

Proverbs 28

Sunday 10/6/2019

SEC: Review of Proverbs 28:9 and the Simplicity of Christianity

Last time we were in Proverbs 28 was the week before last. Of course, we had John's funeral service here last week. We studied one of the greatest verses in the Bible on us as Christians not really knowing how to pray and having the right prayer life. Our inability to understand prayer as God sees it and as it is so clearly laid out in the Bible.

Our verse in chapter 28, verse 9, that we really focused on was:

Proverbs 28:9

He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.

That is hard. As I said last week, that is really hard for a lot of God's people today to grasp. We will talk about this a little bit more as we get farther into the sermon, but it never ceases to amaze me today how complicated man has made Christianity. It just seems like everything that God intended to be so simple, man has to get his hands on it and make it so complicated. It is an incredible thing that you see.

I guess it goes with the times of the Laodicean church period, where everything just has to be mechanical. Everything has to be in a corporate mindset. Many churches, when you have large mega churches, liken the pastor to a CEO in a corporation. I understand that because truthfully most big churches have just become corporations. It is all about nickels and dimes. It is all about the bar graph, where you are at and all the things that happen. I totally understand it. It is totally unbiblical, but at least I understand where it is at.

I showed you our lack of understanding when it comes to prayer. Not knowing how to pray is one of the three infirmities that we talked about last week that is listed in the Bible that we struggle with as Christians. Obviously, the first one you remember was our flesh, and nobody has to even argue that one. We all struggle with that. The second one, nobody has to argue with this one, is that we always forget what God has done for us. But the third one is most people just never get. That is based on Romans 8:26, that we do not know how to pray.

You could go online and you could find books on prayer by guys put out across this country. You could buy seminars, you could buy books, you could buy tapes, you could buy all of that stuff. Ninety-nine point nine nine percent of it is stuff that has nothing to do with the Word of God and what prayer is really all about. It has, like everything else in Christianity, become commercialized, and everybody wants to make a buck off of it. It is just not the way that it goes in the Bible.

I showed you the great study of the tabernacle about its furnishings, the seven pieces of furniture that are found in that tabernacle. When we take that and apply it to what we do in our lives, as our body is the temple of God, you see that these seven pieces of furniture all represent something in our life: the brazen altar, the laver of water, the shewbread, the golden candlesticks, certainly the Holy of Holies. But we focused on last time about the altar of incense and the laver

of incense. I showed you how each piece of this is a picture of something. When it comes down to the incense, that is a picture of our prayer.

We talked about the concept of strange fire, how the lighting of the incense had to come off the brazen altar, a picture of the crucifixion of Christ. If our prayer life starts anywhere other than the cross in your own life, or what Christ did for you, it has to be the driving force behind everything in our lives. We make every decision in life, or we should, every decision we make, we make based on what He did for us and how that will impact what God wants us to do. We are far from that as we are in this terrible period of time called the Laodicean church.

I. Judas as an Example of Abominable Prayer

The greatest example of our prayer becoming an abomination will be simply a study of the life of Judas. He, of course, we all know this, betrayed the Lord in Matthew 26. Then later on in Matthew 27:3, the Bible says that he repented to himself and then he goes out and hangs himself. It becomes one of the seven suicides in the Bible. If you really want to understand the concept of that, then you again study those seven, not to buy anybody's book on it. You do not have to go out and get somebody's seminar to listen to somebody who is an expert. Go to the Bible because the Bible is an expert on everything for you and me. That is where you start.

The modern-day Baptist and the evangelical crowd, they do the same thing that Judas does. They betray the Lord. I guess that is why they work so hard at trying to prove that Judas was really a good guy and a saved guy. Even now they talk about there was a gospel according to Judas. A lot of these guys are going around talking about how Judas got a raw deal. It is a thing where that is not the way that it worked. The modern-day Baptists are just like the old New Testament Judas. They do the same thing.

The Bible clearly teaches us, and again, how simple is this? This is not complicated. This is not rocket science. It is so basic. If you can just read the Bible, John 1:1 says:

John 1:1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Every one of those is a one-syllable word. How much easier does it get? Then John 1:14, same chapter, same book, just 13 verses later, it says:

John 1:14

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

You cannot separate. How hard is it to see that? You cannot separate the Word of God from God Himself. Christ is the incarnate Word of God through the Word of God. 1 John 5:7 talks about that there are three that bear record in Heaven.

1 John 5:7

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

The reason why He set up in Heaven the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and did not say the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, is He is showing you that Jesus Christ and the Word are one and the same. I just do not know how hard that is for somebody to grasp.

In the early New Testament church, God's body was here in Jesus Christ. We know that. God was manifested in the flesh. I get it. When He went back to Heaven, we, the church then, became His body. That is why the church is called the Body of Christ. We replaced the physical presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is why He said over in John 14:12-14, He says, "greater things will ye do than I did," Jesus speaking. That is so true because He was only here for 33 years, and really three and a half years He was in the ministry of His public ministry. You and I live much longer than that. He never moved outside the 30, 40 miles of Jerusalem that He lived. We go much farther than that.

Of course, we see that we are His replacement. The Body of Christ, the church, is His body, but then we needed His mind. That is where the Word of God comes in, in Philippians 2:5 and 1 Corinthians 2:16, that we now have the mind of Christ. So the church is the Body of Christ. The Bible is the mind of Christ. That makes us complete to fulfill the mission that He started that He asked us to fulfill. I do not know what is hard about that. I guarantee you, there are kids in our junior high and our young, older kids that could grasp that just like that. I guarantee you, kids like my granddaughter, Macy, understand that. I guarantee you, some of your kids understand that. Olivia would understand that. You older kids or younger kids would grasp that.

