

Proverbs 20

Sunday 7/2/2017

When the pastor preached, he preached in a lot of little churches: Dunn and Steubenville, Ohio; Bridgeport, Ohio; and some places in West Virginia. That song brought back all the memories of those times. That is the way it should be sung, and that story was great. I really enjoyed it. I was thinking back in those days and how good it was back then, and how much I appreciated all that. So, thanks, guys, I do appreciate that.

Concerning the Fourth of July, Mr. Gravagansa, I forgot to tell you, you need to sign up back there. We are going to do steak shish kebabs on the grill for everybody, so I have to order that tomorrow. Please sign up back there, and if you can bring a side dish or dessert, bring lawn chairs, of course. Jamie says she is going to have the drinks. So, it will be a fun time. I am not sure what everybody is laughing about. What did I say wrong? Nothing? I am glad. This water is yellow. I mean, it is yellow. It tastes yellow too.

I. The Principle of Self-Discipline

If you have your Bibles this morning, I want you to turn to Proverbs chapter 20. Last week, I talked about probably, I think, which was the greatest single verse in all the Bible that will honestly put an end to and fix any issue that we all face in life. We all face issues; I face them, you face them. It is simply the idea of disciplining yourself to the principles of the Word of God. I know that is a lot easier to say than to do sometimes.

But we looked in particular at Proverbs 20:18, where it says that every purpose is established by counsel, and with good advice you make war. You remember, and I like to do this in my own study of the Word of God, I broke that verse down into four areas, and we talked about each one of them, and then came back and kind of put it all together.

We talked about the fact that everybody has a purpose. God saved you for a reason. We talked about the fact that once you understand that purpose, the next thing you need to do is let God establish you in the Word of God, then to establish you in a New Testament local church, and go from there.

We talked about the next thing: you get established by counsel. We talked about the Bible being the principal counselor book that has all of the principles in it by which we do what we do in life. We talked about the fourth thing: getting good, solid advice to make war, the war being your ministry and all the things that go along with that.

Discipline is an incredible word. We talk about discipleship, and we have a program here that you can go through a number of lessons and be disciplined, and then you can actually go to the next level and get disciplined in the second level, a little deeper into the Word of God. We call it discipleship.

Jesus, when He was on this earth, He had disciples, and those disciples were men and women that followed Him. There is a difference in the Bible between apostles and disciples. Most people do not know that. Not all disciples were apostles, but all apostles are disciples.

Of course, the word discipleship or disciple really comes from the word discipline, and that is really what it means. A disciple is a person who has disciplined themselves to the teaching of Christ. They became His disciples. In other words, He gave them a discipline to follow, a structure of doctrine that He taught.

When the scribes and the Pharisees came to Him, they always had an issue with what He taught. They always had an issue with His doctrine. The doctrine was what He taught, and the men and women that followed Him became His disciples because they disciplined themselves to what He was teaching.

The failure today, really, it is just simple in Christianity. The failure today is very basic and very simple. It is a failure for us to discipline ourselves to the teachings of Christ, to make those things the hard, fast rules of life.

Today, it manifests itself, and I talked about this last week, in a number of different ways. We talked about Hebrews 5:12-14, where it simply says that some of God's people, by the time they ought to be teachers, you have to go back and teach them again the Word of God. It made one of the most remarkable statements that I could ever find in the Bible, where it basically said that the failure to do that will lose the ability to discern between good and evil. You will not be able to look in a church in the world and you will not be able to say, "This is wrong, I want to stay away from it. This is right, I am going to allow it in." You lose that ability.

That is what the Bible does. That is what disciplining yourself to the Word of God and its principles does for you. It gives you good, solid advice on what to stay away from and what to let into your life.

We were told in Isaiah 5:20-21 that there was a day coming that it said:

Isaiah 5:20-21

20 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

21 Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!

Of course, that is where we are at today. We are like that with churches. Things go on in churches, and people think it is okay, when in actuality, the Bible teaches that it is wrong. That is the way it is in the world today. Our world is upside down simply because of the fact that we think that good is wrong and wrong is good. The prophet Isaiah, 400, 500 years before Christ showed up, he laid out what was coming in your life and my life. So that was a great verse last week, and I hope it meant something to you that kept you from the world this week and gave you a perspective on what you need to do.

II. Proverbs 20:19-22 Explained

Today, I want to continue in Proverbs chapter 20, and I want to look at another set of verses. We want to look at Proverbs 20:19-22. It simply says this:

Proverbs 20:19-22

19 He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.

20 Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness.

21 An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed.

22 Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee.

