

I. The Ministry of Restoration

Thank you all for being here today. I certainly hope after I am done you say, "Thank you, Bob, for a great message." Last week, we had some great principles on ministry and dealing with people and the issues that we all face in dealing with human beings. I remember back to the Star Trek series with William Shatner. After they were done, they came out with a series of movies, and the first one—I liked them all—but the first one had a term used in it that I have never forgotten about human beings. They called human beings "carbon 14 units."

It stuck with me. So, if somebody asks me what I do for a living, and I do not want to scare them off by saying, "I am a preacher," I tell them I am a technician. They say, "What do you work on?" And I say, "I work on carbon 14 units." That always gets their attention. They say, "Really, what is that?" And I say, "That is human beings. I am a preacher." But now you have them because you are buddies.

I never forgot that, but the ministry is dealing with people and the need to always have the truth of the Word of God through its principles on your side, whether you are doing something for the Lord, growing, or whether you are in the ministry dealing with people. Principles in the Bible are to be used, not to be deviated from. People look at churches and what they do with the Word of God and what we are supposed to do. You get a lot of different definitions, and I understand that, and probably most of them are correct. But, in the final analysis, the bottom line without a doubt in the Bible for New Testament Christianity is about one concept: restoration, fixing things that are broken.

We restore man to God and God to man. The Bible talks about that an unsaved man is enmity to God; he is alienated from God. Jesus Christ, the Bible says, was the propitiation for our sin. That means He was the go-between that reconciled two opposing parties. The church's job, if you are unsaved here this morning, our goal for you is to find Christ as your own personal Savior. In that process, you get reconciled to God, and God gets reconciled to you.

Many times, in dealing with people, you have to get people to get reconciled to themselves. They will blame themselves for something that they should not be blaming themselves for. They will put themselves on some guilt trip that they really should not be on, or they allow somebody else to put them on one. So, when you get into the Bible and the Word of God, you get the real picture of what is going on, and they get reconciled to themselves, who they really are in Christ.

Of course, in carbon 14 units, we all have issues. Somebody said one time, "Wherever you have movement, you have friction." That is so true. We talked last week about us being a family, and we all know that in any family, issues come up from time to time. So, the principles of the Word of God not only restore God to man and man to himself, but they will restore man to man. They will fix things in our lives, using the Bible to fix what can and will go wrong within the family of God in dealing with people in their lives.

Truth has to be the foundation without a doubt. Truth for anything that you are going to do in your relationship with God, our relationship with each other, my ability to preach to you, everything has to be on the foundation of the relationship of truth. It has to be built and established on that.

2 Corinthians 4:2

But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

The job of this church, my job in particular, whenever I open up the Bible to you, whether it is one-on-one or we are in church this morning or Bible study, my job is one-fold in its final analysis, and that is the manifestation of truth, giving you the truth of what the Word of God says.

II. Principles from Proverbs 25:25-26

Today, I want to look at a couple of more verses and learn what we can from these and go along with what we have talked about. We are going to look at Proverbs 25:25-26.

Proverbs 25:25

As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.

Proverbs 25:26

A righteous man falling down before the wicked is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring.

Here again, you are going to find some really good principles within these verses that we can study. They are going to help you not only learn more about how you are going to work with people, but I am going to tell you, last week we did it, and we are going to do it again this week, just by where we are at, you are going to get some major pieces of your Bible today. You are going to get some things that you can put into your Bible that I think are really going to help you not only with just working with people or understanding yourself, but in the course of putting your Bible together.

Let me say this so I can get it out of the way. Doctrinally, these verses will all be the Tribulation Period. We know that from our past studies: the Jew in the Tribulation and somebody helping them, giving them a cold drink of water. In fact, you will find it in great detail in Matthew 25:31-46, how the Lord rewards, when He comes back, the people that actually did this. Inspirationally, we will see some principles to help us as we work with others and help ourselves.

You never want to forget, as we move into this today, you never want to forget that the ministry is people. It is not about ministering to inanimate objects. It is about taking carbon-based 14 units and helping them through their problems with the absolute truth of the Word of God. Let us go to prayer this morning.

III. Water as the Word of God: Salvation and Sustenance

Verse 25 says, "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country." This verse is an absolute goldmine; both of these are, really. We know that in the Bible, the life of an unsaved man or a woman, their journey through life, is like Israel walking through the wilderness of Sin for 40 years. It is called the wilderness of Sin, and that title is a great picture of our life and your life if we have never been saved and going through it. It is a picture of after you get saved that there is nothing of any value in that old life.