What is so hard about that is the fact that it is a great truth that the devil does not want anybody to have. When you reject the Word of God, then like Judas, you have rejected Christ Himself. I know that sounds terrible. I guarantee you, people are going to listen to this. I am just a guy with a Bible, I believe. Who are you? I am telling you, it is so simple and so basic, but you like to hide behind the complexity. That is what men do today. When you reject the Word of God, you have, like Judas, rejected Christ Himself, for He is the Word. The Bible says in Psalm 40:7:

Psalm 40:7

Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me,

The question this morning is, do you have that book? That is all it is. Now, like Judas, your prayer now becomes sin, an abomination.

If you do not believe me, turn over to Psalm 109. I am going to read you a great passage that went in with last week. The reason why I do not always finish things up last week is because I like to blend them all together and keep it flowing. I am going to go back and save a few things and then move it into this week's. Some guy says, "Well, that is not my style of teaching or preaching." That is why you are not a very good preacher. I do not know what to tell you.

Psalm 109:1-10

1 Hold not thy peace, O God of my praise;

2 For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue.

3 They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause.

4 For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer.

5 And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.

6 Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand.

7 When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin.

8 Let his days be few; and let another take his office.

9 Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.

10 Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places.

If you cannot figure this out, this is Christ speaking prophetically here. He is getting ready to talk about Judas who betrayed Him, just so you know where we are going here. So He says, "For the mouth of the wicked," that would describe the Pharisees and all that crowd, "and the deceitful are opened against me. They have spoken against me with a lying tongue." They compassed me about also with words of hatred and fought against me without a cause. For my love, they are my adversaries, but I give myself unto prayer. They have rewarded me evil for good and hatred for my love. Set thou a wicked man over him and let Satan stand at his right hand. When he is judged, let him be condemned. And here it comes, "and let his prayer become sin." Let his days be few and another take his office. Let his children be fatherless and wife a widow. Let his children be continually vagabonds and beg and let them seek their bread out of their desolate places.

This is Judas. Here is your guy. This is a prophecy about them hating Christ and then Judas betraying Him. Once we understand that Jesus Christ is the Word, the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and it is settled in heaven, and there are three that agree in heaven, then we know what we have here.

Verse 2 is talking about somebody lying with a deceitful tongue. We know that to be, as I said, the scribes, the Pharisees, and all of that crowd. Those will be the Bible scholars of His day. That will be, as I said, the Sadducees and the Pharisees. Verse 3 says that these people compassed Him about with words of hatred. They are talking about the Lord Jesus Christ with words of hatred and they are lying about Him.

Let me just stop here. Come on, let us just get real today for a moment. If He is the Word of God and these guys in the first coming of Christ are talking about the embodiment of Christ in a body, lying in hateful words to Him, and that body is the Word of God today and you have some Bible scholar doing the exact same thing, please show me the difference. I am open to it. Please do. Bring your credentials in and impress me with them. Show me what you have.

Verse 4 says that they are His adversaries. I want to tell you something. These adversaries were the leaders of His religion of the day. They are not Jehovah Witnesses. They are not Church of Christ. They are leaders within the established religion that Christ came to be the Messiah of. The very men who are the Bible scholars of the religion of His day have turned against Him just like the religious scholars and leaders today have turned against the volume of a book that is the mind of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no difference. Only in your depraved mind can you make it different. When you get down to the clear Bible and just lay it out, this is why they do not care much for the Bible.

Verse 6 says that he is a wicked man. That would be Judas in the historical context. There will be any scribe or Pharisee today or Bible scholar who takes a stand and betrays the Lord Jesus Christ through the Word of God. Satan had his right hand. We know that Satan is involved in all of this. Verse 7 says, "When he is judged, let him be condemned." And here it is, "his prayer becomes sin." Verse 8 says, "Let another take his office." That would be Judas dying. Matthew is in Acts 1:20-26 taking his office.

There it is, an incredible yet terrible truth that most of God's people have betrayed the very book that God clearly told us is His Son. I am going to say it again. You cannot separate Jesus Christ from the Word of God. You cannot separate God from the Word of God because:

John 1:1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:14

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Notice it did not say that its original manuscripts were manifested or the teachings. It says the Word. The Bible tells us that God was manifested in the flesh, 1 Timothy 3:16. The Bible tells us that God then was manifested in a book, Isaiah 40:7, John 1:14, Philippians 2:5, 1 Corinthians 2:16.

Now, who would argue? In fact, Paul says this. He says, "If another man comes to you and preaches another Jesus," nobody in any church would stand for a man getting up and discounting the Jesus of the Bible and giving you another Jesus. I do not believe there would be a Baptist church or even a neo-evangelical that would go that far. I think if a man got up and he says, "Folks, you can throw out the Jesus of the Bible, I am going to tell you about a new Jesus," who would accept that? But you allow the guy to get up and throw out the book that is Jesus Christ and give you another one. And you are okay with that.

I am a simple guy. I follow 2 Corinthians 11:3, that the Bible says that the devil wants to destroy the church from the simplicity that is in Christ.

