

I. The Local New Testament Church: A Lost Perspective

We have been talking about the local New Testament church. When you lose your Bible, and I have talked about this before, I have given you the seven things that you lose. One of those things, obviously, is your perspective. It never ceases to amaze me how God's people know nothing about the key central plan of God in this age, which is the New Testament local church. There is a pattern for that church all the way through the Bible that has been forsaken today.

I guarantee you, every time we have a Bible study, every time we have a Sunday morning, there are people out there who tune in who are too lazy to get up and come to church today. It is easier for them just to sit home and listen to it on YouTube. I want to tell you right now, if I had a way to block you, I would. You say, "Well, I am really upset. What are you going to do? Quit coming to church?" I am not in a very good frame of mind this morning; I have had my world shaken this week.

We go to church building a Philadelphia church and a Laodicean church period. To most of God's people, that is just talking points; that is just something you say to make a point. It has never been that to me. To me, I always understood the Laodicean church period we are in, and I understood the greatest period of church history that was. I understood why it was. I understood what God did to it.

I understood that Revelation chapter 3 says, in the day and age that we live in now, Jesus says:

Revelation 3:20

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

Literally, it is telling us, whether you like it or not, whether you believe it or not, that in most churches today, they have locked Jesus Christ on the outside, and He is knocking on the door, trying to get back in.

Those two churches, the Philadelphia church age and the Laodicean church age, have been called down through history the church of the open door and the church of the closed door. The church of the open door was a door that God opened of opportunity that no man could shut because they kept the Word of God. The church of the closed door is the Laodicean church period where man tries to open that door, but when God shuts the door, nobody can open it. There is a reason for that.

I hate to say this, but in many cases, in all churches, there are people who look at this church like any other church they go to, just something you do one Sunday morning. There is no perspective of what it really is or what it really means in your life.

The Bible says in Hebrews chapter 10:

Hebrews 10:25

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

Yet some of you are somewhere else today, doing something else instead of being where you need to be. I am not fighting it; I am just telling you.

The Bible says that Jesus loved the church in Ephesians chapter 5:

Ephesians 5:25

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

He did not love your ball game you are at today. He did not love your fishing trip you are on. He did not love this, He did not love that. I am up for those things as much as anything. I have been talking about the church; this is our third Sunday, and we will have one more Sunday in it, but something changed my whole world this week.

I have said it many, many times, and I even hesitate saying this because it sounds out of place and it sounds wrong, and it sounds like I am saying something that I maybe should not say, but I am going to say it anyhow: You get too much Bible around here. My biggest flaw in my world and my life is making sure you get everything that you need. Some of you get an attitude toward the Word of God, and you do not appreciate what God has given you here. So you get the mindset and the attitude that God is not here. You get the mindset and the attitude that there is something wrong with the preaching and the message. I know you have not heard a good sermon in six months.

Every church needs a reality check. Every church. You are going to get a reality check this morning. I did not plan it. Nobody could plan it this good. It is going to change, hopefully, everybody in this church. Most of you, all of you here, are good people, but some of you bought into that stupidity. Some of you bought into the fact that this church is not teaching you the Bible. Some of you bought into the fact because you had better relationships with them than you do with this. And you got your nose bent out of joint. It shows this morning.

Do not mess with me. I am like a dentist who does not like you. When I am going through your teeth and probing for a bad one, and you scream on one, I am going to stay there for a while. I want to change your world this morning. I am going to change camp this morning. I am going to change your kids this morning.

II. The Nigerian Letter: A Reality Check

I got a letter this week. Building a Philadelphia church and a Laodicean church period. That is what I have tried to do. I have tried to give every one of you the Bible as much as you could stand. The problem is, some of you cannot stand much. Here is the danger, and I see it in our own kids. We give our kids too much sometimes. We buy them whatever phones they want. We buy them whatever jeans they want. We buy them whatever they want. I get it, and I have done it

to mine. I have spoiled mine rotten. My kids do it to their kids. You all do it to yours. Come up to Jamie's. Stay off the trampoline next week; it will launch you into the neighbor's yard.

Us older people, who maybe grew up and did not have everything that we wanted to have when we wanted it, I am not saying anything against your kids because your kids have a good balance, and there are good kids in this church who really understand and appreciate it. But you know as well as I do, in a common situation, when you get all that you want and you have all that you need, you start to take things for granted. That is the danger here in this church. It is never dumping the King James Bible. The danger in this church has never been taking Baptist off our name. The danger in this church is giving you too much Bible, and you take it for granted, and you get an attitude in the midst of a wealth of knowledge that people across this world do not have.

You say, "I do not like the way you are taught." You are going to like it less before I get through. I got a letter this week. It changed my whole life. I read it, wept for an hour. I could not put it down. I have carried it with me everywhere I went. I did not plan on it, but it was what I needed. When you start to build any church, you are going to have people who do not appreciate what you give them, even if you do not give them much. But the real danger here is you getting too much, too much knowledge, and you do not do anything with it. Or you do not get any knowledge, and in the midst of everything that is going on, you get an attitude. Or you start to find some people who get their nose bent out of joint about something as they are dealing with it biblically. They get an attitude toward the Word of God, and you are stupid enough to fall into it. You say, "I am leaving the church." We kept both doors open back there.

This letter is from Nigeria in Africa:

"Dear brothers in Christ, may God bless you every minute, every hour, and every day in Jesus' mighty and powerful name. With due respect, we are writing you in this way, honestly speaking, from the Polytech, your father, Sarah Alabadden, which is a trade school in Africa, I am sure. I and 219 other students, brothers and sisters, do gather at one of our Christian school libraries, and there we read from your website unpowerful, undiluted, uncommon, undeniable, unfailing, unavoidable, true messages of God." They obviously have not talked to some of you yet.

"And the message from your website has later touched the lives of 220 of us here at Polytech. We are more than 10,000 students in our school, if I am not mistaken, but 220 of us today decided to give our lives to Christ, and here goes our true testimonies. Honestly, we have been reading from your website for a while, but just for reading sake." Oh, they are like most of my people. "And none of us has ever concluded to give his or her life to Christ. But one day something so serious happened. There was a misunderstanding between some people, and eight of our close friends were murdered in cold blood. After these eight friends of ours died without Christ, so today 220 of us from Polytech, we do not want to die like our eight friends. You see, because of the messages we have been reading and reading from your website, and because of the death of our eight friends, 220 of us have now completely surrendered our whole lives to Christ. We remembered, we remembered, we remembered all we have been reading from your website about salvation, eternal life, and that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, and there was no other

way. And that to all who come to Jesus, He will in no wise cast out, and God is able to save and forgive all sin. Brother, we have seen our friends die without Christ, and 220 of us do not want to die without Christ. We want to make it to heaven. Brother, you see, 220 of us before were backsliders, churchgoers, drunkards, humanizers, idol worshippers, Muslims, and members of secret cults. But today, 220 of us have denounced all those things. We are now for Jesus, and Jesus is now our Lord and Savior. We started going to a Bible-believing church. We all are ready to witness for Jesus, but our main problem is now the lack of Bibles. 220 of us do not have any Bibles to read God's Word and be able to stand and become complete soldiers of Christ and ambassadors for Christ."