As they came through the wilderness of Sin, keep in mind, they are God's children. They came out of Exodus in Exodus 12 by the blood of a lamb, just like the day you got saved. Now they start on a journey to go to the Promised Land. Most commentators will tell you or write in their commentaries that the Promised Land is a picture of you going to heaven. That is not true. The Promised Land for them was not a picture of them going to heaven, any more than it is for you.

The Promised Land was what the name says it was: it was the Promised Land. It was the land that God promised them that as long as they stayed in the Word of God and did what the Word of God said, and yes, kept the promises, that when they got there, everything would be a life of ease. God would care for them, protect them from their enemies, and take care of it. It is a picture of your spiritual maturity. When you get through the wilderness of Sin after you get saved, and you follow like the nation of Israel was supposed to do, you will get to the place in your life where you live by the promises of God.

Then it does not matter what happens. We talked about Daniel and Ezekiel the last couple of weeks. I told you how Daniel goes into the first captivity, and Nebuchadnezzar, Ezekiel goes into the second captivity. We talked about what great men of God they were. Daniel was a type of the Holy Spirit of God. Ezekiel was one of the great prophets of God. We get talking about that, but sometimes we fail to miss the point that even though they were great men of God, they both went into the captivity. In other words, them being right with God and doing what was right did not spare them the judgment that God brought upon their nation.

Just because you and I love the Bible and you and I love the Word of God and you want to do what is right for your life does not mean that when this country falls apart and things begin to go south that we are not going to be in the middle. But the great promise is, and the principles are, that even though they had to go down in the captivity, God protected them every step of the way. Why? Because they were living by the promises. So, the Promised Land is a picture for you and me: no matter what happens in this country, what happens in this world, what befalls you in life, if you stay with the Book and the principles and the promises, you are going to be okay.

That is one of the great concepts that you find in the wilderness of Sin. There was no food, there was no water. It was very hot during the day, probably 110-120 degrees. It was very cold at night, probably 20 degrees. It was as hostile to the nation of Israel as the world will be to you, and I want you to understand that.

In the Bible, water that you find, and you know this, I know you do, water will be a picture of the Word of God. One of the greatest examples of that is found in John 4. In John 4, you have the

great story of the woman at the well and how she comes to the well, and Jesus is waiting there for her, and He meets her. She had been coming to that well all her life to draw water, probably several times a day. She would bring her pitcher, she would lay down the rope, bring up the bucket of water, fill it up, go back home, and probably do that every day of her life, if not several times a day in her life, as long as she could, from the time she was very young.

The Bible says in that story that God uses that as an illustration. He wants to contrast the water that she is getting up against the eternal water that He wants to give her. It is an incredible picture. Yesterday, in Bible Institute, I used this as an example to show you how that typology in the Bible will always reinforce the great doctrines of the Bible. This story here in John 4, most people read it, they really do not get much out of it, I am afraid, but they never make the connection back to Genesis 29.

In Genesis 29, you have the original story of Jacob's well, and you will find back there, when you put the two together, it is an incredible picture. Back in Genesis 29, this well that Jacob had back there, they had three groups of sheep that were around that well, and on that well was a great stone. When they removed that stone, the sheep got to drink. Here we are, some, what, that is probably almost 15, 16, 1700 years later, we have the same exact well. This woman comes to the same exact well. In fact, she said, "Our fathers have got water here forever." She comes to the same exact well.

Here is the typology: back in Genesis 29, there was a great stone on that well. In John 4, the Lord Jesus Christ, the stone made without hands, was sitting on the same well. When they removed that stone back in Genesis 29, the three groups of sheep got to get watered. Three groups of sheep, Ham, Japheth, and Shem, got the water when the stone was removed. It is a picture that when Christ died on the cross, water came to you and me to have the everlasting life. It is an incredible picture as you come down through it.

John 4:13-14

Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

What a great picture that is! There is the type in the Old Testament in Genesis 29 that sustains the principle and the great thing, the greatest thing about that story. That woman had been coming to that well all her life because the water she got kept requiring her to come back because it could not fulfill the thirst that she had. When she met the Rock, and out of the Rock came the water of life, and she got that drink, the Bible says that when she went away, she left her pitcher. She was now complete and filled. She did not need the water of this world anymore; she had now the water of everlasting life. What a great picture that is!

Water is an incredible thing in itself. It has no taste to it, hopefully has no color to it, and it has no nutritional value, but it is the basis for life. I mean, it is the basis for life. NASA sends a rocket up to Mars; the first thing they look for is water. On every planet out there, Io, one of the largest planets of Jupiter, they think that it can sustain life. You know why? Because they think it

has got water on it. Water is the basis for life, and if you want to find life in outer space, you are going to find some place that has water. It is an incredible concept.

