamb. When John saw Him in John 1:29, John the Baptist, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." He came as a lamb.

When the great prophet Isaiah wrote way back in the Old Testament, four, five, six hundred years before Christ ever showed up, prophecy in Isaiah 53, verses 4 through 7, he said:

Isaiah 53:4-7

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

At the first coming of Christ He came as a lamb, a sacrificial lamb. At the first coming of Christ He did not come in with a conquering army. He did not come in as a king. He came in as a prop. This is what messed Israel up because all of the verses in the Old Testament show Him coming as a king because they are all second coming references. So when He showed up in the first coming of Christ as Jesus and claimed to be a Son of God, this is why they had such a problem with it. But He came as a lamb.

Somebody asked me one time why Christ does not come back the second coming like He did the first coming. Did you ever stop and think about that? Did you ever stop and think about why He comes back the way He does the second coming as a roaring lion and the first time He came as a little lamb, as a sheep who was dumb and opened not His mouth and was led to slaughter? I will tell you why. I thought about it a long time. If He came back the second time like He did the first time, I guarantee you, 98% of God's people today would reject Him. The whole world would reject Him.

First of all, He would have a King James Bible that about 98% of the churches would throw Him out on that account. Second thing is, you are coming down and thinking about it. The Jehovah's Witnesses would have to reject Him because He believed that Jesus Christ was God and they do not. The Mormons could not accept Him because He would not let them have more than one wife. The Seventh-day Adventists could not be part of it because they meet on Saturday when the Bible says you meet on Sunday. The Catholics could not accept Him because He would tell them that there is no hope in the Pope and He would also tell them that the only thing holy about Mary was her socks. Most fundamental Baptists could not accept Him because He would not show up in a suit and tie. The Charismatics could not accept Him because Jesus never spoke in tongues. The Church of Christ could not accept Him because Jesus never baptized anybody. No, if He came back the second time the way He came the first time, you can put money on it. They would kill Him in 15 minutes. So He is not coming back the second time like He did the first time. First time He came was a lamb and He allowed Himself to be slaughtered. Second time He is coming as a roaring lion and He is going to tear you up. He will come back as a king with an army that follows Him. That would be you and me. You will find pictures of that all through the Bible: Revelation 19:11, Joel 2, Isaiah 63. It is endless throughout the Bible. When He comes back the second time He is going to take this world by force and He is going to establish a righteous reign by force because He knows as well as I know and you should know that if He tried to come back as a Lamb of God we would have none of it. So He is not coming back as a little lamb.

This is why people are so popular about Christmas. This is why God's people get so excited about Christmas. They love a little baby in a manger that is non-threatening. They love to go to church and hear the story about the little Jesus baby, Emmanuel, how He was in a crib and how He was in swaddling clothes and how all the little animals were around. He is very unthreatening that way, is He not? They like it at Easter time because He is dead. If you really want to have a great day that you really celebrate that you would get nobody to come up to and this is why

nobody does it, you just celebrate September 23rd through the 24th. Second Coming Day. Not us.

Now the second part of that verse will be a reference to the Millennial Reign of Christ. Here again I am going to put it all together for you in just a minute. It says in the second part of that verse, "but his favor is as the dew upon the grass." Now dew in the Bible along with rain, along with water will always be a picture of the Millennial Reign of Christ wherever you find it. It says, "but his favor is as the dew upon the grass."

Proverbs 3:20 talks about the depths being broken up and the clouds dropping down the dew. In Hosea 14:5 it says:

Hosea 14:5

I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.

In Deuteronomy 33:26-29 it says:

Deuteronomy 33:26-29

There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky.

The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them.

Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew.

Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places.

That is the second coming of Christ passage. So when you find dew in your Bible you want to look at the context. One of those key words along with the word rain. Now dew will be found on the grass in the morning. You will find that in Exodus 16:13 when the manna came down and in the morning the manna with the dew was all around the ground. It is a picture of the Word of God. The morning will always be a reference to the second coming of Christ.

A couple of Thursday nights ago somebody asked a question about the third day and I ran you back over there to Mark 13 and showed you in verse 34 the four watches: the even, the midnight, the cockcrowing, and the morning. I showed you how that they span the course of 2,000 years of church history but Christ comes in the morning. The morning. So Christ in the Bible is called in 2 Peter 1:19, He is called the day star. That is our sun. The church age is likened to a nighttime. It is likened to a nighttime through four watches and in the morning guess what? The sun comes up. That is why God fixed the sun that every morning when you see it come up it is red. It is blood red. That is why He fixed the sun that every night when you see it when it goes down at night it is red. It is blood red. You know why? Because the last thing He wanted you to see at night and the first thing He wanted you to remember in the morning is the blood of Jesus Christ.

God's Son cleanses you from all sin. How about that one? See that thing? He is the Sun of Righteousness in Malachi 4:1. He is called the day star over there in 2 Peter as I said. He is called the morning star in Revelation 2:28.

The nighttime comes and we go through the church age and in the morning when the sun comes up, He arises, the Lord Jesus Christ comes back, the dew. All around, all on the grass. Dew is made up of water vapor. Dew is water that gets on the grass. It gets on your flowers. It gets on everything. While you are sleeping at night that dew forms because of the condensation in the air and then you get up and there is your walk through your backyard. Your feet are soaking wet. God waters everything but your grass is greener. Everything is cleaner. It washes everything. What this whole earth needs, it is so filthy, it needs good washing by the second coming of Christ. He is going to do it for you. He is going to do it for you.

Now He talks about the grass. Grass in the Bible will be likened to people. He talks about grass being cut down like in Psalm 37:2 and Psalm 90:5-6. Psalm 103:15. Psalm 102:4. Isaiah 40:6 says all flesh is grass. Isaiah 51:12 says man is made as grass. The indication in the Bible is as we look over your yard, you see it, you look up the grass grows. You know what you have got to do in the springtime a couple of times a month? You have got to mow the lawn. You get out that big old power mower and you are running up and down there and you cut the grass. Well that is what Christ is going to do with the second coming of Christ. He is going to mow the lawn. He is going to cut the grass. He is going to come down if you ever expected Ezekiel 1:1, Ezekiel 10, Ezekiel 1, all the places in there you will find that when He comes back, He comes back on something called a wheel within a wheel that is likened to a lawnmower, a threshing instrument. Blades that spin around and He comes right down on this earth and you know what He does with the wicked men that all flesh is grass? You know what He does with the wickedness of men as grass? He mows the lawn and comes back at the second coming.