"And this is weighing our Christian journey down, but we believe by faith that your ministry is able to help and provide 220 Bibles for us. We need to pray about that. Dear Brother in Christ, please kindly send 220 of us 220 complete Holy Bibles that have the Old Testament and New Testament and other helpful literature and booklets that will equip us more so that we may grow spiritually. And we will promise you that as soon as our Bibles arrive, it will be prayerfully shared. It will not be exchanged, bartered, or burnt, but it will be used to the glory of God."

Now, what are you going to do with that? Some of you do not get anything here. Maybe it takes being in the middle of a Muslim country with eight of your friends being killed with no Bible before you realize what God has given you here. I say that, it is bothering me even saying that. I made enough copies for every family to have one of these if you want. The next time you pal up with one of those sniveling, mealy-mouthed, weak-kneed, Laodicean Christians who does not like what God is doing here, or thinks He is doing nothing here, give them that.

Church is just a place, another building on a street corner with so many more. A place that you can go and get what you want, and when you do not get it exactly the way you think you ought to get it, then you get your nose bent out of joint. When somebody is not nice to you, does not do something for you, and they do not treat you the way you think you ought to be treated. How ridiculously stupid, ridiculously stupid, that the Bible is not taught here. I have 220 people that will argue with you.

We are going on the record. The record of you understanding the church, that letter could not have come in a more apropos time of where we are at and where we are going. This changes camp because the theme of our camp is missions. You guys have labored to build that. You knew nothing about this. We knew nothing about that. Who got you guys to decide it was going to be about missions and put these incredible things about the Moravians, the real biblical missionaries of church history?

I now have the website of this lady, and I want to see it. By the way, we are entering into a program. If you want to partner with me, let me know. We are going to start raising the money to send these people their Bibles. Do not take it out of your offering and put it here. It is going to have to be a sacrifice for you. You come and see me, and we will put this thing together. I have already got the details being worked out. We are going to send them these combat Bibles that we get here. I am sure they want them in English. English is a primary language in Africa because the British missionaries in the 1900s taught them how to read and write in English through a

King James Bible. There is no reason why some of you cannot get a hold of them as we develop this thing and disciple them and work with them through that. There is no reason why out of camp our kids cannot come out. You are not going to tell me there are not kids over there.

This is a biblical missions program. This is the way it is supposed to be done. We now have, by their own word of mouth, 220 missionaries that we do not have to make any money to send over there. All we have got to do is get them a Bible, you, and the website. Not me, you. This church, every man and woman who supports this work that keeps that website up, who does the work, who lays it out, who prints the books, who reads the material, everybody here who has been part of this work. Forget me. You are the church. God has taken your labor of love and touched the lives of 220 people who got on the website, found what God wanted them to find, and then sat down in a college room someplace and decided all 220 of them were going to give their lives to the Lord Jesus Christ. Our missionaries, our missionaries. If half of those people have the fervor that this lady that wrote this letter to me does, we will win half of Africa together.

It is a lot better than sending some kid down to a mission school at a mission Bible college someplace. He is down there for three years. He learns how to become a little American within his own, another culture. So he goes down there in his little suit with his little American flag, and then he is down there for a couple of years, then they bring him home because he needs a rest. Real missions: nobody can reach another person's culture like a person in that culture. I am not saying that there is not a time that you do not do that, but what I am saying is if you go to Africa to be a missionary, do what the models on the wall say. Give up your American citizenship, become an African, become a Nigerian, and go down there and become one with those people. Do not go try to down there and win another culture, still being an American. You say, "Well, I do not know if I can do that." That is because you do not understand it. Now that you are saved, your citizenship is in heaven.

Two aspects to the church:

- You have the church militant. That is this church right here. We are in a fight. We are in a war. This is the church militant.
- Then you have the church triumphant. That is the spiritual body of believers that we are all born into the moment we get saved.

One time, Savonarola, who lived back in the 1400s, he was a great witness for Christ. He was a Roman Catholic priest that got saved and just caused all kinds of problems for the Roman Catholic Church. They offered him a Cardinal's red cap if he would shut up and quit preaching the Bible. He said, "I will take a cap of blood," meaning being murdered, and he was. Before they burned him at the stake, the priest came up to him and he says, "Savonarola, I am going to separate you from the church militant at the church triumphant." He snarled back and he says, "You may separate me from the church militant by killing me today, but you will never separate me from the church triumphant."

People go through some tough times down here. They are going through some tough times over there. Just giving them King James Bibles is not going to solve their problems in a Muslim

country like Nigeria. It may not just be eight people who wind up getting killed, but I guarantee you God is in control, and I guarantee you God is using your church, you, every one of you, to reach out across into Africa and give you 220 souls simply because you were willing to begin to understand the concept of building a Philadelphia church in the Laodicean church age.

So far, we have seen some really important concepts. We have seen how the church started. Last time we were together, I showed you how there were seven distinct churches in the Bible, and then to define what a church really is. We talked about the commission of the church. Everybody teaches us in Matthew 28 and Mark 16. Now we know it is not. It is found in the book of Acts and more appropriately in the book of Ephesians chapter 20. We understand now that custodianship of the Bible was given to the priesthood, the body of Christ, and it was never taken away from them. God never gave it to anybody else and took it from you and put it where God never intended it to be.

One of the greatest things that this church stands for and believes is the fact that we are the authors and the custodians of the Word of God. Our wide margin Bibles and our combat Bibles we buy out of Milford, Ohio. Milford, Ohio, is a ministry there of printing Bibles out of the First Bible Baptist Church of Milford. It is a New Testament local church who understands their responsibility to publishing the Word of God so the world does not have to do it. What in our minds do we think that we are going to have God's holy Word and that we are going to send it over to Zondervan or we are going to turn it over to some worldly publisher to publish the holy Word of God? It is the church's job. That is why I will not buy Bibles from them. I buy them from a local New Testament church because that is the mandate. We have custodianship of it.