Let us pray. Father, we ask You today, Father, to help us to move through these verses. Help us to put together all the things that we need to do. Help us to think clearly today and to put all the things in our hearts that may be heavy aside. Lord, help us to always look for the Word of God and to be able to put it out to give other people what they need. Lord, I just pray Your blessings upon today, and I want in Jesus' name, and say, can we ask it? Amen.

Now today, again today, we are going to look at some more really good principles to add to our library of good advice that will establish our purpose in life through being a disciplined Christian. I talked last week about the disciplined Christian life, structuring yourself to a discipline that you hold to.

III. The Talebearer and Flattery (Proverbs 20:19)

Now look at Proverbs 20:19. It says this:

Proverbs 20:19

He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.

As the verse stands on its own, it is pretty easy to understand what he is talking about. It is about people who will use flattery and then take advantage of you, or they will take the confidence that you put in them, that you trusted them with, and then they will take that out and tell somebody else and cause issues with it. It is talking about people who will tell you, as I said, what you want to hear, and then through their flatteries, by telling you what you want to hear, through their flatteries, have a personal agenda, and in most cases, you are going to wind up getting hurt in it. It is a false friendship, a false relationship that through flattery of their lips, as I said, they are simply telling somebody what they want to hear, and they have their own agenda that they are going to take and they are going to do what they want to do.

Now that is how the verse stands, but we know that in our Bible, and I am talking about a King James 1611 Authorized Version, that everything in it is there for a reason, and there are three applications to the Bible.

1. There is a historical application, which actually happened in history.

2. There is an inspirational application, like we just talked about, or something that is practical in your life.
3. Then there is a doctrinal application, and the doctrinal application will always cast itself forth to prophecy or something that God is going to do in the future.

Doctrinally, this talebearer here that you are told not to meddle with, it will be the Antichrist. You know that in your Bible, in Proverbs, you have a wise man and a foolish man. The wise man is someone who heeds what God says; he heeds what God says and he stays away from it, where the other guy is the fool, and he gets caught up in it and he gets destroyed. We know that.

Proverbs 6:16-19 talks about the characteristics of the devil, the Antichrist. It talks about having a proud look. It talks about having a lying tongue. It talks about hands that shed innocent blood, feet that are swift running to mischief. It talks about a heart that devises wicked imaginations. Then it says a false witness that lies, and then it says, "sowing discord among the brethren." He does this. The way that he does this is the way so many people do it. He tells people what they want to hear. He flatters them. He tells them, he finds out what they are wanting in life, and he tells them all about it. He will tell them everything that they want to hear, and all the same time, they have got an agenda that they are going to do something else.

Without a doubt, the devil will be the greatest flatterer that the world has ever seen. The context here, doctrinally, as I said, will be the Antichrist using flattery within the tribulation period to deceive and fool the nation of Israel as he is doing the whole world.

Look at Daniel chapter 11. I am going to show you a couple of places of the Antichrist doing this found in the book of Daniel. I want to go to Daniel 11. Pick it up in Daniel 11:21.

Daniel 11:21-22

21 And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries.

22 And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflown from before him, and shall be broken; yea, also the prince of the covenant.

See that? It says there that he takes the kingdom by flattery. Now look at Daniel 11:32. Same chapter. Move down a little bit.

Daniel 11:32-34

32 And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.

33 And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.

34 Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries.

It is very clear that in Proverbs, the Antichrist is going to use these flatteries. In Proverbs, the system of the Antichrist is likened to a strange man and a strange woman. This woman is a harlot. She is a fornicator. She will seek out young men and she will destroy them. She does this through religion. This will be the Antichrist's fundamental religion: Babylon the Great, false religion, the mother of harlots. This will be the woman who will take your crown and take your garment in the day and age that we live in.

The great example of it is Samson and Delilah. It was a situation where here is a guy who was stupid. He did not follow anything with the Bible. He never really paid attention. He followed his own flesh and his own emotions. We know how the story ends up. Delilah ruined him from what God wanted him to do, and Delilah destroyed him.

Inspirationally, this will be any woman who will use her body, use her looks, use whatever she has in a physical sense to try to destroy somebody and to try to take advantage for whatever purpose she has. The book of Proverbs is written to us to prevent this.

Proverbs 2:16 says that the Word of God, the book of Proverbs in particular, was written to:

Proverbs 2:16

To deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words;

Of course, that is a reference again to the Antichrist. It is a reference to any woman who wants to take advantage of somebody in an inspirational way.

Proverbs chapter 7 is the great chapter on it. It talks about the fact, he says in Proverbs 7:1-5:

Proverbs 7:1-5

1 My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee.

2 Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye.

3 Bind them upon thy fingers: write them upon the table of thine heart.

4 Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman:

5 That they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words.

In other words, make wisdom and understanding part of your life. That is what he is saying. Make it part of your life. These are the principles. Make it part of your everyday life.

