

Proverbs 28

Sunday 9/15/2019

You will remember last week we looked at Proverbs 28:5, which without a doubt I think is one of the greatest verses in all the Bible. It deals with man's lack of understanding with God. Last week I showed you a verse in the minor prophet that talked about the three controversies that God had: that there was no truth, no mercy, and no knowledge of God in the land. That was true of Israel back in their day, and it is certainly true of us today.

Man does not understand God and His dealings with nations and His dealings with men. The fact is that an unsaved man, and many a saved man too, will never grasp the concept of the judgment of God in their own life. God deals with unsaved people, and He deals with saved people through chastisement. We see it not only with people, but down through history we saw it with nations.

Last week I talked to you about the Bible being built around seven judgments, and how important they are to open up the Scriptures for you, along with the other, what we call, the seven series coming through the whole Bible, which is God's systematic theology of really laying out the Scriptures. I showed you that the key, in fact, we talked about this Thursday night. Josh asked a very good question. We talked about the aspect of three judgments for you and for me as Christians. At the cross of Calvary, when Christ died, we were judged as sinners. When you make that decision to trust the Lord Jesus Christ as your own personal Savior, then God will never again look at you as a sinner, nor will He deal with your sin as a sinner.

We saw that God deals with you as a son, and that will be the book of 1 John.

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.

Then I showed you that at the judgment seat of Christ, you will not be judged as a sinner; you will not be judged as a son, but rather you will be judged as a servant. The judgment seat of Christ is going to be about motive. It is going to be about your attitude of heart, not what you did and why you did it. It is not going to be about quantity; it is going to be about quality. Most people fail to understand these three things. A lot of God's people today have issues with their own salvation, how to work with God, the aspect between being a sinner now that you are saved, you still sin, what do you do with that sin. All that is answered in God's simple systematic theology of the seven judgments. Then you move on to the other four, which we talked about last week. Without a doubt, a key to the aspect of God will be His judgment because He is a God of judgment. Most people do not want to think about that today. The key to that will be understanding, getting into the Bible and allowing somebody to show you, explain to you, or getting to the point in your life where you really understand that.

I. Understanding God's Judgment and Man's Lack of Understanding

II. The Mindset of Man in God's Judgment

We live in a world that believes about God much like they did in Genesis 6 and Genesis 18-19. Genesis 6 being the flood, Genesis 18-19 being Sodom and Gomorrah with Lot. The Bible tells us that in both cases, which again, there are two great keys:

➤ As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days that are coming in the Son of Man.

➤ As it was in the days of Lot, so shall it be in the days that are coming in the Son of Man.

Someone is showing the parallels that what happened in Genesis 6 and what happened in Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 18-19 is going to happen again right before the Lord comes back. In both of those cases, you find God's imminent judgment: the flood in Genesis 6 and the fire and hail coming down in Genesis 18-19 on Sodom and Gomorrah. It is incredible what you find. Someone says, "What was it like back in those days?" It was like it is today. If you say, "What is it like today?" It was like what it was back there.

There are a couple of places in Job that most people have no idea where, or even how to apply it, or where it is at. But you talk about great insight into at least Genesis 6.

Job 22:15-17

15 Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden?

16 Which were cut down out of time, whose foundation was overflown with a flood:

17 Which said unto God, Depart from us: and what can the Almighty do for them?

There it is, Genesis 6. It was said unto God, "Depart from us." Well then, there was a knowledge of God. Then they understood that there was a God. They were not as pagan as everybody thinks that they were. Let us see what they said to God: "Depart from us, and what can the Almighty do for them?" That is exactly where we are today in this world. We say the exact same thing in everything: politics, our schools, our society, our homes. That is exactly the same attitude that we have today that they had in Genesis 6, which said unto God, "Depart from us." People do not want anything to do with God today, not until there is some tragedy in their life, and then it is only a temporary thing. Nobody wants a real relationship with God. That is the way it was in Genesis 6, yet obviously everybody knew about God.

When you come over to Job 21:15, you find them speaking up again, and here is what they say:

Job 21:15

What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?

If there were ever two verses that put everything into a context of where we are today and where the world is today with Genesis 6 back in the olden time, it is these two verses. It shows you

exactly the mindset. Yet I look at Job 21:15, and most people would just read it. They would not really get it. But the trained eye, we have talked about the trained eye many, many times. The trained eye would see something here that is quite interesting. First of all, he starts out in verse 15, "What is the Almighty?" Notice he did not say, "Who is the Almighty?"

Remember I told you how our founding fathers came to the place where they recognized in the Declaration of Independence that God was the Creator? You have come from that place where God was Creator in 1776 to the year 2000 and beyond, where God is no longer a person. Now He is just an intelligent design. He is a neuter. He is your person of choice. He is your higher power. God can be whatever you want Him to be. So the question is, "What is the Almighty?" It is not "Who is the Almighty?" It is "What is the Almighty?" Because in Genesis 6, they came to the same conclusion that people have come to today: that God was not a real person. He was an influence. He was a power, a higher power. But He was not a person. He was not somebody that you could have a personal relationship with. So it is "What is the Almighty?" And they take the same position that we take today: "What profit should we have if we pray unto Him?"