III. The Pattern of the Church: Introduction

We want to now begin to look at the pattern. The last couple of times, we looked at the model of the church. Now we are going to look at the pattern, and in light of the letter that I wrote today. Our text today is Hebrews 8:5. I hope that letter changes your whole perspective of what God is doing here because He is doing something here, and the fact that you hung out with the wrong crowd is your problem.

Hebrews 8:5

Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

Delano, would you ask God's blessing on the service this morning?

Thank you so much, Lord, for Your Word, and thank you for Your time to be a Father. Thank you, Lord, for the prayer to not be just a Christian person, but Your body, Father. For people that are all around the world, Lord. For someone to know You, Lord, for someone to have a relationship with You. For those who say from the things that Father is regarding to the outside of God, no more that we usually do not deserve it, it is just service, we have not done anything done in the body of God, it is part of what it has all been said to the other side of the Bible. So I

can confirm that, Father, say that You speak so hard today and make it more like this on the side of the Bible.

God uses patterns.

- Exodus 25:40 says God gave Moses the pattern for the tabernacle and all that was in the tabernacle.
- In Exodus 25:9, He says He gave patterns for the instruments that they had to make.
- In Joshua 22:28, He says there was a pattern for the altar that they had to make.
- In 1 Chronicles 28:11, in Solomon's house, He gave them a pattern for the porch.
- In 1 Chronicles 28:11, He gives them a pattern for everything else in the house.

God uses patterns. A church needs to be a church that is built on pattern. Your Christian life needs to be a lifestyle that is built on pattern. Patterns are principles.

In 1 Timothy 1:16, the Bible says that how you and I deal with the issues that come into our lives form a pattern for other people to see. How is that going for you?

Titus 2:7 talks about our lives, your life, my life, being a pattern of good works that others can see and understand what God is doing. This church needs to have a trail of pattern of good works based on people who are in it, who have a pattern in your life, who deal with the issues in your life, not the way you want to deal with them, but follow the pattern. There are certain things the way things have to go, and the fact that you do not like it does not change it.

IV. The Pattern of Three

Let me give you some things here that are key to any pattern so you can recognize them in the Bible and maybe even recognize them in your own life. In the Bible, we know that certain numbers mean certain things, called Bible numerology. We are not crazy on it. We know that you can make numbers prove anything, but as I have told you many, many times, there are some things that are undeniable. One of them is the number three. Three in your Bible will always be the completeness of something. Something will be finished until the third part shows up.

Time has three parts to it:

1. It has a past.
2. It has a present.
3. It has a future.

If I drew a line on this wall up here with a magic marker, that line has three parts:

4. It has a depth.
5. It has a breadth.
6. It has a height.

You take any one of those parts away, you do not have a line. It has to be three. You see, three in the Bible and three and something in your life will always form a good balance.

We talk about God:

- God the Father
- God the Son
- God the Holy Spirit

We talk about the Bible:

- Doctrinally
- Inspirationally
- Historically

We talk about you and me, man:

- Body
- Soul
- Spirit

An unsaved man has a body and a soul, but his spirit is dead. He is incomplete. What completes is when he gets the third part; the Holy Spirit will come inside and quicken that spirit. Now he is alive in Christ Jesus.

We talk about the name of God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Three aspects to His life, to His name:

- The Lord: that deity
- Jesus: that earthly man
- Christ: that is Christoph, that is the anointed one

We say in the world, "Third time is a charm." It is. In your Christian life, what completes you is getting saved, the Holy Spirit of God, getting you a Bible, and getting into a local New Testament church.

When you get into the Bible, you get three things:

7. Knowledge
8. Wisdom
9. Understanding

In the Old Testament, the Old Testament is built on three aspects:

10. The Law
11. The Writings
12. The Prophets

In the New Testament, it is built on:

13. The Gospel
14. The Acts
15. The Epistles

Three. No math problem is going to be complete without the third part. Two and two is incomplete until you get six, or four.

In the world, we talk about matter. Matter is three things:

- 16. Short
- 17. Generation
- 18. Position

We talk about reality, which most of us do not want to deal with:

- 19. Time
- 20. Matter
- 21. Space

We talk about a family. A husband and wife are a husband and wife, but they are not a family. They are not complete as a family until number three shows up.

In the earth, you have:

- 22. The air
- 23. The land
- 24. The sea

In the kingdoms:

- 25. Animal
- 26. Vegetable
- 27. Mineral

The sun:

- 28. X-ray
- 29. Light rays
- 30. Heat rays

Music:

- 31. Harmony
- 32. Rhythm
- 33. Melody

Army, Navy, and the Air Force. Three. So, when God does something and lays down a pattern, it will be in a pattern of three. You never, never, never, never want to forget that. That will always form the biblical balance, the structure. We know that Proverbs 11:1 says that a false balance is an abomination in the sight of the Lord.

A couple of the last two times, we saw models based on Acts 11-13, the church in Antioch. Now, the pattern is something different, and I want to talk about that today and next week, built around based on the timely letter that God sent our way.

The pattern for the New Testament church will be found in a story and a study of the nation of Israel. It is called the Church of the Wilderness in Acts 7. I gave you that last time we were together. The pattern of the church through the study of the nation of Israel comes alive through the types and through all the pictures. That is why the two greatest words in the Bible for unlocking the Bible are two of the smallest words: "as" and "like." They form up the pattern for us.

Notice the parallels:

- Israel in the Old Testament is called a congregation. You are called a congregation.
- In the Old Testament, it is called a church, Acts 7. Ephesians 5, you are the church, church militant. It is all right there.
- God's system in the Old Testament was God's church, Israel. God's system in the New Testament is Christ's church, the bride of Christ, us.
- Both go through a transitional period to get where God wants them to be so they can be fruitful. Israel went through theirs, the church went through it, if you know church history.
- You are both called God's son.
- Both have a commission and a mission for God. Israel is to nations, you are to individuals. That is very important. You do not want to miss that.
- Both are built around one central figure. The Old Testament nation of Israel was built around an ark. You and I and our relationship is built around Christ. That Christ, that ark in the Old Testament, is a type of Christ.
- Yet both reject God's Word, Old Testament Israel and the church.
- Both go into apostasy. Both completely lose God and they lose His Word.
- Both of them face a judgment because of their sin and apostasy.
- Both replace the priest class with a non-biblical system. The nation of Israel replaced the priest class with the Sadducees and the Pharisees. The New Testament church replaced it with the Bible scholars.

V. The Ark as a Pattern of Christ

With that in mind, let us examine the pattern in lieu of our letter today. Let us talk about the ark for a moment. We will talk about the ark this week, and then we will get into the rest of the patterns next week and close it out. As I said, the ark in the Old Testament will be a picture and a type of Christ. The ark was central to all that Israel did, and everything that they did, everything that happened, was centered around the ark. In the New Testament, for you and me, it is Christ. Everything you ought to do ought to be centered around Christ. Everything you do ought to be centered around Him being the number one thing in your life.