Then it goes on down in Proverbs 7:6-23. It talks about how she meets this young guy. The Bible says down here in Proverbs 7:11:

Proverbs 7:11

She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house:

Proverbs 7:13-15:

Proverbs 7:13-15

13 So she caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him,

14 I have peace offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows.

15 Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee.

This last week when I gave you those 28 things, this is the time to refrain from embracing. Doctrinally, embracing this woman, this religion. Of course, there will be a time, there will be a time in a present physical sense, in an inspirational sense, there will be a time if you are not to embrace somebody like this too.

So it goes on and it says, "So she caught him, verse 13, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him." This is called body language. No, with an impudent face she said. Her face says something. This is why women want to put their face the way that they do. They want to get a message across. Sometimes it is not a very good message.

"I have paid my peace offerings with me. I have paid my vows." She is religious, see. She is religious. "And therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee. And I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt." Egypt is the type of the world. "I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning. Let us solace ourselves with loves. For the good man is not at home." See, it is the church age here. The good man is Christ. He is not here. It is the church age. This is this woman working through it.

Look at Proverbs 7:21:

Proverbs 7:21

With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him.

What happens? You see, this is an exact example of what Proverbs is talking about. In addition to that, you will find that these words are flattery. It will be called enticing words in the New Testament.

1 Corinthians 2:4, Paul tells the church of Corinth that they are following the enticing words of man's wisdom over God's wisdom. Also in Colossians 2:4, somebody is enticing you and beguiling you through flatteries.

What the devil will do is he will flatter you with knowledge like he did Eve. He came to Eve and he flattered her. "Ah, you will be like the gods, knowing good and evil." He flattered her. He used flattery with her. He came to the place that he told her and he brought her an elevator to the point so much that she actually thought she knew more about it than God did. That is what the devil will do with flattery. He will make you think you are so good. He will get a man to the point in his life with all of his good deeds, with all of his good works, with all of his dedication to changing society and all the social things and the issues he deals with, that he does not need God and he can rest in his own righteousness. If that is not a picture of not only America today but Christianity.

In life, people will feed your ego. They will tell you what you want to hear. They will use flattery to falsely build you up with flattery, and then they will use you. It happens all the time. An unprincipled, undisciplined life will always fall for the con man Christianity. They always will. Of course, this will be the strange woman of Proverbs chapter 5 and again in Proverbs chapter 7.

IV. Cursing Parents and the Lamp (Proverbs 20:20)

Now look at Proverbs 20:20:

Proverbs 20:20

Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness.

Here again, doctrinally, just so you know, this will be found in places like Matthew 10:21, where in the tribulation period, the kids are turning against their parents and they are turning their parents in, and they bought into the flatteries of the Antichrist, and their mom and dad maybe have not. So whole families are being split up over this. It will tell you in Matthew 10:21 that the kids are turning on their mothers and turning on their fathers, just like it is here.

But inspirationally, the verse is dealing with a son or daughter who grows up in this life and actually hates their mom and their dad. That is a terrible thing. It is a terrible thought, but it happens in the real world all the time.

We live in a world today that the problem with our children and the problem with kids is the fact that their parents do not raise them to be under any kind of structure of authority. They do whatever they want to do. Of course, they grow up into that. You are looking now at America with the leaders of this country who were back in my day, which was the late 60s and the 70s, were the movement that was against the establishment of this country. It was against the government. It was against the war in Vietnam. They were against anything that was established. They were the beginning of what you see today to understand to be the liberal movement. Now they are all grown up. Now they are congressmen. They are senators. They are people who hold high authority in office, and they brought their valueless system right into this country. It all started back then because moms and dads were not disciplining their children. They were not being trained in the Word of God.

In the Old Testament scenario, to put it into a historical context, when a kid, whether it was a son, was rebellious to his mom and dad, capital punishment was in order. They killed him.

Deuteronomy 21:18-21

18 If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them:

19 Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place;

20 And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard.

21 And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.

They killed him. Now this will give you some insight. Remember in Ephesians 6:1, when they are starting to get into the whole armor of God, it says this:

Ephesians 6:1

Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

It goes on and it says, "Honour thy father and thy mother." That is Exodus 20:12, the fifth commandment.

Exodus 20:12

Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

"Which is the first commandment with promise." You know what the promise is? The promise is if you do not honor your father and mother, I promise you are going to get killed based on Deuteronomy 21.

Now people look at that and they think, "Why was God so harsh to kill kids like that?" Well, God understood a great principle that most parents do not get today. God wanted to build a strong nation, and He knew that that nation being strong would be built on families. He knows that when the children are not strong and the children are rebellious, the nation will wind up being rebellious. We see it in our own country, as I said a few moments ago. Our country is run by a bunch of lawless liberals today who are in rebellion of everything against God simply because when they were teenagers, that is how they were raised. That is how they were trained, what society gave them. It is exactly what it is.