Water is an incredible thing. We cannot live without it, like the Word of God. Men need water even more than they need food in a survival situation. I remember the survival classes we took; they said you can live three or four weeks without food, but you can only go about a week without water. Water is essential. Water will be the only thing that will absolutely quench your thirst. You can get Gatorade, you can get a Diet Coke, you can get whatever you want; it will not quench your thirst like the number one thirst quencher will: water.

I am going to tell you right now, you can try everything out there the world has to try to quench your spiritual thirst; you will never get it quenched until you get the real water. It is simple; that is how it works. It is an incredible thing to look at and understand. You are going to find that some water that people think is real water, and they move toward it, the water just keeps going farther and farther, and finally they realize that what they thought was water was a mirage. It was not real water after all.

There are people in churches just like that. They go through their whole life thinking this is water; it just stays out of their grasp. One of these days, at the great white throne judgment, they are going to find out that that was a mirage. You are going to find that some water that people will, that will be polluted, and it is poison. That will be your NIV, your ASV, and all the other translations. The purest water is naturally filtered by rocks, coming through rocks. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 10 and Deuteronomy 32 that that Rock was Christ. What you have here is a picture of us and what we need to survive on our journey through the wilderness of Sin.

When you are going to work with somebody through discipleship or maybe in the counseling level of things, when you get into that area of it and you start to work with it and deal with it, I am going to tell you right now what you are going to try to do for them is you are going to try to get them drinking out of the crystal clear water of the Word of God instead of the polluted fountains of this life.

In the Old Testament, we are going to get a little deeper here, and this is where you are going to get some of your Bible. In the Old Testament, there are two great examples of this, the water of life, that supernatural thirst quencher that is for all of us in life. In 1 Corinthians 10, we are talked about the fact that he says that the things in the Old Testament, like we are about to look at here, the things in the Old Testament were for our own samples and for our examples and for our admonition. In other words, he tells us to look back at the things that actually happened. There is going to be a spiritual application in the typology, and then you apply that to the New Testament doctrine, the New Testament principle. That is how you learn the Bible.

So, I want to show you two great examples of this. First off, I want you to come to Exodus 17.

IV. The Smitten Rock: Salvation (Exodus 17)

Exodus 17:1-3

1 And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the LORD, and pitched in Rephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink.

2 Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the LORD?

3 And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?

That is the problem. Here, in this place in Exodus 17:1, the people are out in the wilderness of Sin. There is nothing in that wilderness that sustains them. There is no food, certainly there is no water. Now they are out in the middle of this thing. God brought them out of Egypt, and they are out here in a world that has absolutely nothing for them anymore. I want you to see that.

What follows, Moses goes to God, and what follows is an incredible picture of how you and I got saved by the Word of God, and you cannot get saved without the water of life. The Bible says in Romans 10:17 that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.

In Exodus 17:5-6, God comes to Moses, and God tells Moses, "Here is what I want you to do, Moses. You take the staff in your hand, the rod of judgment." You know what rod I am talking about? It is the one that you used down in Egypt to smite the waters and turn them to blood. This is the rod of judgment. He says, "You take that rod," and He says, "You go over to Mount Horeb, and I am going to show you there a big rock, and what I want you to do is stand on top of that rock and take the rod of judgment, and I want you to whack that rock with your staff."

So, Moses says, "Okay, Lord, it does not sound like much to me, but if that is what you want me to do..." You know, sometimes God will ask you to do something that the average person will think is ridiculous. I mean, if this was not to work, he would have looked stupid standing on top of a rock beating the fire out of it. I mean, if I was Moses and it did not work, if somebody said, "What do you do?" and I am saying, "Well, a lot of the people are mad at me and giving me problems. I cannot hit them. I got their name on this rock, and I am just beating the fire out of this poor rock."

Sometimes God will ask you to do something that the rest of the world thinks is stupid. Do you not know that Noah had a time of it? He lived in a world where it never rained. There were no oceans. He lived in land someplace, and he is building an aircraft carrier beside the USS Nimitz in his backyard. Sometimes God will ask you to do something that, as the world sees it, does not make any sense. Unfortunately, many times we as God's people do not do it because we do not think it makes any sense.

But in this case, somebody needed water, and Moses, a servant of God—I mean, he talked with God face to face like a man speaking to his friend—he goes on here at that rock. He takes his rod of judgment, and he whacks that rock, and guess what? The water comes out of that rock. God says, "I am going to stand before you, Moses, and you take that rod and you smite that rock," and when he did, the water came out, and the people got to drink.