2 Corinthians 11:3

But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

He is not going to get that from me because I am not going to allow that to happen. I simply believe He only has one Christ and I simply believe He only has one Bible, and they are the same. It is settled in heaven, the Bible says in Psalm 119:89.

Psalm 119:89

For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.

Like Judas, when a man takes the position that he kicks out Christ like Judas did and betrays Him, or a man today betrays the book like they do today, this is the basis of our Proverbs 28:9, that his prayer becomes an abomination. Then he goes on and he says, "and your children are now fatherless," verse 9. That means they have no God. That means they have no guide. That means they have no direction. That means when you reject the book, unless God intervenes in something, then your children are going to be worse off than you are. It means that every generation is going to get farther from the truth. Boy, do we see that happen today with men who were once held up as great men with the Bible.

Then he says, "and your wicked generation," verse 9, "will seek their bread," the Word of God, "out of desolate places," verse 10. You bet they will. Of course, we know that bread in John 6:35 is the type of the Word of God. So now we are seeing that this crowd has to seek bread out of desolate places. That will be your NIV, ASV, RSV, and the New King James Bible, all the new garbage that is out there that rejects the clear truth of God. And all of the rest of the people that hang out in that crowd.

Yesterday in people ministry, I told them that I read an article this week. It was put out by one of the seminaries in this country. I forget which one it was. They listed a poll and they listed the 12 top pastors in America. They gave a little bio on each one of them. As you read down that list, you could know very clearly out of the 12, there was not one of them that believed that you had the absolute perfect Word of God that you could trust and believe in. Not one of them. There were a couple of them in there that were women. There are a couple of them in there that if they actually believe what their church teaches, they are not even saved. But that is where America is at today. We have put the preeminence on men who will take the Word of God from you. We will put the preeminence on men that will have to tell you, you have got to come to a Bible college or you have got to come to our seminary before you can really have a relationship with God. We will teach you and take from you the simplicity of Christ and build into you the complexity of Christ. You will go there and you will learn about hermeneutics. You will learn about sociology. You will learn about anthropology. You will learn all of these big \$50 words that nobody in the Bible ever spoke like. They want you to believe that that is what Christianity really is when the Bible clearly tells you in 2 Corinthians 11 that that is satanic. The devil wants to destroy and take from us the simplicity that is in Christ. Of course, that is where we are at today. I cannot stress that point enough.

II. Rejoicing in Righteousness and the Hidden Man

Moving into today, we are going to look at Proverbs 28:12-14. We are going to move right along with this same concept. All this is kind of going together. There are some really good truths here that we want to look at. I am going to save verse 14 for next week, but we are going to look at 12 and 13 today. That will be enough to keep us busy.

Let us start with verse 12 here and it is pretty straightforward.

Proverbs 28:12

When righteous men do rejoice, there is great glory: but when the wicked rise, a man is hidden.

That simply means that when a saved man begins to rejoice in something that God has done, he will give the honor and glory to God and not themselves. So because the man is righteous and he rejoices, there is great glory, not for the man, but giving the glory back to the Lord.

The great example of this, and there are a number of them in the Bible, would be Solomon at the dedication of the temple. This will be back in 1 Kings 8. You will find that now he is king over the vast nation of Israel. It is quite an impressive thing. When he dedicates that temple, you have in there what is called Solomon's Prayer of the dedication of the temple. It is simply one of the greatest prayers anywhere in the Bible and certainly a model for anybody in public office, but certainly a model for us. He totally gives God the credit for everything that he does. He did not ask for riches. He did not ask for honor and glory. He asked for wisdom to deal with God's people. Boy, that was the right prayer. God not only gave him the wisdom, but He also gave him the riches and the glory and the honor that came along with it. But Solomon, at least in his early days, he gave all that back to God. One of the greatest prayers in all the Bible and a great model for us.

I would ask you to take that as a leader of the nation of Israel and just compare. I will just say the last 10, but you could probably do all of them. Just take the last 10 presidents of the United States and see if they follow that same approach. See if they follow giving the honor and glory back to God or they take it to themselves. When the unemployment is down as it is now to the point where it has not been this way in 50 years, nobody gives God the honor and glory for it. It is, "Look what I did to make this happen." When something happens over here, that is great, but politicians take credit for it themselves so it can help them get reelected. They never stop and think for a moment of time to give the honor and glory back to God, because I want to tell you something. God could sink this nation in 15 seconds. You have not seen a tsunami until you see the one God can cook up from the east coast to the west coast if He wanted to.

It is a great model for us. I know some of you, if not many of you, understand this: the older you get as you walk with God and you are doing what God wants you to do, the less important you know that you really are. You realize how God does not need you as much as we thought He did early on in our lives. It is more that we need Him. The more you know how dependent you really are on God for everything and how absolutely worthless we really are, that God could replace any of us in about a millisecond.

John 3:30 is a great verse. In fact, when somebody asks me to sign their Bible, I always put this verse in here.

John 3:30

He must increase, but I must decrease.

That needs to be the plan for every child of God that ever got saved. The older you get, the more God does, but the more you understand, the more you realize that it is not because of anything you do.

Another great example of this would be David. I know David had his issues and David had his problems, but so do we. But never did he forget what God did. I can find places in there when David is completely out of fellowship with God, but he is faced with something that he has to make a decision. Even when he is out of fellowship with God, he is going back to the Word of God on the basis to tell the guy the advice that he needs. No matter where he got in his life, at the end of the day, he never forgot what God did for him. That was the thing that when Nathan nailed him, it brought him back to God.