God knew that He had to stop the rebellion in children if He was ever going to save the nation, because if the children went as they grew up, the whole nation would go. This is why we see the example in the book of Judges, where it says in Judges 21:25:

Judges 21:25

In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

In a practical application, a father and a mother will or should put the light of God in their child that this verse will never come into play. You put the Word of God light into your kid, and when a parent does not, and the light of God is not there, then the kid only has darkness in his spiritual life, and it will cause mom and dad some incredible issues. We see it all the time. You deal with it all the time.

Proverbs 13:9 says:

Proverbs 13:9

The light of the righteous rejoiceth: but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.

You know, we talk about, "I am going to punch your lights out." That is exactly what God does. Of course, that is exactly how it works. You know, it works like this: the light inside of a man will be called in Proverbs 20:27, it is called a candle and it is called a lamp. In Proverbs 20:27, it is defined as man's spirit.

Proverbs 20:27

The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.

Now when man's spirit gets made up to God's spirit, the lights come on. The Word of God, the Bible says in Psalms 119:105:

Psalms 119:105

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Psalms 119:130 says:

Psalms 119:130

The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

When you turn the lights on in your kid's life, when you put the lights on in your kid's life, it gives them understanding that they can grow and they can get a hold of some things. When you do not turn the lights on, then they are going to be in darkness, and you know what the verse says, the lights are going to be put out in obscurity.

People do not grasp that when the lights are turned on in your life, people are drawn to it. In time, the light will establish that person, and people within the church, people that you work with, people around the world, will see the light in you, and it is something that you can draw to them. This is why your testimony is so important in your life. It is the light of God in you, and it is something that you can pretend that you are a Christian and the lights are on, but when the world sees you or your friends see you, it is another scenario. That is a very confusing thing to people.

It would be like driving down the street on a dark night, and all the lights are on in the homes, and it is a very pleasant, warm feeling. But then you come to a house where something is wrong with the electrical circuit, and it is like somebody is flicking the switch. The lights keep coming on and off real fast. You know there is something wrong in that house. When the lights keep flickering on in your life, there is something wrong in your house. I mean, it is not hard. You may not want to deal with it, but it is not hard. You may not want to be truthful about it, but it is not hard.

Matthew 5:14-16 says that:

Matthew 5:14-16

14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

You know that is a great concept because it is like this church is made up of individual temples, houses, 2 Corinthians chapter 5. We have, you know, in this house, we desire to be clothed and not naked. You are like a small city. Our little city here is about 300 people connected with it, and that is our city. You take a city and put it on a hill, and everybody in the house turns the lights on.

I remember one time, early in the space program, one of the astronauts, and I cannot remember who he was, he was just by himself. It had to be one of the Mercury guys because it was Apollo after that, and they had two guys. He was doing his orbits around the Earth, and his hometown was, I forget where it was, but he was passing over them at night, and everybody orchestrated and coordinated. He is 400 and 500 miles up in space. As he passed over the United States, everybody in his city flicked their lights on and off, and the whole city, they did, shut everything off, off and on, off and on, and the whole city saluted him, and he could look down and he could see the off and the on lights of that city.

When everybody in this church, when your lights are on, and we are a city on a hill, people see that light and they are drawn to that light. What confuses them is flickering lights. Of course, when you come back to Revelation chapter 1, you will find that each church in church history, in their seven periods, they have an angel that represents a candlestick, their light. You will get in Revelation 1:20 that the Laodicean church, their candlestick is gone, they have no light. Today, the church has no light, the light being the Word of God.

Your family is to be a lighted family. People in your world, in your neighborhood, they should see your family as a light. They should see mom and dad and kids get in a car going to church while the neighbor across the street is mowing his lawn. He is going to take note of that. He may not say anything about it to you, and he may dismiss it, but let me tell you something, the Holy Spirit of God is going to work on him and wonder why there is a family over there where they are all going to church. Your family is to be a lighted family, all members having their lights on. Moms and dads will either light those lights and keep them going, or they will put the lights out, and they will suffer the consequences with their child.

I have known in my ministry, I have known kids that they learned to do drugs, they learned to drink alcohol, they learned to smoke cigarettes. They are going to do all the things that the world's vices are, being taught by their parents. I had a kid one time that his dad and him used to go buy drugs together and do marijuana together. I mean, it was a father-son deal. It is a terrible tragedy, and a kid grows up and gets completely lost in everything, and instead of the parents keeping the lights on, they turn the lights off.