You see, I know I am weird. I know that. But I am going to tell you, I believe Romans 1:19-20 where it says that the visible things of God are clearly seen and understood by the things that God made. I hate mowing the lawn. The only thing that I love mowing the lawn is I play that I am God at the second coming of Christ. I fire that sucker up boy and it is just humming together and that grass is high up there and I just look at it like all the armies of the antichrist. I hate mowing the lawn. I would rather do an antichrist mowing the lawn. I would rather go to the dentist and get my teeth pulled without any novocaine than to mow the lawn. The only thing that is my salvation in mowing the lawn is the second coming of Christ. Boy, I get up there, and the grass is down there and I could just think about what it is going to be like. The boy you go up and down that thing, man, and the thing I like about it, some of you people put the bag on that carries the grass out, not me. I want to see that people fly out of that machine. Man, I fire that baby up and I am going down through there and grass is going everywhere. I will tell you, that is what it is going to be like at the second coming of Christ. I know that is weird, but you see, you ought to get to the place in your life where you see God's picture of His word in everything that you do.

Why, there is not a time that I go through a rainstorm knowing what I know about the Bible that I do not understand that that is a picture of what God is going to do. What happens first? It comes

a cloudy day. That is Joel 2. Second coming of Christ is going to be a cloudy day. Then you start to see off in the distance lightning. The Bible says that lightning is Satan falling from heaven like lightning. He is coming down. Then you hear the thunder. Psalm 77 says that thunder, Psalm 29 is the very voice of God. It thundereth. One time over there in John, somebody says, "I wonder how God is going to call us up at the rapture of the church." One time over there in John, there is a bunch of people standing around that are believers and they hear God's voice come down and say something to them and there is a bunch of unbelievers all around there that do not believe in God and the Bible says the ones that believed in God heard a voice and all the other people that did not believe in God, they just heard thunder. Now, maybe that does not do much for me, but I get my ears perked up when I start to thunder. I am listening. Now the world just says, "Ah, it is going to rain. It is thundering." Boy, I see that old lightning falling. I really believe because the Bible says that before, back there in Isaiah, before God does anything, He is going to tell you what He is doing. He already told me that a rainstorm is a picture of the second coming of Christ.

Now if I was God, and I am not, but if I was God and I laid that thing out in the Bible, you knew when I would come back? I would come back in a rainstorm. Because the Bible says, "in such an hour you think not the Son of Man coming." You do not know the day and the hour. I cannot propound that, but I am going to tell you something. When I see those clouds gathering and I see that lightning flashing and I start to hear the roll of the thunder, I am ready to go. Then you know what happens? The heavens open up, the rain comes down, it thunders and crashes and lightning. Picture of the tribulation period. It is going back and forth. You know what causes the thunderstorm, do you not? Hot air versus hot air. You know what is going to cause the tribulation, do you not? Forces of evil versus the forces of good. When the heavens open up and that rain comes down and it just beats everything after the storm is over, in the morning, the sun is up, the sky is clear, the air is cleaner, the grass is cleaner, everything is cleaner. There in the sky, twinkling off, the dew is a rainbow. You know there are only two times you find a rainbow in the Bible. First time with Noah, second time with the second coming of Christ. Noah is a picture of the second coming of Christ. Oh boy. Why do you think that they told you there was a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow? There is. There are also streets of gold at the end of that rainbow.

So what you have here is getting this all together. Proverbs 19:11 says that God overlooks Israel's transgression because of His covenant that He made with Israel way back when. Then He jumps into Proverbs 19:12 showing that He is going to put an end to all nations and He is going to destroy all the nations of the second coming as a roaring lion. But at the second coming in the morning, the Word of God likened to rain, water, and dew is going to come down and make everything cleaner on this earth and then God is going to establish His covenant with Israel that He promised to Abraham. So that is what you got. Just one, two, three. Just that simple.

III. Israel as God's Son and God's Wife

Now it goes on in Proverbs 19:13 about the same context. We just changed gears a little bit here, but there is a lot to learn here. It says, "A foolish son is the calamity of his father: and the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping." Now inspirationally it speaks for itself. A foolish

son will be a calamity to his father and his mother and a contentious wife who gives problems all the time. It will always be an issue. But again, the verse here looking at it from a doctrinal standpoint, we are dealing again with the nation of Israel. Let me show you how.

This is one of the great key verses in the Bible because it shows you two main ways to study the nation of Israel. Now I know there are a lot of ways to study Israel, but there are two main ways. If you want to get a complete understanding of the nation of Israel, you have got to study it these two ways. It is a lot like the church. If you want to understand your relationship to Christ, you have got to study it two ways. First of all, you are a son of God, so you study it that way. You get all the material about that as you as God's son. But then the Bible says that if you are a male or female here and you are saved, you are Christ's bride. So now you are a female. So you have got to look at all of that aspect. You put the two together, son versus bride, you have got a complete picture of the church.

Now Israel is the same way, almost the same way, because there are two ways to study the nation of Israel.

1. The first one is God's son. We are going to look at that for a moment.
2. The second will be as God's wife. Not a bride, but a wife, a married wife.

You see, we are not married to Christ yet, but Israel was married to God in the Old Testament. Let me show you how it works. Now let us look at the first way first, a son. This will be the first way you want to get all the material together to study the nation of Israel.

Exodus 4:22

And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn:

See that thing? "My firstborn." Now it can get confusing if you do not understand your Bible or have somebody explain it to you because you are a son of God too this morning, but not like Israel. You see, you are a son of God as an individual. There was never a Jew in the Old Testament that was a son of God as an individual. They were a son of God as a corporate nation. When God looked at Israel, He saw the nation as His son. When He looks at the church, He sees you individuals who were born again as His son. That is a major difference. Of course, like I said many, many times when I said yesterday, most people do not understand that. Most people think that you were saved in the Old Testament like you were saved in the New Testament. Nothing could be farther from the truth. That is not true. The reason I know that is not true is because when they died, they did not go to the same place. Hello?

No, in the Old Testament, God looks at the nation of Israel as a nation, as a corporate nation, as His son. When you find Israel as a son of God in a corporate sense, it is always dealing with the political aspect of it, the kingdom of heaven as God's nation. That will be Israel as a corporate nation, always dealing with the political line of the kings through the kingdom of heaven, always. It will represent as a nation their God's son, and as a nation as God's son as a nation in the millennium, they are going to reign with God. This is the great key to the gospel. You see, when you find something in the Bible, even if it is in the Old Testament, it will stay consistent and it will always be a great key for the rest of the Bible.