Last week we looked at Psalm 139:1-10. That is just one great example of God, David recognizing who he was and who God was and how God knew him. God understood his thoughts afar off. God knew when he laid down. God knew when he got up. God knew everything about him, and yet he is absolutely amazed that God still wants anything to do with him. It is incredible stuff. Because of that, he was the greatest king that Israel ever had. In Acts 13:22, God Himself said he was a man after His own heart.

Acts 13:22

And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

Sometimes you have time, you want to pick up Arthur Pink's book on the life of David. Probably without a doubt the greatest book that was ever written on the life of David. But be dedicated to it. That sucker is probably four inches thick and there are no pictures. It is an incredible work. The life of David by Arthur W. Pink.

Along with that, of course, fresh in our minds, let us not forget what we had last week. The great example of John Gowan's last service here last Sunday. A celebration of what he gained by going home to be with the Lord. Not a time of rejoicing about what John did, but rather a celebration of what God did through him. And what he gained when he went home to be with the Lord. We all know our rejoicing goes back to God and what God's Son did on Calvary's cross. That is where it all has to start. Not only does your prayer need to go back to the brazen altar, but everything that you do, when you take the credit for it or you get the glory of it, needs to go back to that cross too.

John's life was a textbook. I am not saying he was perfect. I am sure he had his issues just like we all do. But overcoming that, his life is a textbook of a guy giving God his life and going home to glory, back to God. Of course, we know that Revelation 4:10 says that, I know we all get rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ. We all get crowns and an inheritance. But it also says at

some point we put those at the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ in Revelation 4:10. You know why? Because it all goes back to Him anyhow.

Have you ever noticed how, and I have observed this for many, many, many years, most funerals today are nothing more than a half-hearted preacher spending 30, 40 minutes trying to convince you that the person was a great Christian when they were not? The funny thing is everybody sitting in the audience knows that he was not too. But that is the way it works today, you see. That is how it goes. Because a really good child of God, a really good Christian does not need that. Their life for God will be all that is needed. 1 Corinthians 8:3 says:

1 Corinthians 8:3

But if any man love God, the same is known of him.

You do not have to get up and dig for something to try to say about a person, especially when everybody is there. I have made a decision in my life, and in the past, I have almost repented for this. In my past, I have done a lot of funerals. I think I told you it was 198 last week. Many of those funerals were probably looking back. I know you get a chance to witness all those things. But I am not good. I am just not very good at getting up and pretending somebody really loved God when everybody in the audience knows that they did not. I am just not very good at that. I have had to do funerals where I have done them just out of doing it because I felt like I should have done it. Deep down inside, I did not want to do it.

I see the people there whose loved one dies, and this is not really with anybody here with you, but people on the outside who are fringe people. They have a brother die or commit suicide, or a brother dies that gets drunk in a car or a daughter gets killed in a car crash or something like that. They do not go to church. They do not do anything. Everybody expects you at the funeral to resurrect them as something great with God. I will be honest, I am just not good at that. I am just not good at it. I have told people here lately, I have got to have done more funerals. I have had people call me. I had one just a couple of months ago. I said, "You know what? You really do not want me to do it. I am not going to be good at it." The funeral home, for an extra \$250, they will have somebody on call that will come in and they will say whatever you want them to say. Just give them a list of everything that that person was, and they will get up there and make them like the Virgin Mary. But I cannot do that. I am just not. I just cannot get up there and look at people in the face because I know they all know I am lying to them. Tell them we are drinking buddies and I am going to say he loved God. Some of them were carousing together and running and doing all the things that they did. And I am going to get up there and say what a great Christian he was. You see, if you cannot tell the truth, then if you did tell the truth, then everybody would get mad at you. So I just step out of those things. Because a really good Christian does not need that.

If most of you would die here today and I have to do your funeral, I would not have to come up with a lot of things because everybody knows what you are already there. Because if any man loved God, the same is known to him. At the same token, if you do not love God, it is also known.

I look at the last part of that verse: "But when the wicked rise, a man is hidden." Boy, this is a great principle here. You want to learn. If you are in the people ministry with me or you are just out there really want to learn how to deal, you want to get this one down.

Now, doctrinally, I have not said anything about this yet, but doctrinally, all of this stuff will be dealing with the Antichrist or the devil at the first coming and the second coming of Christ. At the first coming of Christ, men rejoiced. You see Matthew 2 about the wise men and they are coming from the east and they are giving glory to God in the highest. But you also see that it was the scribes and the Pharisees and the Sadducees and the Romans, Herod in particular, that hid behind their Jewish religion but hated Him and wanted Him dead. At the second coming of Christ, the Jews will rejoice when they know the Messiah has come. You will see that in Revelation 7 and Revelation 14. But the world under the reign of the Antichrist will reject Him and the hidden man. That is a key word I want you to remember, the hidden man. The hidden man will always try to stop Him. We know that that finally ends in the Valley of Armageddon. He hides behind his church. We know that the tribulation in the first three and a half years, he comes back and he establishes peace. We talked about it a little bit on Thursday night. 2 Thessalonians 2 tells us that. Then he is hidden. He hides behind his position. Brings a false peace to the world but all the time he is a hidden man, plotting against the nation of Israel and the Lord Jesus Christ.