When it came to that ark, there were three things that were put in that ark. You might know there would be three. Three things that were put in that ark which form up for you and for me the three things that God cares most about, or Christ cares most about. Here we go. You might know it was three. Somebody said, "What does Christ care about?" Well, He does not care about who wins the ball games this afternoon. He does not care about the things probably that you think He cares about. No, no. When they put that ark together, they put three things in that ark. That ark is a type

of Christ, and those three things represent the three things that are in Christ today. That is all He cares about.

The first thing they put in was the Old Testament law because the apple of God's heart is the nation of Israel. They are His people, and He is going to bring them back someday. The second thing they put in the ark was the rod of Aaron. Remember the rod of Aaron that budded? Aaron was the priest. That rod that he had, that priestly rod, represents the New Testament church. You are supposed to be fruitful and budding as a priest today. And the third thing they put in, out of Exodus 16, was a pot of manna, a type of the Word of God.

There are only three things in the heart of Christ today. Too bad they are not the only three things in our heart. Back to Him. The only thing in Christ's mind today is the nation of Israel. That is why we are going through what we are going through in the Middle East. The body of Christ, you, and the Word of God. There was nothing else in that ark. Why are there other things in your life than in my life? When it comes to Christ, I am not saying you cannot have other things in your life. I am saying when it comes to your relationship with God, when you question some things that are so clear in the Bible, maybe you just want to. Maybe it is who you are hanging out with. Maybe they started questioning it, and you are so stupid now you are questioning it. You say, "I do not like the word stupid." I do not either, but boy, it sure fits today.

When the children of Israel traveled, they had 40 years of wandering, you do know that. For 40 years, every day they got up, or sometimes they may have camped for a while, but when they started to move, that ark was always out in front, and they followed the ark. That is a picture of the leading of God in your life. When you get up in the morning, or you leave here this afternoon, or you begin to go through life after you get saved, I want to tell you something: you follow the leading of Christ in your life. You do not go your own way. The big word today that we have all forgotten in salvation is the word repentance. We think repentance means you are sorry. We think repentance means you are brokenhearted and cry. That is not what repentance means. Repentance means that you were going one way in your life, and the day you got saved, you quit going that way; now you are following the ark. That is what it means: change the direction.

VI. The Danger of the Ox Cart Mentality

Along with that, that ark was to be, I do not know if you have ever studied it, that ark had rings on the side, and they put long poles called staves through both sides, and they picked it up and they carried it on their shoulders. That is how it went. When the children of Israel were going, there were guys that were carrying that ark on their shoulders through those staves, through those rings. There is a reason for that, and it is a great principle.

You remember back in 2 Samuel chapter 6, there was a guy by the name of Uzzah, remember that story? The ark had been down in Philistine land, and David got it back, and they put that ark on an ox cart, bringing it out of Philistine country. They are all walking around praising the Lord, and the ark stumbled. This is a great principle, kids, you do not want to miss this, and yet some of you are just waiting to miss it. When I say this, it is so clear to you, it will be so, "I do not get

it." That ark is going along, that ark stumbles. And the cart shimmies this way or that way, and the ark begins to tip, and there was a great New Testament Christian by the name of Uzzah. What a man of God he was, and I am sure he was just like a lot of you are. And that ark stumbled, and the ark began to fall. He did what anybody should have done. He reached up and kept God from falling off the cart. Rewards in heaven, millennial rewards, jub and cedar cracks, no, God killed him. God killed him.

Did you ever have a bad day? Mean old God? You see, because you do not understand why God killed him. You think there was something wrong with God just because when I preach you something you do not like to hear, you think there is something wrong with me. Well, there may be something wrong with me, but there will never be nothing wrong with God. You need to clarify that. Well, the cart begins to shimmy-shammy, and it falls over, and Uzzah, "Oh God, I love you." God says, "I love you too." *Bap*.

There were people that did not understand that. Most of God's people in the Laodicean church period will never understand it. God designed that ark to be carried on staves, on shoulders of men, because it represents the burden of Christ in your life and my life, and we are to bear that burden on our shoulders. That ox cart was a Philistine concept, the world. It did not matter Uzzah's motive. It did not matter Uzzah's fervor for God. And it does not matter with you. What matters is God wants it done His way, not your way.

You have churches today that you do not even have to bring your Bible anymore. "We will put it up on the big screen." "I was just out for repairs." You do not even have to bring your Bible anymore. It will be a cold day in Topeka, Kansas, before I tell you not to bring your Bible on Sunday morning. You go to churches, they do not have hymnals. They will put the songs up there; you can just sing along. There is some value in getting a hymnal. Open it up. Get that hymnal. See who wrote it. See the date it was written. I have got to be honest, most songs that they sing today in Laodicean churches are not worth putting in a book. But ours are.

Now you can go to a church, and you can have them take your tithe right out of your paycheck or go online and do online giving. We will never do that here. But there is value, and maybe you do not get it. There is value. There is value in you writing out your check, taking it out of your wallet, separating it from what you have got, and then saying, "God, here it is because I love You." Please do not tell me the only time you remember what you give to God is when you look at your bank statement. That is for you to see. And everybody is fine with that. I am the odd man out. If this message was circulated around a preacher in this city today and some of your friends today, they would think I am out of my mind right up till they showed up on Thursday night and we opened up a Bible.

God killed him. God was not mad. He was not a mean old God, but there were people that thought God was unfair, just like people will think the preacher is unfair when he has to preach the message. God was not mad. God is exact in what He wants, and the idea that you and I come up with of a better way, God is not interested in. Better right to do wrong to get the chance to do right. That ox cart mentality. That ark was designed by God to be carried and burdened on the shoulders of men. Jesus Christ, when He comes into your life, He tells you in Matthew, "Take

my burden. My yoke is easy upon you," but there will be a burden you have to carry, and too many of God's people want to take the burden of God off their shoulders and put it on an ox cart. The devil in his eye is a picture of the Laodicean church age, that the church goes worldly and forsakes and forgets the biblical principles that it is supposed to operate by, and I am the bad guy. God represents us carrying the burden of the Lord's ministry wherever He leads us on our shoulders. The burden of these people getting these Bibles are on our shoulders. God could have sent it to any church, any place. He sent it to us because we were the initial ones that got 220 people saved. He must have listened to some messages way back when because I have not done one of Goodwin for a while. You keep hitting that point over and over and over again until you see the stupidity of it.