Now when you understand that Israel as a corporate nation—say it again, not individuals, that is you—in the Old Testament, as a nation is God's son, then you take that aspect of God's son, a male, a man, a son, and it will give you the keys to everything dealing with Israel through the rest of the Bible. Now you will get over in the book of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. You will find a lot of stories there about men and women too, but men. You will find the Bible says there was a certain man. Your Bible will go through there and it said a man had two sons. The Bible talked about the fact that there is a rich man and a poor man. Wherever you find that man in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, once you understand that Israel is God's son as a corporate nation, that story about that man will always be a story about the nation of Israel. It is not simple. It is not complicated.

I will give you an example of it.

Matthew 12:43-45

When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.

Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished.

Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

Now this is a great passage here on demon possession. Demon possession is a real deal. It was a real deal in the Bible's time. It is a real deal today. Most people, especially the charismatic world, they get all upset about it and all get down into it and think that everybody has got a problem with your demon possessed, and that is not true. That is not true. That is not true at all. The other night, the devil does not have to demon possess you to get what he wants you to do. He just shows you the world out there and you will be gone in a heartbeat. He did not need to do that. But it can happen.

I had a lady in the church one time that every time we had something, I did not trust her with it any further than I could throw her. Her thing that she always brought was deviled eggs to everything we had. I was sure that she had a demon possessed chicken at home that laid deviled eggs, and I would not eat them. We had a lady in this one time, it was demon possessed, and you remember us deacons, we went out there and we exercised the demon and we unpossessed her. We charged her \$50. She did not pay it, so she got repossessed.

"When the unclean spirit has gone out of a man," see that? A man, a man. "He walketh through the dry places, seeking rest and findeth none." There is a lot in here, we are not going to get into all this. I want to make my point here. "Then he saith, I will return unto my house, from whence I came out, and when he has come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he and taketh with himself seven other spirits, more wicked than himself." Now those seven spirits that he is talking about are found in Proverbs 6:16. This is where you want to put it in there.

Now watch what he is saying. "Then goeth he and taketh with himself seven other spirits, more wicked than himself, and he enter in and dwell there in the last state of that man." See that thing? "It is worse than the first." Now here is your key. "Even so shall it be unto this wicked generation." The man here is a generation of people. Now it can be an individual if you want to make the practical application to it, but in the context of what you have got here, that man is the nation of Israel. Look at it, Proverbs 12:44. "Unto his house," the whole house of Israel. He is saying here that the nation of Israel at one time picked up some evil spirit, then the evil spirit left and Israel cleaned itself up. It got religious, but it is still empty. So he comes back and brings seven more wicked spirits than himself, and the last state of Israel is worse than the first state. That is Israel today. That is Israel going into the tribulation period. The man here is a generation of people. He is not a man. It is using it once you realize that Israel as a nation, every time you get into Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John and you find in a story about a man, it is going to be Israel. This is the key to it all. It is the difference between understanding the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Now the second thing that you are going to find here, the second thing that you are going to look at is you are going to find Israel as a great study of being God's wife. So you want to study him first of all as the son, corporate nation, but then you want to study him as a wife. That will be the religious side. Israel is God's wife. Israel is a foolish son. You will see them both, the way you study them.

When you go to Jeremiah 3:1-4, Isaiah 54:1, it tells you that Israel is God's wife. Just like Christ has a bride for Him, God has a wife for Him. Then in the Old Testament, God operates through the Old Testament through His wife, Israel. In the New Testament, God operates through His Son's bride, the church. They are not the same. They are not the same.

In Genesis 2:20, we have Adam. He is the model. He is a type of Christ. He is also a type of God the Father. God created Adam. He put him dominion over everything and He says, "Adam, I have got something I want you to do, but you cannot do it by yourself, so I am going to give you a help meet." Not a help mate. Your dog has a mate. Your cat will have a mate. Your canary will have a mate. Humans do not have mates. They have meats, M-E-E-T. If you are saved, if you are unsaved, I am not sure what you have got. If you are saved, you have got a help meet. What does that mean? That God gave you a task and a commission and for you to get it done, He gave you a woman that was going to help you meet that commitment that God called you to do. So in the Old Testament, Israel, God cannot do it by Himself. He needs a help meet. So God gave Him a wife. In the New Testament, Christ cannot do it by Himself, so He gave Him a bride, a help meet.

I love pious people. I was one time, I was talking to a group of people and I said, "I cannot do this on the Thursday night because I have my Bible study on Thursday night." The woman looked at me and she said, "Brother Bob, never say Brother Bob, you know you are in trouble. Brother Alexander, that is really you are in trouble." She says, "I do not mean to quibble about that, but she says, you know, it is not really your Bible study. It is the Lord's Bible study." I said, "I am glad to know that. We can go ahead and meet. Let Him teach it." Let me ask you a question. If I did not show up Thursday night, do you think God is going to come down and

teach you lame heads anything? Do you really think He is going to walk in that door and say, "Okay, open your Bibles now." Such a pious statement like that is, "Well, Brother, it is not really your Bible study." Then who is it? "Well, it is the Lord." Really? Let Him teach it. You know why He will not teach it? Because I am His help meet. That is why. He depends on me like God wants to depend on you. No, I cannot help it if you shirk your responsibilities. I am not going to shirk mine.

You know what Paul said about the gospel of Jesus Christ? He said, "It is my gospel." It was his gospel. God gave it to him and then he gave it to everybody else. This ministry, it is my ministry. It is not yours. You want to be part of it? Love to have you. I will carve out a big piece and keep you so busy you will die in the process. But you know what? End of the day, if the Germans eat a Christ, it is not going to be you that gives an account for this work. It is going to be me. Yeah, obviously it is God's work. Sure it is. But you know what? In the New Testament, God said, "I cannot do it by myself. My Son cannot do it by Himself. I am going to give Him a help meet." You know why you do not get that? You are not a very good help meet. This lady was not. She had the long dresses. She had the long hair in a bun. She had it all down. I mean she walked into crypto. The buns on her head, they would be grabbing those things and they were cinnamon rolls. But they were not. She had it all down. She had the dress down. She had the talk down. She had everything down. She did not understand the concept that if you are saved this morning, you are His help meet.