But staying with our own practical application here, just so you can put that note in your Bible, there is another really good principle here: "When the wicked rise, a man is hidden." I want you to know this, that no matter what wickedness rises up in your life, in your job, certainly in churches, no matter what religion, no matter what happens, there will always be a hidden man or a hidden woman behind it. I know it says man here, but it is talking in a biblical sense, but there will be women too, but they will be behind it. You will see this many times in many pastors. You will see it in many pastors' wives. You will see it in deacons. You will see it in Christians who are in a position of authority in any church. You will see how the wickedness of God's people can flow through that.

I made the same mistake that most of God's people made when you first got saved, like I did when I first got right with God. I will never forget that night. I had been out of fellowship for so many years and they preached that night and the choir sang the invitational, "Just As I Am Without One Plea," and boy, I would hit that thing. I went down there and I got right with the Lord. When I got up off my knees, if you had told me that there was wickedness in that church and there were deacons that were not doing what is right and there were Christians that were not doing it, I would have fought you. I thought that every Christian at that point in that church or any church was just like the angels of God in heaven. Some 45 years later, 48 years later, I know that is not true. But you do not know that back then. God protects you from that. It is a thing where you have got to learn how to grow into those things.

You will find that these guys, most pastors, they are very, and I have known this for years. This is not something I am just making up. I have watched this. I have been part of this for almost 50 years. Most pastors are so very insecure within their own selves. They just really are. They just do not have any self-worth or understand who they are in Christ. I know a lot of God's people get

that way too, but I will tell you, as a child of God, I can get it, but you do not need to be a pastor and be that way. So what they try to do is they try to, instead of admitting it and dealing with it, oh no, they could not do that. They try to portray themselves as something real spiritual to their people. They will get up and they will say things like, "Well, you know what? If few people really knew how much I gave." They try to intimidate their people. They will talk about, "Well, you know what? As a pastor, I pray about everything." Everybody thinks that that is really spiritual. In our set, we talked about this a couple of weeks ago. You tell me you pray about everything. I will just confirm to me you do not know very much about the Bible. But you see, it is a ploy. It is because of their own insecurities they have got to project to their people that they are really something spiritual and something special. They will get up there and they will whine and complain about, "Well, you just do not know how hard the ministry is. You just do not know what I go through as a pastor. You just know you need to pray for your pastor. You just do not know what..." Well, let me tell you something. Once you get a job selling cars, whoever told you the ministry was going to be easy? You go through the Bible and you find the guys that whine about it, study who they really are and when they whine about it, where they are at with the Lord. That is just the way it is today. It goes back to their own insecurity.

In doing so, they take the honor and glory that belongs to God and they try to wear it themselves by saying, "Look at me, how spiritual I am. Do not you want to be like me?" They hide. "A man hidden" is the verse. They hide behind their position as some spiritual leader, but they themselves are threatened by everything and everybody. For them, it becomes all about control. I have seen pastors in my years that anybody that can preach better than they can, anybody that can teach better than they can, or anybody that can do things better than them, they had to go. Or they put such... They locked them away someplace that they would never allow them to grow and develop. Because it all has to be about them. The moment you allow somebody to... I have been in churches where I preached and the pastor was standing there and the guy came up and shook my hand and said, "Brother, that was just some great stuff." And then look at the pastor and say to him, "How come you do not teach this stuff like that?" You see the big neck muscles in my neck. It is just like that. I am thinking, "Oh boy, that is the last thing I need to be said. That is the last thing he needed to hear." In a moment, it all changes. Now, before I was going to be an addition to his church, now I am a threat to his church.

In politics, they have what they call a bully pulpit. A bully pulpit is the political term. Obviously it is what it is. A position where you have the pulpit, not necessarily a Bible pulpit like this one, but a pulpit in politics. You have the only position and you can bully people with it. And make them do what you want them to do. Boy, that bully pulpit is not just designed for politics, I guarantee you. Anybody who can preach, teach, or do things better than them, they just have to go because it is all about them. I will be honest, over the years I have picked up a lot of good people by pastors like that and it works for me. They will spend their whole lives in ministry hurting good people so they themselves can look good. They will never develop them. They will never help them reach their full potential because actually their full potential in many ways are better than some of the potentials of the pastor himself. So he is not going to allow that. They will never allow anybody in their church that will be on equal footing with them. They have to... They are like the Bible scholars. They know Greek and Hebrew, or they say they do. You do not.

So they can always keep you at a disadvantage because you do not know it. Every time you try to exert any kind of spiritual whatever, they will tell you, "Well, in the Hebrew, the Greek, that is not what I mean." And they will keep you at bay. Pastors do the same thing. Not with the Greek and the Hebrew. They do it with their fake spirituality. They will not allow you. They will control where you grow, how you grow, how you develop yourself. They will put either people in your world to help you or they will keep people out of your world to not help you. That is what they do.

He had a guy here a while back that thought he found the perfect church. This one was not perfect for him. He thought he found the perfect church that was going to be everything he wanted. So he moved to that church. Now he was there. He got the great church where he said, "This is really where God wants me to be." And "This guy is a great preacher." And "This is where I need to be." Then sometime later, word comes back that he is just sitting in that church. They do not have any ministries. They are not going to allow him to do anything. When he comes up with an idea, "No, we are not going to do that." So he is now stuck in a situation in a place where he is going nowhere.