I have seen many a child learn to drink, smoke, do drugs, to fornicate, to gamble, to live a godless lifestyle from their mom and their dad. That is what they taught them. That is what they

trained them. Their mom and dad consciously, they do not care about the light in their own life, but unfortunately, they turn off the lights in their children's life.

I think family values are a very key part of everything, and I think family values are an incredible part of a good, strong family. I think that a family is always talking about making memories with their children, and I think that is an incredible thing. I think that families ought to grow up together and they ought to make memories. They ought to have vacations when they can all look back and talk about it and laugh. They ought to have school activities where they go and they support the kids. They ought to go to their baseball games and their football games and their soccer games and all the fun times together that they have. I think making memories for your children is an absolute paramount thing to do.

But I want to tell you something. The best family memories should be the memory in your child's mind of a God-fearing, Bible-believing, ministry-oriented parent who paid the bill to keep the lights on in their family. There is going to be a cost for doing that. There are going to be some things that as a parent you are not going to be able to do that maybe you want to do, and you may think you get away with it because your kid does not see it. It is not the kids seeing the act of what you do, it is the spirit by what you do that that spirit gets taken by guess who and translated into your child.

Parents wonder sometimes why their kids do things that they do, and they do not figure it out. It is because you have done the same things, and you think because they did not see you do it that you got away with it. You do not get away with anything. It is your spirit you are infusing, and when you get the wrong spirit, that is the spirit that gets put into that child. It is just that simple. That child needs to have a God-fearing, Bible-believing, ministry-oriented parent that is involved in a local New Testament church that is willing to pay the bill to keep the lights on in their family, and that will cost you something. It always will. Nobody has all the lights on for all their life in their house that electric bill does not come, and there will be a light bill for keeping the lights on. Count on it. Of course, when we do not, then the light shall be put out in obscure darkness, and that is how we lose our kids.

V. Hasty Inheritance (Proverbs 20:21)

Look at Proverbs 20:21 back to Proverbs.

Proverbs 20:21

An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed.

This is a great commentary on modern-day Christianity. Doctrinally, it will be the Antichrist showing up bringing the false second coming and the millennium. We know that he comes portraying himself to be Christ, and he brings in a false millennium and a false second coming. You see it in Revelation chapter 6 and in Revelation chapter 19. It is very clear what he does. You can see the counterfeit in almost everything that he does. Of course, he brings about a great deception by flatteries, and he establishes a false kingdom, and he thinks Israel thinks that they

have gotten the inheritance that God had for them, except this one is not going to have the blessings of God in it.

Inspirationally, it is dealing with God's people getting your inheritance, getting your rewards here in this life. We talked about this Thursday night, or getting them over on the other side when the Lord comes back. Right now, a false inheritance, the inheritance, the world, it can look pretty good. Everything looks good while you are doing it for the moment. But the blessings of God are missing in it. It is a thing where you can live like a king now and have everything that you want. You can kid yourself into thinking it is all of God, and brother, in truth of the matter is, God is a thousand miles around it.

It is the great principle. It is the ability, as I said, to be able to discern between good and evil. It is the principle in your life and my life to be able to look at a situation and say, and understand, "Is God in it or is He not?" That is where it starts. That is where it starts. Many of God's people, unfortunately, they say, "Is God in it or God not?" They know the difference, and they go ahead with it because that is what they want to do. You can live like a king now and have everything you want, or you can get it over there.

The key phrase here is "the end thereof." The real question is, how are we going to end up? For an unsaved man, it is going to be the great white throne judgment. For a saved man, it will be the judgment seat of Christ. But the question for each of us today is, how are you going to end up?

You know, down in Alabama years ago, I heard this story a long time ago, an old dead Southern Baptist preacher. I mean, he had been in the system all of his life. I do not know if you know it or not, but back in the 20s and the 30s, and even today, the Southern Baptist Church is just an absolute mess. I mean, they are absolutely, they were so bad there at one time that they were at their major seminaries, they were teaching evolution. They were teaching that Noah's flood was a fable. They were teaching young preachers that Adam and Eve were not a true story. They have raised a whole generation after generation of men in the pulpit today who simply do not believe anything about the Bible. It is the reason J. Frank Norris left and started our church, basically, on the long chain of events if you follow him through history. I mean, that is where it started from.

This guy, he retired, and he lived in a fabulous house, very expensive. He had a very nice, fat pension. Now he got the easy life. He got to play golf whenever he wanted. He got to do all the things that he wanted to do. He had paid his dues in the pastoring as they do within that system. Many have systems that way. Now he is out to pasture, so to speak. All his life he was part of the corrupt, ungodly system of the Southern Baptist Convention. He followed all the rules. He played ball. He did everything they told him to do. Now he gets his reward. He gets his pension. It is a nice one. He gets a home. He gets everything that he could ever want. He is now late 60s, early 70s, and he has received after 40, 50 years of the ministry. He is retired. He can take it easy. He can kick back. He can relax. Out to pasture, so to speak. I mean, he can actually move down to Florida like all the Baptist pastors do and go to the dinosaur preacher graveyard when they all die.