VII. Following the Ark: The Path to Wonders

Now I will show you something else. I will show you something else about this ark. You want to watch this? Do not tell me about the old Bible I have got. Do not try to give me a better rendition. Do not try to give me a devil's Bible, the NIV.

Turn over to Joshua chapter 3:1-5. I want to show you something about your Bible.

Joshua 3:1-5

1 And Joshua rose early in the morning; and they removed from Shittim, and came to Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over.

2 And it came to pass after three days, that the officers went through the host;

3 And they commanded the people, saying, When ye see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it.

4 Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: come not near unto it, that ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed this way heretofore.

5 And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves: for to morrow the LORD will do wonders among you.

You know what? It is no wonder. There are no wonders of God in your life. It is no wonder. Do you not get tired of just going through the doldrums? It is no wonder you get an attitude about things. How do you get an attitude about things when God is using you? How do you get an attitude about things when God is just using you one upside down the other? How do you get an attitude about things when God is just permeating your life with the blessings and doing the wonders? It is no wonder. There is no wonder in God's people's lives today. I get it.

Now I want you to look at something. First of all, I want you to see this thing. It says there, first of all, we are talking about in verse 2, "after three days." We are talking about the third day. Whatever this is, it is going to be a picture of the Second Coming of Christ in some way, shape, or form. The third day, that is the Second Coming.

Verse 4, "we follow that ark so you will know the way." You see, you do not know what life has for you. We live in this world as darkness. The Bible says that He is the light of the world. The Word of God is a lamp unto my feet, a light unto my path. It lights my path. So I follow the light. I have had 66 years, 65 years, 66 years. I have had 40 years of following my own way in darkness. Some of you just refuse to follow the light. You have got every excuse in the world, and you think they are good. And they may work now with your friends, your mom, your dad, me. They will work right up to the judgment seat of Christ.

The next thing, I want you to notice that the priests are carrying it. The New Testament priesthood, the local New Testament church, not some parachurch organizations. That ark is being carried by the priest. In the New Testament church, you are the priest. No Bible scholar should carry it. No Bible college should carry it. Nobody outside a New Testament local church should carry that book because of the fact, or carry that ark because of the fact, it was carried by the priest.

Now look at verse 3 again. When you see Christ, the ark, being carried by the New Testament priest here, I am going to give you some good practical advice. You were not going to take it, but I am going to give it to you. It says there, "When you see the ark being carried by the priest, leave the place you are and go after it." You need to be going after Christ this morning. I am not sure what you are going after. Maybe it is a her, maybe it is a him. Maybe it is an it. When you see the people in this church doing what they are supposed to do, the Bible says that your good works are a pattern. How you deal with issues in your life is a pattern. People see that and they will say, "Go after it."

You know what happened with this? And I never even met them, and neither have you. God used our little website because of you. And they saw Christ, and they saw the ark, and they said, "You know what? We see a bunch of priests carrying that thing on their shoulders. We are going after it." Do not even get in. I told somebody the other day it is only a matter of time, and I will be sending teams of you not just to Lincoln or Wichita. You will be going to Nigeria. You will be going to England. You will be going to Holland. You will be going to South Africa. That is the next step. It is the next level. I could just get my sermon together.

Now I want you to look at verse 4. "Yet there shall be a space between you and it, the ark, of two thousand cubits." Why, what is God's deal here? Why two thousand cubits behind the ark on the third day? The ark is the type of Christ. The third day is the type of the Second Coming. Why do you have two thousand cubits, and then the nation of Israel falls in behind? I will tell you why. Because you have the nation of Israel, then you have two thousand years of church history, then you have the Second Coming of Christ. That is why. There is a two thousand-year space between Israel and the Second Coming of Christ, so God patterned it. He has put two thousand cubits between it because you guys do not know this yet, but there is going to be a two thousand-year period of time called church history that separates the nation of Israel and the third day. That is why. That is some Bible you have got. You see, my professor never taught me that. That is because he is professing the wrong things. You will notice how they like to be called professors. It is built on the word "profess." A professor professes things. Here, when you go to Bible college, you take a Bible college class, you will have a professor. I am a professor. I profess that

the King James Bible is the absolute perfect Word of God. We just do not profess the same things.

Lastly, out of Joshua here, verse 5: "You get all that down, then God will do wonders among you." This here is one of the wonders that God did among us. We were not looking for it, had no idea what was happening. Ten thousand, twelve thousand miles away. While we are here, doing what we are doing, building a Philadelphia church and a Laodicean church period. God has taken what you people have sweated and labored and built in this work. It is not me. You could get a chimpanzee to do what I do if you trained him right. It is you. It is you. It is you who have understood what we are trying to do. It is you who have understood. It is you older guys and gals that God has brought back to stabilize these younger people. It is you. You host of young guys and gals are incredible. But everybody knows in a military organization, you need to have cadre, veterans. God just mixes the whole thing together, and God will do wonders among you.

This room is filled with wonders that God has done in your life. Some of your lives were a mess. Darren, I do not know how many years you guys finally played softball and volleyball before you decided to come to church. Many, twenty. Give me twenty. I need to stop the big thing here. Twenty. A long time. You know what you guys are today? You are a wonder. You are a wonder. He is saying, "I wonder too sometimes," but I know. He is a wonder. I will tell you. You guys up in Lincoln. You are a wonder. I mean, come on. Give me a break. It is your wonder. God has reaped down through here, and I remember tonight you got saved about, what, four years ago? Seven. Seven years ago. That is what I needed. Seven years ago. She came in. She came in. Got saved. Has not looked back since. The story is filled that way. I look at the Christiansons. One family we wanted to have when we started the church, and I am not lying, was you, John and Betsy. Was you guys? We did not want the kids. I love you guys. You are a wonder. You are a wonder. Where have you been? He calls me up after being away from me for twenty years and wants to know if it is okay if he comes to church. No, you cannot come to church. I do not want you here. You are a wonder. You are a wonder. I want this room today. It is what God has done. I remember the first time I met Bubba over at Waldo's Pizza. What a hot dog you were. Playing video games. I would have never introduced myself after I shook hands. I wanted to slap you. You are a wonder. You are a wonder. It is a wonder. I am telling you. And you know why? Because you follow Christ. You do it the way He wants it to be done. His way. And great wonders He will do among you. Incredible.

VIII. The Tabernacle: A Pattern for the Christian Life

That ark was housed in a tabernacle. That tabernacle was built by a pattern, Hebrews chapter 8. You want a model and a pattern for what our Christian life and our church should be? Study the pattern of the tabernacle. The ark. That tabernacle, a picture of your life and my life and what this church is.