It is one of those things that a pastor should want his people to be better than he is. Let me just say this. If you ever look for a church someplace, do not look at the church, do not look at the people. Go in and sit down with a pastor and simply say, "Hey, I am thinking about coming to church here. But let me ask you a question. What is your plan for me if I come here that is going to help me be developed to be used of God in every way that God wants me to be?" Listen to what he says. If he says, "Well, just keep coming Sunday morning or Sunday night and tithe," be out of there. If he does not have a workable plan that is going to put in your world, putting people with you or him himself to get you where you want to go. A pastor should see the value of his people. He should see the value of the people that God gives him and he should expect them, want them to be very secure in the fact that they will do things better than he does. In fact, he should surround himself with that kind of men and women. He should be completely secure in himself and realize that together we all make up the body of Christ. My arm does not stop working because my leg gets to do more than my arm does. My ear does not stop hearing because my hands get to do things and the ears just stay static. It is part of the body and obviously different parts of our body, our hands, our feet, our ears, our nose, our eyes, our head, they do different functions. But the body itself never revolts and says, "Oh, I am not going to be part of that because I did not get to do that." It is a body. It is like a family. It is like a marriage.

We all have strengths and we all have weaknesses. I would never stand up here and tell you that I have all the strength. Are you kidding me? First of all, you know, I was lying to you and I would not believe it for a moment when you want to pretend that you have it all together. That is you have learned all the things now of the body. No, you have not. It works like this. I have strengths. You have weaknesses. I have weaknesses and you have strengths. God has put us together in the body for your strengths to override my weaknesses and my strengths to override yours. Together we work together. In time, I expect you to be better than me. I expect you to be smarter than me. I have had to struggle for everything I have learned about the Bible. It did not come to me easy. But my goal is to give it to you easier than I had to get it. Why? Because I want you to be better.

Why? Because you are smarter. You are younger. You are more vibrant. I am on this side of life. You are on that side of life. I am going out of mine. You are coming into yours. You have to come to the place as a pastor where you want to give your people everything that God has done. I am going to give them everything that God has given you and make them ultimately better than you are. Now that is not going to happen with everybody because some of you are going to be no-doer the rest of your life. I get that. But if just five of you, if just four of you, if just a couple of you get it, it will be worth it all.

A pastor should be completely secure in himself and realize that together we all make up this body. Using together everything we have, each other's gifts, getting insecure and threatened by that is absolutely ridiculous. The end result of that is so many people get hurt in churches. So many people get bitter and never go back to churches because they got a raw deal. I have dealt with it all my life and seen it. The Bible says that when the wicked rise, a man is hidden. There will always be somebody behind it. If it is not a pastor, then it will be a deacon. If it is not a deacon, it will be somebody in authority. It will be a Sunday school teacher or it will be somebody that has been in a church for 150 years that are worthless.

Having said that, I want to address a point here. Last Sunday was historic. Never in my ministry have I done that before. Nobody has ever asked me. But certainly his request was worthy of his life, as we all saw. We all know, we love John. But I want to tell you, do not think for a moment that everybody was happy with John's last request to have his service on Sunday morning in church that he loved and wanted a preaching service. Do not kid yourself. God's people are incredible sometimes. We know more than told our church that John wanted it the way he wanted it and wanted it on a Sunday morning. Three or four people over the course of the week had come to me and said that people, not here, but people were saying, "Well, Bob is just doing that because he wants to have a crowd on Sunday morning." Are you kidding me? You see, to them it means nothing as to what John wanted. We have a phrase we like to use and we say, "Over my dead body, you are going to do that." You know what John said? He said, "I want you to preach the truth and I want you to give them the Word of God because there are people there that I want to reach and I want you to do it over my dead body." They will never get it. He wanted the message at his expense. He was willing to go home. He was excited and happy to go home and sad as he was to leave everything here. He knew that he was gaining some things. All he asked me to do was to take that Sunday morning and tell people that he wanted in a church where he loved in a service that he loved by preaching that he loved what he gained. But oh, no, no, no, no, no. It is all about you. The Bible says when the wicked rise, a man is hidden. Yes, they are. They are hidden behind their pulpit. They are hidden behind their little gossip sessions. They are hidden behind the little closed doors with their friends. They are hidden behind their little slander circle. Yes, when the wicked rise up, it is always a man hidden.

As I said before, you want to know this. In every slander, in every gossip, in every talebearer. You would think people are really stupid. The Facebook deal. People put stuff on Facebook like nobody is going to see it. They will put some of the stupidest stuff on there and think that, I do not know what they think. You realize that you cannot go anywhere in America without being on a camera someplace. I am telling you, you put something on Facebook. Not only does everybody

have the ability to see it, but it is there forever. I have seen them up there posting some of the stupidest stuff you ever saw in your life. I have seen them saying some of the dumbest stuff you ever saw in your life. I do not do Facebook. You people all send it to me. No, Facebook is not for me. I will tell you right now, if you spent as much time in your Bible as you did in your Facebook, you would be a lot better off. You do not have to pay me for that. I will just throw that out there.