One day there was a knock at his door. As he answered it, there was a lady there, probably in her 60s, asking to speak with him. He invited her in, and she says, "Sir, I want to talk with you for

just a moment of time. I just wanted to stop by. I will not take much of your time. But I want you to know that I have now found the Lord Jesus Christ as my personal Savior, and I stand before you and I am washed in the blood of Christ tonight." He kind of looked startled. Somebody would come to the door and say that. She continued, and she said, "And I just wanted to stop by, brother so-and-so, and tell you that I was in your church from the time I was a little child. I grew up in your church as a teenager. I grew up in your church as an adult woman. Not one time did you ever tell me about the salvation and the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ who could save me. So I wanted to stop by and I wanted to tell you, now I am saved. I thank God that He got me to a man who finally told me the truth."

When that dear saint of God turned around and walked out of that house with all of its grandeur and on her way to a real inheritance, not the fake inheritance that that old preacher had. I mean, it looks good at the beginning, but the end thereof shall not be blessed. That old preacher represents 99% of the men behind the pulpits in America today. He represents 99% of the people that go to churches today. Pastors today, they have to live in better houses than their people live in. They drive better cars than they do. Their lifestyle is five or six levels higher than the people that come to their church. They do not have to worry about anything. Everything is taken care of them. They have a great retirement plan with the church. They have everything that they could ever want. All they have to do is hit that magical golden number.

I mean, this guy had character. He had reputation. He had good works. He had good deeds. He had money. He had friends. He had security. He had a lifelong ministry. It all meant absolutely nothing to God. He got an inheritance down here. He played the game. All of his life he played the game. The game in the Southern Baptist Convention. They took care of him now, but God was nowhere around. But the end thereof shall not be blessed. Wait till he hits the judgment seat of Christ. I mean, that little story is about one woman. How about all the ones who never found Christ?

Now, let me just say this to you. You do not retire from the ministry. It is a lifelong purpose. When you get into the ministry, there is no expiration date on it. The Bible says in Ecclesiastes 8:8:

Ecclesiastes 8:8

There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.

I was eating lunch here not too long ago, last year or sometime. I ran into a guy that was a preacher friend of mine from years gone by. I had not seen him for years. Him and I were both youth pastors. He was a youth pastor not too far from where I was. Many of you would know him. Penny would know him in a heartbeat. You probably know him too. I will not say his name. He will come to me afterwards, and I will be glad to tell you who he is. But we met, I mean, I was eating there, and I was getting ready to leave, and he was standing there waiting for somebody to come. I went up to him and I said, "Hey, how are you doing?" He says, "Hey, how are you doing, Bob?" We talked back and forth. I had known that when the pastor of that church

had been there for many, many years, that when that pastor retired, that this kid took over the church. You know what I am talking about? How is that? Okay.

It was a thing where, and I have got to tell you, this kid was not a pastor. I mean, I am not being cruel. This guy could not preach his way out of a wet paper bag. He did not know the Bible. He just was not. He was not. But that is their desire. It is not a question, "Should I or should not?" "I want to do it, so I am going to do it no matter what the Word of God says." So he took this church, and absolutely it went down. Like all guys who cannot admit their failure, he blames the church not growing based on the location of the inner city, not the inner city, but the bad area of the neighborhood that they are in. "Who is going to come to a church like this?" So he tells all the people in the church, "Let us move out to another place that is more growing and more moving, and everybody will buy some land there, and we will sell this building. We will go into another little building over there that we will rent until we get 1,000, 5,000 people coming out, and then we will build this big church." Though that has got to be the way. He never considered that you do not build churches by building buildings. You build churches by building people. But we do not know anything about the Bible. How are you going to do that? I mean, there are only so many sermons on the internet you can get.

So I asked him, I said, "Hey, how is it going?" I said, "I hear you moved out so-and-so, and you are going to, you know, how is that working for you?" He says, "Oh," he says, "I am not doing anymore." He says, "I am retired." I mean, this guy is my age. He says, "I am retired now, and I am retired." I said, "Really, you are retired?" He says, "Yeah," he says, "I just," he says, "I have done all my part of my life." He says, "There is time for me now just to take it easy." I asked him, I said, "Did you ever see the former pastor anymore?" He says, "Oh, yeah, I am waiting for him." He says, "He is coming in. We have lunch together about once every other month or so." Of course, he is retired too. Probably getting off the golf course, you know, come over.