There were seven pieces of furniture in that tabernacle. And 2 Timothy 3:16-17 talks about the fact that:

2 Timothy 3:16-17

16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

You know, God wants to build some furniture inside your tabernacle. What? God is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you. He wants to build some furniture inside. You all have anybody buy a house here and just never furnished it? Well, sleep on the floor. Maybe you did when you first got married. But you know what? "We will just sleep on the floor. We do not need any plates. We do not need any this. We do not need any beds. We do not need any chairs. We do not need anything." That does not work. Furnishings in your home make life more comfortable. When you get saved, the Holy Spirit of God dwells inside you. He wants to make some furniture inside you that will make Him comfortable. Why do you think that Jesus Christ's occupation was a carpenter? He builds furniture. You do not have to pay for that.

The two key words here in this verse are "thoroughly furnished." It starts on the inside when you get saved and it goes to the outside. It is thoroughly furnished. He builds the furnishings in your life. The only Bible in the world that has that correct doctrinal application is the King James Bible. Your NIV, the best of the best today, it says that you are "thoroughly equipped." It completely misses the doctrinal whole concept. But they always do. Based on the pattern, you are not thoroughly equipped. You are throughly furnished from the inside out. And you will build seven pieces of furniture that make you perfect for the work of the ministry because God is comfortable. And when God does not have those furnishings, He is grieved.

Now let us talk about the tabernacle here for a moment. There are three compartments. You might know of the three. You have the outer fenced-in area. You have the tent itself, and then you have a place called the Holy of Holies. Three compartments.

Outside, in the first compartment, there was the brazen altar made of brass. That is where the sacrifice was burnt. A picture of Christ's death on the cross. Right before you went in, there was a laver of water that had little spigots on it. The tabernacle had a lot of things, and the priest went in there and did all the work in the second compartment. But there was no floor in it. So he gets his feet dirty every time he goes in and goes out. So every time, every time, every time before he goes back in to do the work in the ministry, he goes over to that laver of water. He washes off his feet. So he is clean when he goes in to minister. That is a picture of you getting right with God every time you come to Bible study or church. Every time you open the Bible. You get dirty walking up and down this earth. So you have got to wash your feet.

Then you went inside. You had the showbread over here that had bread on it, twelve laid out six and six. That showbread is a picture of the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel. But the bread is a picture of the Word of God. And it is laid out in six-six because He knew that the pattern would be that when you would get a Bible, it would have 66 books in it. It is called the table of showbread, table of fellowship.

Over on the other side, you had a seven-pronged candlestick that represents the Holy Spirit of God. Seven spirits in Isaiah 11 in the Old Testament of the Holy Spirit. It is called a Menorah

today. It is the only light inside that tabernacle once you went inside the second compartment was those seven golden candlesticks. You know as well as I do that you would be out in the bright sun and the shining desert over there. It would be 110 degrees, and it would be so bright. And then you walk into a tent where there is absolutely no outside light. And you are going to minister in there, and all you have got is the light of seven little candlesticks over here. You know what you would have to do? You would have to just stop and wait a little bit. You would have to give your eyes time to adjust from coming from the world's light to God's light.

In this church here, we call that discipleship. When you first get saved, we take a little time in your life, and we let your eyes get adjusted to the new light. You come out of the world's light into God's light. And you just have to wait a little bit and let your eyes get adjusted, and then you can go to work in the ministry. I am not saying you cannot do some things, but you know as well as I do that you are most prone to make some bad mistakes when you are a young Christian.

Then you went to work. I always thought this: the candlestick is over here, the bread is over here. He is working back and forth. But there is no light in there other than that. So what he has to do when he is working on the table, he cannot work in front of it. He has to go around behind it. And he has to work it from here because otherwise he will block the light from the Holy Spirit on the bread. You see, you cannot get in front of the Word of God. You have got to get behind it. You cannot block the Holy Spirit of God wanting to illuminate what He wants to give you.

Then a little bit up there, toward there, you had a golden laver that they put incense in, and he carried it around, swung it back and forth. That is a picture of your prayer life. That is a picture of you praying without ceasing. That incense gets lit off the fire from the brazen altar. Your prayer life always going back to what Christ did for you. When you got a little bit closer up to the Holy of Holies, before that veil was, there was an altar of incense where the laver of incense is the picture of your prayers and your prayer life. The altar of incense is the picture of God praying for you before the throne of God, making intercession when you would groan into cannot be uttered.

Then you had the Holy of Holies. That is where the ark was. That Holy of Holies represents for you and for me a place where most of God's people never get. You know there were hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of priests in Israel, but only one got to go behind the veil. You know there are hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of Christians in Kansas City, but very few of them are going behind the veil. When you went behind the veil, you really saw what God was doing. You saw what it was all about. You are not going to kid me that that priest did not go in there and see those cherubim over that throne and see that thing and see that radiating of that light out of that thing and see that you are not going to tell me that when he came out of there his life was not changed. You are not going to tell me that if what will change your life is going behind the veil and seeing who Christ really is in your life in this church, you will never be the same. This is part of it. What He is doing.

I always like when God does tremendous things without me being involved in it. Because I know that when I am involved in it, I end up using it for the wrong motive. I love it when God just drops it out of nowhere, and I had absolutely, you had nothing to do with it other than the initial

stuff that we just do. But God just comes down and says, "Here, by the way, this was going on in Africa while you were out there washing your car." All right, Lord, I will not wash the car anymore. I do not like washing it anyhow. I am not going to cut the grass. Doctor told me not to.

IX. The Wizard of Oz Analogy: Behind the Veil

Most of God's people never get behind the veil. Hollywood is always trying to destroy everything about the Bible. Billy Sunday was a great preacher, and he probably won millions and millions of people to Christ. Hollywood came out with a movie called Elmer Gantry, which took the picture of him. It was aimed at Billy Sunday and portrayed him as a drunken, fornicating man, just because they hate everything that God does.

My favorite anti-Bible movie has always been The Wizard of Oz. I am not saying you should not watch it. My kids grew up, I learned a great biblical lesson about my children and them watching The Wizard of Oz. They were growing up when The Wizard of Oz was on, they were glued. And I watched it, and they watched it over and over again. For the rest of that week, I heard every song, "Off to See the Wizard." I heard all the little things of munchkins. All those things. I heard those great guys. I love those guys. For the next week, they watched it one time. They knew every character. They knew every song. And we had to work unbelievably hard to get them to learn their memory verses and sing Bible songs. I learned a great lesson from that.