Somebody said, "Well, you know, we have got a problem. Let us just put it in God's hands and God will take care of it." I believe that. There is nothing wrong with doing that. Did you actually think God is just going to come down and fix your flat tire? Do you think God is going to come down and fix your problem? You know what God is going to do? He is going to find a help meet out here and bring that help meet along to help you through what you have got to go through. That is why He does not. In the Old Testament, it was His wife. She was to be the help meet to God, to take the light to the Gentiles. Now then in the New Testament, it is you and me for Christ as the bride of Christ to take the truth, the gospel to the world. I mean, how complicated is that? In all of history, certainly all the Bible, but I will say all right now, all of history is built around those two identities. In Proverbs 22 and 23, they are called the landmarks. God shows you that in the Old Testament, everything He did was around His wife. In the New Testament, everything He does is around His church. Now the fact that you do not get that, you have been hanging out with the wrong people.

Now let us go back to the Old Testament. It is going to get better. It is going to get gooder. Because here is another great unknown today. You know God as we speak with His wife, Israel. You know God is divorced. Divorce. I grew up in churches that if you were a divorced person, you could not go to the normal church service. They had a little room back there for divorced people. Just like you had leprosy. Hey, I have been in churches all my life that have special classes for divorced people because they did not want you divorced people mixing with other people and maybe hooking up and marrying them because, oh boy, then we got a problem. Boy, you have got a problem in your church when divorced people start marrying other people and

getting married again where you have got a real problem. That was the mindset for many, many, probably still is in most cases.

I used to laugh at it. God says, "I want to join the church and I love the Lord and I love the Bible. You know I tell you, I just really want to do everything God wants me to do and I would like to teach a Sunday school class." "Have you ever been divorced?" "Yeah, I was divorced years ago." "Cannot do it." "Okay, well I would like to drive a church bus down." "You have been divorced?" "Yeah, you cannot do that." "Well, I would like to sing in the choir." "You have been divorced?" "You cannot do that." "Well, I would like to be a deacon." "Forget it. You cannot be that." "Well, pastor, what can I do?" "You can tithe." That is how it works. Cannot do anything but we want your money. Nietzsche said one time, "God is dead!" Shocked the world! He is not dead. I just talked to Him this morning. Well, I will tell you what will shock most of God's people. He is divorced. I will show you. I always show you, I just kind of let it go for a while until you are almost going to a cardiac arrest and then I will give it to you and bring you back.

Jeremiah 3:1-4, God said to Israel, "I am married unto you." Isaiah 54:1, God says God's married wife is Israel. Isaiah 62:4, this shows your great connection here. It says the land is married to the Lord and of course that land is Israel. What happened is this. Under the Old Testament law there were grounds for divorce. One of the grounds was adultery. If a man found that uncleanness in a woman that was his wife, he could put her away. So in a spiritual sense, God looked at God's wife and she had stepped out and committed spiritual fornication, read about it through the Old Testament, with all the other gods. Why do you, one of the first come in without you having to go to God before me? How many times did God tell you He was a jealous God? So His wife Israel stepped out on Him with other gods, Baal worship. God pleaded with her. You ought to read the accounts in Ezekiel, down around chapter 22 in some of those places. How He pleaded with her and how she darted upon her lovers. She committed great acts of whoredoms. So bad that when God told Hosea to write his book, He says, "Take a wife of whoredoms," which is the violation of the law. But at that point, who was paying attention to the law?

So when Hosea went out there to preach and give them God's word, you know what Israel did. The same thing that God's self-righteous people do today. "Now who are you to tell me when you violated the law and you married a harlot?" Gomer. What a looker she must have been. Golly, I do not know what to tell you. When they started to point fingers, you know what he did? I will tell you what he did. He put that finger back and said, "You know why I took a wife of harlots? Because God told me to as an object lesson that you as God's wife have committed whoredoms." Read the book of Hosea. It is all the way through it.

So what did God do?

Isaiah 50:1

Thus saith the LORD, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away.

God divorced her. He put her away. So the Old Testament law, He separated Himself from His wife Israel. That would be Deuteronomy 24:1 and Deuteronomy 24:3. From 606 BC up to now, up through the tribulation period, God has separated Himself from His wife Israel. He has put her away. He is hidden from her. He watches her from afar. He takes care of her. But He has divorced Himself from any relationship with her. All this stuff going on today with the nation of Israel, how they pray to God at the Wailing Wall and all that stuff, you know what? They may as well be praying up against the wall of a Quick Trip. At least you can get a cup of coffee there.

God divorced His wife under the Old Testament law, but God never violates His own principles. So as in any marriage with issues and problems, the key word and concept will always be restoration and reconciliation. That is always the bottom line. It is always the bottom line. The bottom line in any marriage when it gets into trouble, gets into problems, and maybe it does not work out. I do not know. A lot of water under the bridge sometimes, but I am telling you from a Bible standpoint following the principles of the Word of God, God's program when you have problems, when He has problems with His wife and He put her away, it was a temporary putting away and He is going to reconcile with her and restore her.

1 Corinthians 7, we all know is to defend the new past and past, you go on marriage, divorce and remarriage. Nothing in the Old Testament. It is all found there. In fact, he adds some things in that that he does not have in the Old Testament. Why? Because you are dealing with the church and not with Israel.

Now listen to what I am about to say here. Fundamentally, you need to understand this. In the Old Testament under the law, listen to me now, in the Old Testament under the law, there were grounds for a divorce. God divorced Israel and put her away, Isaiah 50:1, gave her a bill of divorcement on those grounds, adultery against other nations and other gods. See the book of Hosea. But God is going to restore Himself to her at the second coming of Christ.

Now, here we go. Stay with me. In the Old Testament, there were grounds for divorce. In the New Testament, listen very carefully. You do not want to miss this. In the New Testament, there are no grounds for divorce. None whatsoever. Now, I say that in a world where Christians are getting divorced like donuts are flying out of a Quick Trip on Saturday morning. But I am telling you from the Bible standpoint, I am going to lay it out here and I am going to explain it to you so you grasp it. In the New Testament, there are no grounds for divorce. None whatsoever. Because the model in the New Testament will be Christ in the church. We are not under the law. The Bible says in Ephesians 5:22-33, that the relationship between a husband and a wife is like Christ in the church. That is the model. Just, we call it eternal security. Just as Christ will never separate from the church. Just as Christ will never separate from the church. One more time for the slow people. Just as Christ will never separate Himself from the church, two Christians that will never separate themselves from each other. It is the difference between the Old Testament and God giving Israel the bill of divorcement and eternal security in the New Testament where God will never leave you or separate from you.