I walked away from that, and I thought to myself, that is exactly the way it is today. You do not know what you are doing. So when it fails, it has got to be either the people's fault, the geographical location's fault, the church building's fault. Hey, if I can build a church on a bomb shelter, you can build a church anywhere. This room used to be an antique mall. This used to be a car museum. This church, this room used to be Lord knows what, but you know what, it does not matter. What matters is the Word of God. That is what changes people's lives. This guy, he said, "I have done my part." He did not do anything. He never built anything in his life. He never built one thing. But when you get to that point that you want your inheritance here, God will give it to you. God will give it to you.

VI. Waiting on the Lord (Proverbs 20:22)

Look at Proverbs 20:22.

Proverbs 20:22

Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee.

This is a great principle on life. When people do wrong or do you wrong, you want to let God deal with it in His time, in His way. The self-discipline not to retaliate, to do something to get even. Obviously, the great example of this, it probably comes to all your mind, is David and Saul. Saul wanted to kill David. He was David's enemy. He used flatteries to get David in situations where he could try to kill him. You know what, David had multiple opportunities when he could have killed him and ended it right there. But he just let God deal with it.

Hebrews 10:30 says:

Hebrews 10:30

For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

Now that does not mean you do not hold people accountable, but it simply means you do not get even. When you go back and you look at the story of Joseph and his brothers and all the evil things that he did to them, and you read once they have to come back to him, you know what he does in that story? He holds them accountable, but he never hurts them. But he held them accountable for what they did, and then God brought the whole thing together. I mean, he could have had them killed. He could have done the same thing to them that they did to him, but he understood. In fact, he says, "You do not understand. You meant it for my evil, but God meant it for my good that we could get a lot of people saved through this." He is looking at it from the right perspective.

You see, when you are right and following the principles, you do not have to get even. Because the same principles you follow to do the work of God will be the same ones you follow to move on and know that God will take care of it.

Proverbs 20:22 says, "but wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee." Now that word "save thee" is not getting saved from your sin, it is save you from the people who are out to get you. He will deal with them, He will take care of you. Be patient. He will save you from hell, and He will save you from those who live like hell and try to hurt you. You just wait. I mean, I have seen situations where you wait 10, 15, 20 years and see where their life is at and then see where your life is at. Wait 10, 15, 20 years and see where their kids are at and where yours are at.

You see, when nothing else tells, when nobody will tell, when nothing else tells, time will always tell. Just watch it go. Watch what happens to them. Hey, I have seen them. I have seen them lose their ministries. I have seen them lose their wives, lose their husbands. I have seen them lose their kids. I have seen them lose everything and wind up on a trash pile and are absolutely miserable. The root of bitterness in them makes them one of the most, somebody you do not want to be around. It is a great principle. Oh, there is a great principle that God always takes care of the person who wants to do right. I do not have to get even with somebody because that is God's job.

Sitting around and thinking how to get even, and let me tell you something, I have some incredible ways if I wanted to. Sitting around and thinking about it, all it does is pull you off

what you are trying to do. There are enough things that I have to deal with that can pull me off of what I have to do.

There is an old saying, and I have followed it for many years. It is not in the Bible directly, but it is in the Bible in principle. It simply talks about being patient and waiting, like Proverbs 20:22 says. I have followed this for years and years and years in my life. I am not even sure where I heard it, but I found it to be true. It is a saying that I have heard people say, it is an old Chinese saying. I do not know, I have never heard a Chinese saying. I have heard somebody say it is an old saying from wherever. I cannot vouch for that. I just know that it is a good saying and it is true. I have followed it all my life. It simply goes like this: when getting even with people or people do you wrong, if you sit by the river long enough, the body of your enemy will float by. Let God deal with it. Let Him deal with it. I just sit there. I know those feet floating out of the water.

Romans chapter 12, the great chapter that tells us how to deal with the world and people. Romans chapter 12 says that we are to be a living sacrifice. You know, that takes discipline. It takes discipline to live the Christian life in front of people that need Christ, and we do not follow through with what we should do.

Romans 12:21 says:

Romans 12:21

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

You follow the principles. These are great, great, great proverbs. Too many of God's people get overcome by evil. They are obsessed with what people do to them unfairly. The evil things that people will do will be all around you. If you are faithful to do the ministry and you experience that evil, sooner or later, it is just going to happen. You are going to invest in people. You are going to put your faith, your trust in somebody, and you are going to find out that they are going to do you evil. It is just the way that it goes. It is life, sooner or later. You know what? There is not a thing you can do about it to stop it. All you can do is deal with it, and you deal with it through the principles.