To me, I love doing these things. I look at every one of them. That is why I want to go see Alien. I want to put it all together in the Bible. In 1939, they came out with The Wizard of Oz. You know the story. It is a picture of going, basically, it is a picture of going to a golden Emerald City from Kansas. You know how it works. You get there by following the yellow brick road. This Bible is filled with principles that form that yellow brick road to get to the place where you are going to get home. Now home for me is in Kansas, it is heaven. And this is the takeoff of it.

So you have Dorothy. And she wants to get back home, and she is told, and you know in the story, you have two women, just like in Proverbs. You have the wicked witch, and then you have the good fairy. If there are any good fairies out there. It is a very bad statement to make, but what can I say. I live in. It did not have that problem in 1939. And the wicked witch, oh, we do not want to forget this. The wicked witch, you know how she gets killed? They put water on her. Water is the type of the Word of God. You want to kill the wicked in this world, just throw some water on it. Oh, I love this. I love this thing. I watched it last night till two o'clock in the morning.

Then Dorothy has three companions. And those three companions, when you really watch the movie, they do not help her get there. They are an obstacle to her to get there. They are always complaining. They are always afraid. They are always cowering. They are always thinking, "We should do this," or "We should do that." "Oh, do not go through here. Do not go through here." You know what they are. Now Dorothy is a good gal, and she wants to get there. But it is just like with some of you who are good people. Some of the idiots you hang out with are going to impede your progress.

You see, some of you hang out with the Tin Man. And they have no heart for God. And you think that you are going to just go right through life, and it is going to be okay hanging out with the Tin Man who has no heart for the things of God. And then some of you pick up the Straw Guy along the way, and he has got no brains. And some of you pick up the Cowardly Lion, and he has no courage for God. These are the people that she put in her world. I know it is just a movie, but these are the people that she put in her world, and they never really helped her get there. They were always impeding her process, afraid of everything, questioning everything. This is why you have such a tough time on your yellow brick road.

I counseled a lady one time years ago who went from Kansas, and her name was Dorothy. We were talking about her marital problems, and I said, "You know, I bet you get a lot of jokes about being Dorothy from The Wizard of Oz, don't you?" She said, "Oh, you would not even believe it." She said, "I have been married, this is my third marriage." She says, "The first one had no heart, he was lazy. The second one had no, he was a wimp, he did not have any courage, and the one I have got now, he has got a brain, one." She says, "I feel just like Dorothy." I get it. It is a problem with us sometimes. We put the, and then you have got the flying demons. Oh yeah, you have got those little monkey guys who are flying all over the place to go with the wicked witch.

And then you have got God Himself, the Wizard. And you know what? When she finally gets to Oz, that Emerald City, Revelation chapter 21. He is behind the veil. And she came all that way thinking that there was a real wizard. And all it was was some broken-down old man who looked like W.C. Fields who could not do anything, and his way to get her back to Kansas was a hot air balloon. My point is this, and I know it is a movie, and it is a movie slammed against that book and what God wants to do with you, but I am going to tell you this: This is my point. They never saw the reality of what the situation really was. So that little dog pulled back the veil, and they saw who was pulling the levers.

In a biblical sense, you will never really know what God is doing in your life and how it is being done and why it is being done the way it is being done. So you cross through ministry and go behind that veil and get into the Holy of Holies with He who is behind that veil. Everything else, you are just wasting your time. She never saw what reality was till she saw what was going on behind there. As a Christian, you will never understand what God in reality is till you go behind the veil, the Holy of Holies, and see it for yourself. And 99% of God's people will never get behind that veil. They will never get there. They will never see Christ as He really is in this life. They will never know what God loves. They will never know what God hates, or they will go through life as knowing what they love and what they hate. And it usually does not match up.

God's people will go through their whole lives thinking they have a relationship with God and yet have no idea of who He really is. And they delude themselves thinking that this Laodicean mindset of who you think Christ is is really a relationship with Christ. You will never have one till you get behind the veil. Hundreds of priests in Israel, only one got to go behind. Hundreds of Christians, very few ever go behind the veil.

This church's job is to furnish you. Furnish you with the things that in your spiritual life that will make you perfect for the work of the ministry. The patterns. We do this by preaching truth to

your heart and you accepting it, and then God building the furniture in your life. He is a carpenter. He specializes in furniture. When you go behind the veil, your life will never be the same. Your life will take on a total and complete meaning. You will laugh at those who laugh at God's church in light of what God is doing because their head is somewhere where it should not be. You will never be influenced by the wrong crowd. You know why? The light memorizing off of that, that ark, will just keep you wired and plugged in. You will never lose sight of the wonders that He does in your life when you go behind the veil and understand why He is doing it. You will understand why He saved you, why He put you in Kansas City, why He gave you the family He gave you, and why He brought you here. Behind the veil will be your personal, intimate relationship with Christ that in all you do, you do by the principles of the Word of God. His way, not yours. It will affect your prayer life. It will affect your relationship with the Word of God. It will affect your obedience to the principles. It will affect your walk and your fellowship with God. Following that ark, Christ letting Him lead you where you have never been. And in time, through just the website, He has taken us to Nigeria, South Africa, Holland, England, and I cannot even tell you the scores of places in the United States. You and me going behind the veil, coming out, picking up that ark, shouldering the responsibility of a ministry that God has given us in this New Testament local church.

X. Colossians: The Church Eclipsed by Laodicea

The book of Colossians is a tremendous book. It stands to validate the old saying that great things come in small packages. It has only got four chapters, but wow. Four little chapters that present the most powerful understanding of where we are at today. When I began to build this church, the book of Colossians was one of the books that I followed very closely, understanding what it does.

Colossae was a city in Western Asia Minor on the banks of the river Lycus. In its day, it was a mighty metropolitan city of trade. But it had, in years back then, in the Bible times, it had become eclipsed and become second rate by a city that was just 11 miles south, which is called Laodicea. In the book of Colossians, you will find Laodicea mentioned five times. The church here was built by one of Paul's boys. Paul did not build this one himself. And it was mostly composed of Gentiles. This little book will show us today how Christianity has been eclipsed, the true church, by Laodicea, and how it has destroyed New Testament Christianity.

Colossae was here, and 11 miles south was Laodicea. We are here in Independence, but if you drive down 40 Highway, you are in Kansas City. If there is no sign there that says you are entering Kansas City and leaving Lee's Summit or Independence, you do not know where you cross over. That is the way it is in our Christian lives when you leave the things of God and you move into Laodicea. You know how close those things are. The problem is, because you are not in the principles of the Word of God, you do not have the signs telling you when you are getting close to Laodicea, and you better get back. So you just drive right into it. And you wonder why you have the attitudes you have. You wonder why you have your problems you have. It is tough for you here. You are a Laodicean mindset in a Philadelphia mindset church. I get it. Four little chapters that define what the root problem is today in the church.