Now I say all that and it is true. The reason why I say that is because we are under grace. They were not. You have the Holy Spirit of God living inside you, they did not. You are a son of God,

they were not. As a son of God with the Holy Spirit of God inside you, there ought to be nothing, nothing, nothing that two Christians cannot work out together in Christ Jesus.

A woman said to me one time, "Well I just do not love my husband." I said, "You have got to love him." She said, "Well I cannot stand him." I said, "Well you know you have got to work at him." She said, "Well I just hate him." I said, "Well you have not got a chance there either. The Bible says you have got to love your enemies." You have nowhere to go. You know some of you are unlovable? All unlovable people stand up. No, I am just kidding. Some of you people are hard to love sometimes. You really are. I can be unlovable. I can be hard to love sometimes. I can. I am. The older I get, the more crankier I get and the worse I feel and the best. I just, you know, I just, do not mess with me today, I will smack you. But the most unlovable people I ever met in my life, they were unlovable. You know what? I still love them. You know why I still love them? Because I think how unlovable I was with God for so many years. He loved me. You are all human. You all have your good days and your bad days. Why should I let your inability to deal with something break a relationship or be loving you when I may be the one to be able to help you with it? I mean it is just that simple. Now I use that as an example, but I have got to be honest with you, you are all lovable. I do not see any unlovable people. I just saw one in the back over there. You are all lovable. You are. You are the most lovable people on the planet. You are good. You are kind. You are loving. You are sweet. You are. But I had to use that as an example. "You are talking about me." "He is talking about me." I am not talking about you. I am talking about the guy sitting next to you. No, I am not talking about you.

So a husband and a wife should never separate from the marriage. Now 1 Corinthians 7 says that there is a biblical separation of getting apart when things get chaotic. But he tells you that the believer is never to leave. Now the Bible says that the unbelieving depart let him depart. Allow me to explain this New Testament concept so you can compare it to what we are talking about in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, there will never be biblical grounds for divorce. In the Old Testament, there was. But hey, come on. You are well aware of as I am that there are many, many divorces among God's people. Where there may not be any biblical grounds for divorce, there are reasons for divorce in the New Testament. This is what I want to focus on. The reason will always be that either one or the other, in many cases both parties, will not follow the patterns and do what the Bible says.

If you have got a husband and a wife that are having problems and they follow what the Bible says and they commit themselves to what the Word of God says, they are going to be okay. But I am going to tell you, sometimes you get a husband and he will not do what is right. Sometimes you get a wife and they will not do what is right. Sometimes you get a, both of them will not do what is right. I have seen them where the husband says, "I want to work it out." The wife says, "Not me." I have seen it where the wife says, "I want to work it out." The husband says, "Not me." I have seen them when they look at each other and they say, "Neither one of us want to work it out." But at the end of the day, there are no grounds for divorce in the New Testament. But there are reasons.

Now, I say that with grace, understanding that some of you are sitting here tonight and you are a Christian and you have been divorced. The last thing I want to put on you is the fact that you

think you did something wrong. I do not know that you did or you did not. But I will tell you this. Sometimes a husband will get to the point where he does not do what he needs to do. He does not follow through with it. Does not become the man who went after 10, 15 years. The woman just busted and broke and done. Sometimes it is the other way. In other words, what I am saying is there may not be any biblical ground, but there are sometimes extenuating circumstances that God certainly understands. At the end of the day, I do not care if you made a mistake in getting divorced or you did not. It does not matter. The mistake of getting a divorce when maybe you should not or you did not do what you did is no different than every other mistake we made in life. God's grace covers it all.

I never, in this church, I never look at anybody of where they have been for and what they went through, what they did or what they did not do. I do not care where you are at now. But there are people in this church here this morning that you went to other churches and they threw you out because of the fact that you were divorced. I welcome with open arms. I do not care. Do you think that in those same churches that did not want anything to do with you, those pastors and those deacons and those people in that church are just as got as much dirty laundry as you got? They just got their lock in the closet someplace. It is easier to focus on yours than theirs.

My point is simply this. God in the Old Testament had a wife that was Israel. Under the law, He had ground the divorce on her basis of adultery. She stepped out on Him with other nations. So He divorced her, gave her a bill of divorce, but He is going to restore her because at the end of the day, Old Testament, New Testament, by the line of restoration. In the New Testament, there are no grounds for divorce because it is Christ in the church. Just as Christ will not separate Himself from His bride, you cannot separate husbands. Love your wives as Christ loved the church. Let the wives revere unto the Lord. It is the model. But it happens. Many times it happens because most of the people bless their hearts in a day and they relish and they did not have a biblical marriage to start out with. So you really cannot blame them. But where you are at now from here on is where you have got to focus. That is all. No big deal. No big deal.

When in the Old Testament, Israel as a husband and a wife had issues, they were under the law. But they had a strict guideline to follow and God followed those guidelines and He dealt with them on that basis. In the New Testament, where he began to fall apart and have issues, there is an absolute guideline that they have to follow. Many times they will, many times they will not. Many times one will, the other one will not. It is just the way it is. As long as both parties want to follow what the Bible says and do what the Word of God says and understand the role of each other as Christ in the church, you know, some of God's people will have problems with other God's people. It will go on for years. I have known people that hated people for years. You know that, after so many years you forgot even what you hate them for. But you know why you never fix those things? It is easy. It is not complicated. It does not take a degree in theology. You know why you will not fix that thing? Because you will not do what the Bible says. That is all. I do not know of a problem that you have or I have this morning that cannot be simply fixed by doing what the Word of God says. Now, how complicated is that? Not very.

In both cases, the Old Testament under the law and the New Testament under grace, it will go back and reflect on God and the Old Testament as His wife, as Christ and the New Testament, the

church as His bride. All this based on Israel as God's wife in the Old Testament and the church as Christ in the New Testament. But either way, it goes on and says the rest part of that verse, "and the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping." Now what does that mean? How does that fit into this? Continual dropping. Israel continually, as the wife of God, dropped her responsibility as the help meet to God. What do you say in the world? "Boy, I dropped the ball on that." What do you say? He is saying that Israel as God's wife dropped the ball continually as being the help meet to what God wanted to do. You know what? You can put it into the church age. Without a doubt, the church today has dropped the ball on being the help meet for Christ. Without a doubt, look at Revelation 3:20. You do not think what I am saying is true. Pastors have dropped the ball with their churches. Churches have dropped the ball with their people. Christians have dropped the ball with the world concept. Christians have dropped the ball with doing what God wants them to do. The Bible says it is, in today we as Christ's bride, we are like Israel. We have dropped the ball. In Christianity, as in Israel, it is a continual dropping. We just simply do not do what God called us to do.