But churches are the same way. In any church, I do not care what it is, in any church, you need to really be careful who you say something to, because in every church there is an underground pipeline. World War II in the Pacific Theater was called the bamboo pipeline. It always comes back. It is a thing where people get out there and they say stuff, "Well, do not tell anybody." Well, the moment you get off with them, they just told ten more people. The pipeline is one of the greatest things, I think. But it is a two-way street. You always say things, but then it always comes back. You could go out there, you are out with a friend that works someplace, and you are eating lunch and you are mouthing off about this or about that, or down in, if you work downtown or wherever you work or whatever you are doing. You think, "Well, I just told him and then we will go." Hey, before that food digests, five other people will know about it. That is the pipeline. It is a thing where people are so stupid. You know what the best thing to do, if you have something you want to say to somebody, say it to the person you need to say it to. These people should have called me up and said, "Well, Bob, why are you doing this the way you are doing it? You just want a crowd?" No, they are not going to do that. They are just not.

Let me be clear. I am speaking now to these whited sepulchers out there, but let me be clear. We did not have John's funeral where and when we had it so we could get a crowd. Let me be clear. Unlike you, little man, we get a crowd every Sunday. So we will start with that. No, we did it at the request of a man who you could never understand, much less be like, to give a celebration of what he gained in going home to be with the Lord, and to give the honor and glory to God for what God did in his life as righteous men do, Proverbs 28:12, and the people that he wanted to reach through his gain. He specifically asked me and wanted a time and a preaching service where he knew there would be people that would come and that we could learn about what his transition from this life to the other life was. It is an incredible thing. Your stupidity is only eclipsed by your wickedness. All you can see is what you want to see. You are afraid, "Oh, that they are just having a church service there because Bob wants a crowd." Come here, break. What planet do you live on?

I have got to be honest with you. I must. If there is any other personal reason, and I will confess this after church, maybe this afternoon, I want to enjoy it for a little bit. If there is any other reason I was glad that we did it when we did it, not only to honor John's request, but I must be honest, if there is any other reason I was glad that we did it the way we did it, it was so that I knew that you could not come because I do not want your unclean spirit messing up the life of a man who dedicated his life to God. When the wicked rise, there will be a man hidden. Or his wife. When the wicked rise, I am telling you, I hope somebody goes back and says, "You need to listen to what he said." When the wicked arise, they will, they will like the scribes and the Pharisees and the Sadducees. They will always be behind the fake spirituality that they project.

The scribes and the Pharisees, they did it. They could not see anything that God was doing, just like so many of God's people today, all they saw was their own personal agenda. The fact that the Son of God, the incarnate Word of God, the Messiah to their nation, had showed up to bring the salvation of God in the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven to them, never entered into it.

III. Confession, Forgiveness, and Fellowship

Look at verse 13. What great advice for all of us.

Proverbs 28:13

He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.

This is a tremendous truth. At the time of salvation, you got saved from your sins as a sinner that was lost without hope. Of course, we have taught the great teaching here, the sinner, son, and servant, so you know how that works. We have also laid out the great doctrine of standing in state, so you know how that works. After salvation, you and I need a daily cleansing from the flesh to keep or to restore our fellowship when we lose it. Last week I showed you in the tabernacle concept, the laver of water, how the priest went into the tabernacle to do the work of the ministry. There was no floor in it and his feet kept getting dirty. Picture you and me working the ministry in the world and getting dirty. So every time he came out, he had to wash his feet. Every time he goes in, he has to wash his feet. So picture you and I getting clean with the Word of God before we go in and do the work of the ministry.

You will find this great principle in 2 Corinthians 7:1.

2 Corinthians 7:1

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

You notice it says, "cleansing ourselves, from all filthiness of the flesh and the spirit." You realize it does not say the word soul here. It only deals with your flesh and deals with your spirit. There is a reason for that. Most pastors could not figure it out. Most Christians could not figure it out. But two books in your Bible illustrate this great teaching, doctrine.

The first one will be the Gospel of John. In the Gospel of John, you have Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Each Gospel portrays Christ in a different format. The Gospel of John portrays Him as the Son of God. This is why we have in John 1:1:

John 1:1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

In Matthew, He has a genealogy that runs Him through the kingly line back to David. In Mark, He does not have a genealogy because He is a servant. In Luke, He goes back through the human

line, through Mary. In John, His line goes back to God as the Word of God and as God. Most people do not understand how these books work. In every book of the Bible, there will either be a verse that defines that book or there will be a chapter that defines it. Obviously, one of the things that you want to do sometime in your life is to put it all together and get those verses marked and understand that the whole book goes around either that chapter and in many cases in that verse. The Gospel of John is no different. The definitive verses for the Gospel of John are found in John 20:31. It tells you why John was written in the first place. It says in that verse:

John 20:31

But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

In the Gospel of John, you are clearly told there, was written so you could find Christ as the Son of God and that you might believe, you might get saved. When people print Bibles, sometimes they do not print whole Bibles, sometimes they do not print New Testaments. Sometimes all they print are two books and they pass those out because those are the two books that will show them how to get saved. You want to guess what they are? John and Romans. Because John was written to show you the Son of God that you might believe. Romans was to show you the pathway how to get there. Romans chapter 3, Romans chapter 6, Romans chapter 10. Of course, that is so true.

There is a great debate today. I get emails from it all week. Not all week, but a couple of months. The great debate today by the hyper dispensationalists, the hyper Calvinists, who want to debate the fact that can you get saved by the words of Jesus? Of course, I do not even mess with these idiots. It is a thing where it is not worth the time to deal with it. But the great thing is now, can you, because they believe that the only thing that you can really trust in the New Testament are the writings of Paul after a certain point. They reject the Gospels. They reject everything else. They just take three or four or five books that Paul writes. The rest of it, they just say, "That is not to you." So there is a great debate today. Can you really get saved by just the words of Jesus? Absolutely, in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Of course, I do not debate them on it. But if I ever did, I would knock you out in the first 20 seconds with one verse. That is all you need to destroy you. But you do not know anything about the Bible. So therefore, you play your little game with the little guys that you play it with. You go back and forth with it, but at the end of the day, you have got two books that define it for you.