Chapter 1, I do not know if you have ever looked at it or not, but chapter 1, he goes over and over and over and over and over again. What he does simply is he redefines who Christ is. You know why? Because the church had forgotten who Christ is. This church today, the church age, has forgotten who Christ is. They think He is into everything that is going on. When you start talking like this, some of you, and obviously some of your friends, they do not like that kind of talk either. I get it. But it is true. I mean, I cannot tell you. Either God has a Bible or He does not. It is either true or it is not. You either follow the principles or you do not. You either go and follow in the principle of the Word of God, or you are going to go with the straw, that straw man, the Tin Man, and the Cowardly Lion.

So he goes through that whole chapter. The hallmark of Laodicean Christianity and churches is building a relationship with God on your terms. It is. The whole mindset of Laodicea. If you do not believe that is true, just come over sometime into the privacy of my office so you are not embarrassed by anybody but me, and I will not embarrass you. We will find out if you do or you do not. No big deal. The hallmark of Laodicean Christianity today is God's people want to build their relationship with Christ. You are like Uzzah. You want to do it your way, on your terms. You want to take the ox cart off the staves and put it on a worldly cart, and then you want to help God along. Yes, you do.

Chapter 2, he now takes the time to show us what has replaced the Bible and God's principles. He says in Colossians 2:8:

Colossians 2:8

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

These are all things that have replaced the Word of God. You go to most churches now, big churches, they have a staff psychiatrist on there to solve your problems. They have such big churches and such big things up there that it is all built, it is all in vanity. It is all, "Look at what we have." I remember one time I walked into a big church, and a guy took 20 minutes to show me around all that they had. They had everything. They had a restaurant, they had a gymnasium. It was incredible. They had a restaurant, they had a gymnasium, and they had this and they had that, and the auditorium was incredibly beautiful, and they had all these Sunday school classes, they had this and that, and he says, "Look what we have here." And I just said, "Yeah, that is great. Look what I have got. What good is all that if you do not have this?" And they did not have this. See where we have come?

Tradition of men, rudiments of the world. The Church of Jesus Christ today, unfortunately, is rooted in the world. They do not care about anything but getting bigger and fatter and better. You go to most churches today, whatever you do, whatever they give you, you pay for it. They charge you for it. You go to a class, you have got to pay \$40, \$50 to take that class. You want to get married, it is \$600 to use our deal. You tithe and you support it and you clean it and you do all this stuff, but when it comes back to using it, we want money for it.

Then chapter 3 and chapter 4, thank God for chapter 3 and chapter 4, it gives me my response to it. This is how I survive. This is Bob Alexander's survival chapters.

Colossians 3:1

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Set your affections on things above and not the things of this earth. I do not give a flying flip about one thing on this planet. I have got my affections set on things above. I know in the Bible what is new. There is a new heaven, there is a new birth, there is a new Jerusalem. There is a new spirit coming to Israel. I have got a new name written down in glory. I am focused on those things. That forms my reality check. God saved you and me for a reason. It was not so you could do whatever you wanted to do. God wanted to use you. God wanted to use you. God wanted to use you to do things out there just like in Acts chapter 8 when the old Ethiopian eunuch from Africa is reading over there Isaiah 53 and does not know what he is doing. God sends him Philip, and Philip comes up and says, "Understand what thou readest?" And the old boy says, "How can I, except some man should guide me?" And he desired Philip to come up, and the Bible says that Philip started at that scripture and preached unto him Jesus.

Times really have not changed. He had 219 people over in Africa, 220 people over in Africa, got on a website, said in their hearts, "What is this all about?" And God gave me everything they needed, and then they sent a letter to all the Philips in this church saying, "What do I do now?" Times have not changed. God is still in the wonder business. Problem is, we have got out of it. He has not.

Let the word, he says over there, he says in Colossians 3:16:

Colossians 3:16

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

You see, here is the deal. You study your Bible. Most of you probably do. People dwell in the Word of God richly, but the problem is you will not let the Word of God dwell in you richly. You do not do anything with what you read. You just read enough to satisfy your conscience for the day. You do not read the Bible to find out what God really wants you to do with your life. God help us. "It may change my plans." No, no. "I will dwell in the Word of God as long as that Word of God will not really dwell in me." And that is why today most of God's people have no furnishings. And the real tragedy is they are satisfied with that. And that is why you have to get a bad attitude because a bad attitude helps you be satisfied with what you do not have from God. Because bad attitudes always justify your position that this is the way I am, and here is the reason for it. I know all about bad attitudes. I get them all the time.

Colossians 4 says, "Following the principles of the Word of God and the patterns in allowing God to do the work in our lives." And Colossians 4:3 says:

Colossians 4:3

Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:

You see, when we do what is right with the Word of God, when we do what is right with the Word of God in this church, when we make sure that we stand in this pulpit, we preach the truth, and God takes that and around in time, around this country, and now we are seeing it around the world. Some little podunk church that people would laugh at where we are at compared to some of the Taj Mahals that are out there today. The people come down here, I watched when John Hill's daughter's funeral, we had some old people come down here that we used to know from years ago, and they have a humongous tomb of a church. I had to watch them when they came in, they snickered when they looked around. It is okay. That is all right. Those things do not bother me a bit. You know why? I would rather have the book, and I would rather have the wonders of God in my life in this church than any building you can ever put up anytime, anyplace, anywhere. You could overlay it with gold a thousand times, and I would walk into that thing, and if it did not have the Bible, I would be out of there so fast, and I would just stick with the book. You know why? The wonders are not in big church buildings; the wonders are in the principles of the Word of God. The wonders are dwelling in you, and then God giving us the open door.

Laodicea was just 11 miles south of Colossae, and that is such a pertinent concept because you could walk out of that city, not keep track of your mileage, and before you know it, you are in Laodicea. In your Christian life, it only takes one bad attitude to get you in Laodicea. In the Old Testament, Laodicea, or in the New Testament times, Laodicea was just 11 miles south. Let me tell you something, in the church age today, the distance is a lot shorter. You would be there in a heartbeat.

Next week, I am going to finish out the last part of this, and I am going to take you on the inside and show you the patterns of the three kinds of people that make up every church. Now I want you to pray about our brethren. I have already got some things moving here. I am going to contact this lady this week, find out for sure what they need. We are going to find out what we need to do. I want you to pray about in your heart what you want to do. You come and see me. If you want to buy a Bible, if a family wants to buy a Bible, whatever you do, the Bible is going to probably be around \$30. I am working on it with all the shipping and everything we are going to have to do, and I am not going to have to work all that out. That is all I have for you today.

Thank you.