I do not know what you know about the Bible or how deep you are into it, but I am going to tell you right now, that is a picture of how you and I got saved. That Rock is the type of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 10:3; Deuteronomy 32), and it is a picture of the crucifixion of Christ, the Rock of God. When God used His rod of judgment to smite His Son, Isaiah 53:4 says, talking about the crucifixion of Christ and God's judgment on His own Son:

Isaiah 53:4

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

Do you know what God did the day God's Son hung on the cross? Do you know what He did? He whacked Him with His rod of judgment so you and I could have the water of life. Do you not know when that Roman soldier took that spear and put it in His side, the Bible says water and blood came out? I am going to tell you something, when God stood upon that cross and He whacked His Son for you and for me, the picture of that is the Rock of God. The Old Testament, God's people needed water. He says, "Stand on that Rock and smite it with the rod of judgment," and the water came out. It was a day in time when God stood on the cross of Calvary and smote His Son, and you and I got the water.

Isaiah 53:10

Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

Isaiah 53:5

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

I love that part of the verse: "the chastisement of our peace." You have the peace of God this morning, or you should have the peace that passes all understanding. You got it, you live in it, that is your Promised Land. But you know how you got that peace? I will tell you how I got it. You got it by God putting His chastisement on His Son and smiting Him that you could have it. Incredible. "The chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

When Moses smote the Rock, and when God smote His Son, the water comes out of that Rock, and the living water, the cool water to my thirsty soul, the Word of God. We sing about the great song, "Oh, the love that drew salvation's plan, Oh, the grace that brought it down to man, Oh, the mighty gulf that God did span at Calvary." Do you know what He did? God sent His Son, put Him on a cross, the Rock of God, the Rock of Ages, and then took the rod of judgment and put God's chastisement of our peace on Him, and the water came out the day God smote the Rock of Ages, and the water came out, my supernatural water that saved me and saved you out of the wilderness of Sin.

There is a time in all of our lives when we tried everything in the world, and we were still unhappy. We were still unfulfilled. The world just gave us a worse time than anything else, and

we just got into more problems and more trouble to compound themselves in one bad situation, one bad decision, one bad relationship. We were like a man walking through the desert that had a thirst that could not be quenched, and we tried everything to try to quench that thirst. Then God showed us the living water that came out of the Rock the day God smote the Rock of Ages, and the water came out, and now I will never thirst again, spiritually speaking.

V. The Spoken Rock: Sustaining Power (Numbers 20)

Our next example, I want you to see these in comparison and contrast. Our next example is found in Numbers 20:1-2. As I said earlier, we talked about this in Bible Institute yesterday, how that the typology will always reinforce the type. It will not teach the doctrine, but the typology will reinforce the doctrine. That is why one of the secrets I told them that you can always spot a false religion, whether it is Mormons or Jehovah's Witnesses or Seventh-Day Adventists or whatever it is, Charismatic or whatever they may be, you can always spot a false teaching because they may have the verses that they use, but they can never go to the scriptures to find the types that will justify the verses. That is the biggest key you will ever find in your life about teaching the Bible correctly: does it all line up with everything that God has given us in the Old Testament that are for our examples and our samples? That is the key.

In Numbers 20:1-2, here again, we have a problem.

Numbers 20:1-2

1 Then came the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, into the desert of Zin in the first month: and the people abode in Kadesh; and Miriam died there, and was buried there.

2 And there was no water for the congregation: and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron.

At first glance again, the children of Israel find themselves in a situation with no water in the wilderness of Sin, and we know that the Rock here, what God is going to tell them to do, we know that that Rock here has always been established already as a type of Christ. Many people read those two events, and they do not think much about them.

We talk a lot about here, and have been, and I will continue to focus on it with where you are at, about the trained eye being able to see something or two passages and see the difference between the two, and through that trained eye, know what you are dealing with. So, at first glance, these two look similar, but now let us put the trained eye to it and see the real difference.

First of all, in Exodus 17, we saw where he first dealt with the Rock. This is Numbers 20; this is some 20 years between the two events. It is not the same event. There are at least 20 years according to us as chronology between the two events. That is not all. The second thing that your trained eye will show you is that Aaron, the high priest, is here. Aaron was not involved in the one back in Exodus 17. The third thing that your trained eye will show you is that the rod in question here is not the same rod that they had in Exodus 17. The one in chapter 17 was the rod of judgment that Moses used. Here, it is the rod in Numbers 17:10