Sometimes you have to let people go. It may be the hardest thing in your world, but you know that this is not going anywhere, and I have to come to the conclusion that I have got to let this thing go. I have got to sever this thing. Sometimes that is what you have got to do. It is not easy, never easy. It might be the hardest thing that you ever have to do in your life, but you know what? Some situations get to that point, and there is nothing you can do.

You will never isolate yourself from it. Boy, I wish we could. I wish we could go through life and never have to touch any of these things, but that is not reality. You will never isolate yourself from it, but you certainly ought to be able to insulate yourself from it. You will keep things from getting to you.

A guy asked me one time, he says, "You know what?" He says, "I have followed your life for a while." He says, "I have got to ask you a question. How do you deal with all the crap?" He did

not say crap, but I did. He says, "How do you deal with it? All the years, how do you deal with the deception? How do you deal with the crookedness? How do you deal with the dishonesty? How do you deal with the lies? How do you deal with all of this stuff?" I just simply said, "You know what? In time, you learn to make friends with it. You realize that this is life. You realize that this is the way it is going to go. It does not make it any easier. It does not make the severed relationships any easier. But you realize that you can take comfort in the fact that you are not alone in this. Many are God's people that stood for the Word of God, that got betrayed in something that had to do the right thing." You take comfort in that.

You will never isolate yourself from it, but you are able to insulate yourself from it. You will do that through your ability to discern between good and evil. Then you have to make the hard choice. You have to have a purpose in your life when they do not. You have to establish yourself in the Word of God and the church that God gave you, and they never will. You have to set your affections and focus on things above, because they will not. You have to allow the principles of the Word of God to dictate how you feel and deal with everything that comes your way, keeping your sanity.

One of the things for me, and I have had hard decisions that I have had to make in my life. I will have more hard decisions that I have to make in my life. There are times you have to say goodbye to some things. There are times that you have to lose some things. We saw that last week in the 28th thing, did not we? What keeps us going? What keeps us going when we have to walk away from something? What keeps us going?

A while back, I gave you the great illustration of the guy prospecting for gold. How that he built that little thing with the water running down, and he got in one of those little round things that has got a screen in the bottom. He puts a shovel full of dirt out of the riverbed on it. He puts it under the water to wash it, and he shakes it back and forth. He will do that to all the little stuff, and all the big stuff that will not fall through, stays there, and he looks, no gold. He will get another shovel full, he will put it in. He will put it under that running water, and he will do it again. He may do that all day long.

Then one night about four o'clock in the afternoon, he comes that shovel in, he is tired, he is ready to pack it in. He says, "Ah, I am going to do one more." He puts that load of dirt in there, and he starts to do it under that thing, and the light is kind of fading, and it is running through that thing, and all of a sudden, the water washes away, and he sees that gold nugget about that big. There in that shining pan that he did all day long and never got another thing, he found the biggest nugget of gold he ever saw in his life.

Now, I promise you, he had worked long and hard, but when he found that one nugget of gold, I guarantee you, he never thought twice about all the dirt that he had to sift through to find that gold. You see, the thing that will always keep you going will be the gold nuggets that God gives you. The men and women who come in who are committed to the work, committed to the Word of God, the ones that God, through our sifting, who are taking the dirt of this world and all the people's issues and all the people's problems, we put them in that big old thing, we put them under the water of the Word of God, we shake you up on Sunday morning and Thursday night.

You have to go through a lot of dirt to find one nugget of gold. But when you find that nugget of gold, all the dirt you had to sift through does not matter anymore. That is how you deal with it.

Never focus when it comes to people, because you are going to lose some people. You are going to lose some friends, you are going to lose some relationships, you are going to have to say goodbye to them. There will be no profit in them, there will be no value in them. You have to come to the conclusion like I have. You can never focus on what you do not have. All you can focus on is what God has given you, the gold nuggets that you do have.

People will betray you, people will lie to you, people will tell you whatever you want to hear. You have to come to the place where you take your stand. The thing that will keep you, keep your sanity, is the fact that all the dirt you have to put up with and all the dirt you have to go through in the ministry. Many of you know what I am talking about, because you worked with how many people before you found one who did what they needed to do? I put you with people after people after people. Pretty soon I think you are wondering, "What is wrong with you, Bob? All you are giving me are the dropouts in life." No, I am just giving you people. What you are, you are prospecting, you are looking for those gold nuggets for God. So you put them under the water with all of their problems and all their dirt, you just sift them up, sift them up. "Ah, that one did not work, that one did not work." Then one day you get one that is a piece of gold, and it makes all the other ones, you forget it. These are great principles. These are principles that will help you. These are principles that will keep your focus. If there is anything that we need to do, we need to keep our focus.

Well, let us hold up there and let us have a word of prayer. I will give you about.