IV. Inheritance, Prudence, and Slothfulness

Look at Proverbs 19:14. "Houses and riches are the inheritance of fathers: and a prudent wife is from the LORD." He is not even married. You do not know what he is talking about. No, I am just kidding. Now the practical is obvious. Fathers typically leave their kids an inheritance, and you find a good wife, you have got a good thing going for you. But look at the word prudent. The word prudent means to be careful. It means in a practical sense to be wise. It means to be careful of the consequences of things. It means to move cautiously around things. In a Bible context of what we have here, in a context of what we are looking at, always be careful to follow the principles of the Word of God in any scenario, either as the wife of God in the Old Testament or the bride of Christ in the New Testament. I know we are talking about the wife of God in the Old Testament, but I am showing you the contrast by throwing in the bride of Christ.

Now as it applies to Israel, it says the fathers, "houses and riches are the inheritance of fathers." So we see Israel in the beginning have what we call patriarchs or fathers. We have Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Solomon, and it was through them that God gave the nation of Israel their inheritance, the land. Their relationship with God, the kingdom of heaven, went and transferred to every one of these guys and translates into the dew coming down in the millennium after God passes over their transgressions. This will be the visible land grant that was given to Abraham in Genesis 12, Genesis 13, Genesis 14, and Genesis 15. Israel is God's wife needs to be prudent and careful. Stay with what gave them to get them where they are at. That is what he is saying. In the New Testament, you and I, the bride of Christ, we need to do the same because we have got the judgment seat of Christ coming up against us. So we need to be careful.

The Bible says in Ephesians 5:15, talking about the bride of Christ, that we are to walk circumspectly, not as fools. Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:5 that if you want to be crowned and you are running a race for Jesus Christ, you have to run lawfully. You have to do it by the book.

Look at Proverbs 19:15, "Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger." Again, inspiration, it speaks for itself. You do not work, you do not eat. We all get that. You will be on the street corner with a sign, "Help me, I am homeless." I cannot get that. Take in your money right now. My cell phone is ringing. I have got to text somebody in Australia.

Now the key words here to look at at this downfall will be slothful and idleness. This is what you do with a verse like this. You look for the key words. Slothfulness is simply wasting the things that God has given us. Some of you do not know your Bible very well. You know why you do not know it very well? Because you have wasted all the time you could have got into the Bible doing something else. That is slothfulness. Some of you do not have anything. You cannot rub two nickels together. You know why? Slothful with the money that God gave you. Most people think if you had more money it would solve all your problems. No, it would not. The problem with you is not getting more money. The problem is you do not do what is right with the money you have. The ability and talents. We are slothful with the abilities that God gives us, the talents that God gives us, that we can do for Him. He gave it to us to do for Him. We have problems in our families, our kids. You know why? Because we have been slothful in not doing what is right and training them up the way they should go. All these things that we have to be effective for God in our life and we get slothful with them. Then we wonder why we do not, we have got the problems we have got. We wonder why our families have the problems we have got. We wonder why we have these issues in our life. We wonder why we are not happy. We wonder why we do not have this. We have been slothful with the very things that God gives us. God has given you a Bible. The most precious gift outside of salvation that He could ever give. Some of God's people do not even bother reading it.

Then the second thing is the idle soul. We know that from our past studies that body and soul are used interchangeably. These will be people who get saved and never do anything for God. God saved us in Ephesians 4 and go through those things for the work of the ministry. Nowhere in the Bible does it ever recognize anybody when they got saved that they did not do four things.

3. First thing they did when they got saved, that is number one, they got baptized.
4. That is number two.
5. Third thing is they joined a New Testament church.
6. The fourth thing is they went to work for God.

It is just that simple. You have got people who get saved but they will not get baptized. They get saved or they will never join a church. They will get saved and will not get baptized and join a church. Or they get saved, get baptized and join a church but they never go to work for God. You can mix and match it any way you want. Like peanuts, cashews, pistachios.

V. Keeping Commandments and Preservation

Look at Proverbs 19:16. "He that keepeth the commandment keepeth his own soul; but he that despiseth his ways shall die." Now let me draw your attention to the phrase "his ways." You need to get this. You and me as a child of God will not make it going our way. You may think you will but you will not. By the time you figure out you will not, it is too late to get out of it. It is like

you do not like roller coasters. The world is a fun and gets on that 9,000 foot high roller coaster up there and everything is fine when you roll out of the gate. Everybody is laughing and talking and you start that long climb. You get to the top and the moment you crush that top, you know what? You know you made a wrong choice. You know what is even worse? It is not any way you are getting out of it. You are going to ride it to the end. You know life is like that. The thing to do is before you look at the roller coaster, look at the sign. No pacemakers, no kids under this age, this size. No pregnant women. No fear of heart, fear of heights. Follow it man. You say, "Ah not me." Click click click click click click click. You have got that thing boy. You look down at it and here it comes. You mean here it comes down? No, here comes your stomach up to your mouth.

There are times in your life when you know to do the right thing and you do not do it and you keep on doing it and you keep on doing it and you get to the point just like that roller coaster. You cannot get back. God gave us some rules to live by and to follow and when we get our attitude about God's ways, it is plural. When we get an attitude against those things and want to go our ways, it is never going to work for you. God's people just never seem to get this truth. Job 9:4 is one of my favorite verses in the Bible. I do not quote it much but I look at people in the situation they are in and I always think it. I would like to say it to them but by that point they do not want to hear it. But if Job 9:4, "Who hath hardened himself against him, and prospered?" The answer is nobody. Nobody.

"But he that keepeth the commandments keepeth his own soul." Do what the word of God says. The word of God will preserve you. I showed you, I read you Isaiah 49:6 when we started and it told you there that Israel is preserved by God. The word of God will preserve you in your life, in your family. Some of you this morning I look across this room and I watch where you have come from. I know your history. I know where you came from in life before you got saved. I know the problems you had. I know the problems you had in your family. I know the problems that you had growing up and the things that were against you. I look at you sitting here today loving the word of God, loving God, saved on your way to heaven and an unvital part of my ministry. I think to myself, you know what you are? You are living proof that the word of God will preserve you. Because you should not be here. It will keep you.