First, the Gospel of John defines you as the Son of God and how you get saved. Then the second book you have is the Book of First John, the Epistle. Where the key to the Gospel of John will be salvation or believing, the key to First John will be fellowship and knowing who He is after your salvation. If you miss these two books, this is why you are in the mess that you are in.

1 John 1:1-7

1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;

1 John 1:2

For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;

1 John 1:3

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

1 John 1:4

And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

1 John 1:5

This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

1 John 1:6

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

1 John 1:7

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

I do not know if you can, right off the top of your head, see the correlation between the Gospel of John chapter 1 and 1 John chapter 1. The Gospel of John says, "In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Here it says, "that which was from the beginning," just like the Gospel of John, "which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, with our ears have handled, the Word of life." Now, we are talking about Christ. Clearly showing you again that Christ was the incarnate of the Word of God. It is a great similarity there. God was manifested in the flesh, and we see that the Word is a reference to Christ.

Then He says in verse 5, "this is the message." Now there is a message in 1 John, just like there was a message in the Gospel of John. The message in the Gospel of John was to show you that He is the Christ, and to believe on Him, you can get saved. The message here is different in verse 5. "Then this is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare we unto you that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth."

The Gospel of John is about salvation. 1 John is about fellowship. The message of John is the fact that you need to get saved, and the message of 1 John is that once you get saved, this is how you stay in fellowship. It is just that simple. "But if we walk in the light of His heat of the night, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin." That is not salvation. That is written to a man that is already saved who has believed the Gospel of John. But 1 John is the book that shows you how to stay in fellowship after you get saved.

Verse 4 says:

1 John 1:4

And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

You can be saved and not be full of God's joy. Do you know that? Because salvation does not just give you the completeness of joy. It gives you the ability to have the joy. But after you are saved, joy only comes through your fellowship, walking in the light as He is in the light, having fellowship one with another. So we see it very clearly.

Verse 7 says:

1 John 1:7

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

You see, one book is about believing. That is salvation. John. The other book is about knowing Him. And that is fellowship after you have been saved. That is why in five little chapters of the Book of 1 John, you have got the word "knowing" 27 times. Yet the Bible scholars will tell you, 99.99% of the pastors will tell you that the theme of 1 John is love. Of course, any time I would read a book in five chapters that you have got 27 times about knowing, I would know the theme of that book is knowing. It is just that simple.

It was written by the greatest, both books were written by the greatest man in the Bible who is both types. He is a type of the church, and he is a type of New Testament Christian. John. Solomon writes five wisdom books in the Old Testament. John writes five wisdom books in the New Testament. It is incredible stuff. I do not know why somebody cannot get it. It is not complicated.

Watch this. Here is a good one for you. In one place in 1 John 3:9, it says that if we are born of God, we never sin. In another place, it says in 1 John 1:8:

1 John 1:8

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

One place says in the same book that we do not sin, the other one says we do sin. There are not 10 pastors in this city, maybe five, that could explain that to you and understand why that is not a contradiction and the great doctrines that lay it out on both sides. Not only that, in the book of 1 John that deals with our relationship and our fellowship and our relationship, we found the greatest verse on eternal security anywhere in the Bible.

1 John 5:11-13

11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

The Gospel of John tells you how to get saved by believing on Christ and how He will change your life. The book of 1 John tells you after you are saved how do you maintain that fellowship. You know what it also tells you? It tells you you have got a record. You have got a record of your salvation. Now you have got a record of everything in life. I do not know if you know that or not. You have got a birth certificate. Try to go to school someplace or try to do something meaningful in life without showing them your birth certificate. The very fact that you are standing there as proof of you were born will not cut it. They want to see a worthless piece of paper that says on such and such a day you came into this world. It is the same thing with your salvation. You carry a Bible around but that does not make you saved. You have to have a record of your salvation. If you have a home, you bought a home, you are going to get a deed to that home. That home is your record. It is yours. The cop pulls you over. He wants to see your license and registration. That is the record that that car is yours. You will go to your doctor and he will say, "Well, we are going to get your medical records." Everything you do, you go to Starbucks to get a cup of coffee. They give you a receipt. That is a record of your La Patina Mina Billina. Real Christians drink coffee black. All this fancy stuff is for new evangelicals. Cold ice coffees for unsaved people who cannot stand the heat.

The verse says that "he that covereth his sins shall not prosper." Boy, what a true statement that is. "But whosoever confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Now, I want you to notice that the two aspects to this: getting and staying right with God and restoring or keeping your fellowship. The first one is everybody screws up during the day. That is why 1 John 1:9 was given.

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Most Christians make a terrible mistake because they do not understand the teaching. They will get up in the morning and you have got the best intentions to serve God. You really do. So you are off to work, and you are coming down the freeway on your way to work. You are singing, "You have got the joy, joy, joy down in my heart." And you really do. About that time, somebody pulls out in front of you and cuts you off. You forget the joy, joy, joy. And now it is, "Praise the Lord. Thank you for cutting me off." You go to work, and you have a little oopsy daisy there and you go to work. Then your people there start giving you tough times or your boss