You know the Bible is like a salt. In the Old Testament they had what they called in Numbers 18:19 a covenant of salt. In Leviticus 2:13, when they had the meat offerings and the peace offerings they put salt in it. You know why? Because salt is preservative. Salt was a picture of the preserving aspect of God. In Matthew 5:13 it talks about you and me. It says, "Ye are the salt of the earth." You and I as God's people with the word of God would keep any country, any nation preserved where they would not deteriorate and corrupt and fall apart. But then the Bible says if the salt has lost its savor. That is what has happened in America. Salt has lost its savor. America is in a corruption not because of the Democrats, not because of the liberals, not because of anything other than God's people. The salt has lost its savor. We are not preserving nothing. You cannot even preserve yourself. You cannot get through one day without having upside down and inside out problems. You cannot get through life without losing your family. You cannot go through a marriage without getting into a divorce. We cannot preserve anything. All because of

the fact that the salt has lost its savor. Yet you will sit here this morning, most of you, if not all of you, and your life is now preserved. Sure you made mistakes in life. Sure you had some bad turns in life. No problem. We all have. We have all done stupid things. We have all had things that happened to us. It was not our fault. Every one of us. We have had most of the things that happened to us but it was because of our fault. But you know what? When you turn the corner and you see that book and you fall in love with God and get that book, you know what that book does for you? It preserves you. You are here this morning for the preservation of the Word of God. You are not here because you decided to come to church. You are not here because you came to hear me preach. You are not here because I am such a great preacher and Bible teacher, though I am. You are here because of the fact that God preserved you. He will preserve you. But it will always come down to which way you go in life. A couple of weeks ago in Proverbs we talked about that. His way versus God's way.

VI. Pity for the Poor and Lending to the Lord

Then Proverbs 19:17, "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again." Now the principle is universal in either testament old or new. We talked about it a couple of weeks ago, that how we take care of the poor, there is a great balance in our lives. Paul tells us to help each other in times of need. Acts 20:35, the famous verse, "it is better to give than receive." In 1 Corinthians 6:1-2, and again in Acts 11:28, the Christian down in Jerusalem will have a terrible time. A great, great, great time of dearth. They were hungry. They had no food. They had no money. He cannot pay the money to take down for the relief of the saints in Jerusalem. The examples are many in the Bible. Last week we saw it with David and Mephibosheth. We saw Peter helping the lame man, Jesus helping blind Bartimaeus.

In this church, I get people all the time that call me from, I do not even know who they are, I want help. I do not mind helping people, but I want to tell you something. The first people that we help in this church are you. You get in a jam, we are here for you. That is what our spot was supposed to be. That is just the way it was. Many times I told somebody, "You know what, my advice to you is, why do not you call your church where you go to?" "Well, I do not go to church." "Well, then I even said this a couple of times. Well, you know what, if serving the devil is such a prosperous thing, why do not you take care of you? Why do you live like hell, live like the devil, do what you want, and then you get in a bind, you come to church and want God to bail you out?" Well, maybe that is anger. Maybe that is mean. I do not think it is anger, but maybe that is being cold. Maybe that is being indifferent. But I will tell you what else it is. It is the truth. If the devil takes such good care of you and you just love hanging out with him and palling around with his crowd and going where he wants you to go, when you get down in the dumps and you get in the jam and you have every intention of going right back into that lifestyle, why come to God?

But doctrinally as it stands, the verse here, "He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the LORD, and that which he giveth repay," is doctrinally dealing with the nation of Israel in the tribulation period. It is the Gentile nations helping out Israel who is poor going through the

tribulation who has nothing. The lending to the Lord is a great concept and a practical application. When you give to others, it will always come back to you through the blessings of God, because the Bible says it is more blessed to give than to receive. Taking care of what belongs to God.

I do not know if you know this in the Bible, but in the Bible there are only two things that we can lend to the Lord. I do not even know if you know this. There are only two things that we can lend to the Lord.

7. One of them is our children. They call it Hannah in 1 Samuel 1:28, when God gave her the boy, she says, "I am going to lend him to the Lord," and she did.
8. The other one is Proverbs 19:17, that is our substance that God has given us on this earth.

You know why? Those are the only two things. I will tell you why, because the reason being, they are not really ours to begin with. The Bible says that your children are for God's heritage. They are not for yours. How dare you take God's heritage and make him a track star when that is not what God wanted him to be? How dare you make him a great baseball player when that is not what God wanted him to be? How dare you take God's heritage and decide what you are going to do with it instead of getting into the Word of God and letting God decide what He is going to do with it? How dare you create his future of what he is going to be and what he is going to do and put God completely out of it because you want him to be what you want to be because you want to vicariously experience it and you want him to get a good education, you want him to get this, and you want him to be famous, and you want him to be this, and you want him to be that. I would just as soon have him be God's man and do what God wanted him to do. If that would be out of the street corner, putting tracts out every weekend. But that is just me.

Psalm 127:3 says, that our children are the heritage of the Lord. We get the idea that they are our heritage. No, no. God gave him to you. You are to be a steward of them. God gave him to you to train up that the heritage of the Lord would guarantee to go on and do what God wants them to do. He did not give to you so you could make him what you want him to be. He gave to you so you would be in the Word of God and make him what God wanted him to be.

Then the second thing is our earthly possessions. "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Now you know me, I am not against you having nice things. I think you should. Some of you drive nice cars, I think you should. Some of you have nice clothes, I think you should. I have nice clothes, I just cannot find them. They are in a pile of my closet, but they are in there. We come to the point where, you know, there is nothing wrong with having nice things. There is not. But do not get to the point that you let those nice things take from you what God wants you to be and what God wants you to do. He gave you those things for His honor and glory, not yours. He gave you those things so you could function. He gave you the job that you have, not so you would have an income to pay your bills. He gave you the job that he has got so you would be a paid missionary that you could do what he wants you to do, like Paul. You could be a tentmaker missionary and support your ministry by the job you have. We lose sight of that and think, "Oh, it is about everything I want," and we forget all about what God wants us to do. Someday we are going to give a stewardship of that. You know, there

are seven stewardships in the Bible and I would dare to say that the average Christian could not name one of them. You guys could. But it all comes from God.

Psalm 111:5

He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant.

A good man showeth favor and lendeth he will guide his affairs with discretion. He understands these things.

VII. God's Ways Versus Our Ways

Now these truths are found in the book of Proverbs and they will be life-changing principles that we all need in our lives. The book of Proverbs is about the way of God, the ways of God. You know, the Bible says in 1 Kings 2:4 and 1 Kings 4:32, that Solomon wrote 3,000 Proverbs. You know, you do not have 3,000 Proverbs. You do not have a tenth of them. You do not have 3,000 Proverbs in your Bible. But you know what you do have? You have exactly out of the 3,000 what the Holy God picked to put in there that He wanted you to have. Now that makes it special. I mean, if you would have had all 3,000, you would have said, "Oh, well, here they are." But no, no, no, no. He picked, hand-picked out of that 3,000 exactly what He wanted you to have. Because it is important. That is what makes Proverbs so vitally important. He hand-picked the Proverbs that would show you God's ways versus our ways. Then gives you the example of a wise man that followed God's way and the blessings of it, and a foolish man that went his way and was destroyed. All through the Bible it is illustrated.

In Luke 6:46-49, it tells the story. It starts out in verse 46:

Luke 6:46-49

And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like:

He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.

But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.

You know, that is one of the greatest questions in all of the Bible. The many times I look at God's people, many times I look at myself. The many times I look at God's people and I simply say, "Why call Him Lord, Lord, and you do not do what He tells you to do?" What is the point of Him being the Lord of your life if He is not the Lord of your life? What good is it if He is, say He is the Lord of my life when He is only the Lord of your life in the things you want Him to be

the Lord of life and the things you want to keep to yourself, you are going to keep? Great question.

Then He says in verse 47, "Whoso cometh to me and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will show you whom he is like?" Oh boy, we are going to get to see what a guy that does what the Word of God said is like. "He is like a man which built a house." Now here again, the man here is Israel. The house is the house of Israel, see? That is the primary application. Here it is again. But you know there is a practical application to it because you have got a house and you are a man or a woman which built a house and dig deep and laid the foundation on a rock and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house that it could not shake it, for it was founded upon a rock.

"But he that heareth and doeth not is like a man that without a foundation built a house upon the earth against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell and the ruin of that house was great." Now it just simply says that when you go God's way, here is what you are like. You have a house. Doctrinally it is Israel. Inspirationally it is your body. The temple of God. We know that if this house be dissolved, we have a body not made with hands eternal into heavens. So you have a house and you build a foundation and you dig down deep. That is the depth of the Word of God. Oh I know most of God's people just want to be a surface kind of guy. I get that. You just want to know the four spiritual laws and you know things like that. You do not want to get down in the depth of the Bible. But when you lay a foundation in your life against the storms that is coming, you better dig down deep.

You know what if you ever get into combat, and I pray that you do not, but if you ever get into combat and you get in a in a wood someplace or open field where you are and you are dug in there and the artillery starts to come in and the 188 mortars start to come in on you and they start to put the artillery on you with 88s and all that stuff over there. I do not care how deep you dug your foxhole. Suddenly it will not be deep enough. Nobody in combat when the 88s come in and the mortars come in and all the artillery comes in is laying in a two inch deep hole. You want that sucker as deep as you can get it. You will try to get down there and the guy that you see in the bottom will be speaking Chinese to you.

Let me tell you something. What is wrong with God's people today? The winds of this world, the disasters of this world, the problems of this world are hitting you like a rainstorm and a windstorm and the problem is you only got a two inch foundation dug and you are getting blown everywhere around. Dig down deep. You know what I teach Bible study on Thursday and that is the way I do, so you will dig down deep. You know what I have for you singles? What I have for you? So you will dig down deep. You know what we do in the people ministry like we did yesterday? I want you to dig down deep. You know I do it on Sunday morning. I could come down here and just give you a fluff thing. The internet is full of messages that would be just nice to preach. We would be done in 20 minutes and out of here. But you will never dig anything deep that way. We are going to get down in the Bible. We are going to get your face in the Bible. We are going to get down in that thing deep. You know why? Because there is a storm coming in your life that you have not already got into it. In your house. You better dig it deep and you better lay your foundation on a rock. Now when the natural disasters of this life hit your house, you

stand because the Word of God will preserve you. You will stand there at the end of the day, maybe some battered bruises and some blood running down off your knees and off your mouth and that thing, but you will still be standing. At the end of the day for a child of God, it is not how bad you get beat up as you get there. The question I have for you and God will have for you at the end of that thing, are you still standing?

Proverbs 6:49. Last part of that verse. "But heed, adhereth, and doeth not." You see, you have to do something with what God gives you. You have to do something with what God gives you. You have no foundation because you build it on earth, not a rock, the world. It falls and the ruin is great. You know what the tragedy is? It really is. It is not apparent just as you see it because we get so caught up in all of the circumstances within it. You know what the great tragedy in Christianity is? It is always a tragedy when anybody goes down. It really is. It certainly is. It is always a tragedy when people, you know, lose what they have with God. It really is. We have a tendency to look at the reason why and the circumstances, and we have the reason to look at it and try to justify it. What was it because of this or because of that? Or the problems here or the problems there? But you know the real tragedy? The real tragedy is when the house goes down because of the natural disasters of this world and you are not prepared. It is a great ruin. It is a great ruin to the cause of Christ. We think it is about the poor person going through. What about poor God who counted on us to be a help meet and now we are gone? We are no longer there. We are not there if we ever were there. That is the great loss. That is the great ruin. It is not just the fact that that person is down and gone now. The great ruin is God loses out.

Have you ever counted on somebody to do something for you and they let you down? We all have. There are times that I thought this person is going to get this done. I showed up expecting to be done, and that person either did not hear what I said, did not care what I said, or was on another planet when I talked to him. How do you think God feels sometimes who invested everything in us? Is there anything else that God could do? I mean there is always something more I could do. I could call you on the phone and remind you. I could write it down. I could put it in a notebook for you. I could make you put it on your phone. There is always something more I could do, but there is nothing more that God could do. I mean come on. He gave you His book. He gave you His Holy Spirit. He came down and died for you. He did everything possible for you to be as the bride of Christ to help meet for Him. So when the foundation is not dug and it is not built upon a rock and the natural disaster of this life comes and the house falls, it is a great ruin for the cause of Christ. Well, we will hold up there. I will give you about five minutes, and then we will call everybody up here and get our restart thing.