That is where the world is today. That is where we are because the Bible says, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the coming of the Son of Man." We have come from Creator in 1776 up to the time we live, where God is no longer a person. He is a "what." Even the Christians, they want to bridge the evolutionist and all that. So they have their own little groups of Christians that want to teach creation, but they cannot get away with God as a Creator. So Christians make Him creation by intelligent design, whatever that may be.

III. God's Nature: Love and Judgment

We think today that God is a God of love, never a God of judgment, that we all are God's children, and therefore He is everybody's Father. This is called the universal love of God and the fatherhood of God in the liberal circles. Yet the Bible clearly tells us in John 8:44 that some people:

John 8:44

Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

It clearly shows that that is not correct. In a world that wants to make everybody God's child, make God everybody's Father, the Bible stands in stark opposition to that, as the Bible always stands in stark opposition to where man wants to go outside the Scriptures. It clearly tells us that there are two spiritual families, and you were born into the devil's family, and if you do not get reborn again into God's family, you are going to be in trouble.

Therefore, because of all that, the war of good and evil that we talk about all the time, that people talk about, simply boils down to that: all the bad things are of the devil, and all the good things come from God. That is the charismatic mindset which floats over into all this evangelical stuff

today because the Bible says that man does not understand God's judgment, so they repeat the same mistakes over and over again.

We operate on the principle that God hates the sin, but He loves the sinner. That is a popular little quote that even Baptist preachers I have heard say. It sounds neat; it sounds spiritual. It is not too biblical. That little phrase was never given by any man who ever entered into the gates of heaven any day in his life. That little quote came from Gandhi, who in a universal pragmatic way, is screaming his lungs out in hell if he did not get saved. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Nowhere in the Bible is that not taught. In fact, the Bible teaches just the opposite.

John 3:36

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

The Bible says that if you are an unsaved man, you are as good as in hell. As far as God is concerned, you are as good as in hell right now, shut up, cannot get out, going to burn for eternity unless something changes in your life. This idea of a universal fatherhood of God is absolutely out of the pit of hell. This idea that God hates the sin, but He loves the sinner, you are wrong. God is a holy God. Back in the Old Testament, He could not even come through the camp until everything was taken out that was unholy to Him. This is why He could not have a real relationship with people like He does in the church days, because He could not get into that mindset and deal with man in his sin, because the operation of God had not come in yet to take place that God could indwell people and have a fellowship with them. Most of this really confuses most of the people, and this is why you get a lot of heresy.

The book of Ephesians clearly tells us, especially in chapter 1, that you ask the question, "Well then, if that is true, if an unsaved man in God's mind is already in hell?" And he is. If you are saved this morning, you are already seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. You do know that, do not you? If you are not saved this morning, in God's mind, you are already seated in a lake of fire. I do not know if they have seats down there, but you are already in the lake of fire.

Someone asks the question, "Well then, how does, if God cannot have anything to do with an unsaved man because he is unclean, if Romans is true and it says that when we were unsaved we were enmity against God, then how can ever a man get saved?" The answer to that is in Ephesians 1, but nobody ever figures it out. The only way that God can love an unsaved man or an unsaved woman is to look at that unsaved person through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. He loves them through what Christ did on the cross for them.

I do not know why those people have such a hard time with that. There are going to be people in your life that are going to be hard to love, do you know that? If you have not figured that out yet or met one or two of them, you are in for a shock of your life at some point. There are going to be people in your life, and sometimes they are saved people. Many times they are unsaved people, but there are going to be people that you just have absolutely no care for, have an absolute disdain for, that you would not let them walk across your arm without sicking a dog on them. Yet you are commanded by the Bible that you have got to love them. How do you do that?

The only way you can love somebody like that is to love them through Christ. That is how you do it. If we can do that, then why can not God look at an unsaved person and love them through Christ? That is the only way for you, the only way for Him. Ephesians 1. God put everything He did and put it in Christ, and everything has to run through Him. The Calvinists could never get that, but that is the basic Bible of what you have got, and it is an incredible concept.

IV. God's Judgment and the Remnant

We come to the place where we operate on these principles, and they are not very good principles. It shows you that as far as nations go, all nations are just a drop in the bucket compared to the nation of Israel from God's standpoint. Isaiah 40:15 says so.

Isaiah 40:15

Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.

These nations are a drop in the bucket. They mean nothing to God. We get the idea that God is concerned about America, God is concerned about this, God is concerned about this country. God is only concerned about one nation: the nation of Israel. If you want to have the blessings of God in your life, or you want to have the blessings of God in your nation, you are going to get those blessings one way: getting into the book that God gave you. Outside of that, the gifts and calling of God to Israel are out-repentant, but they are not for you, not for any other nation. The only way for God to love a man is through the blood of His Son dying on the cross.

Men do not understand judgment, getting the right perspective on God's judgment. People talk about, "I just cannot believe that 9/11." We celebrated 9/11 this week. Everybody was asking themselves, "Where was I on 9/11?" It is a day that is like December 7th. It is a day of infinity; we all remember it. There are certain dates, places, things that happen in your life that you will never forget where you were or what you were doing.

The real truth of the judgment of God is totally lost today because the real aspect and the perspective of the judgment of God is not judging nations, or 9/11, or AIDS to the gay community, or a tsunami that wipes out a city or a country over there on the West Coast of Africa that specializes in child pornography and child incest. We miss those things. We look at those and we just say that could not be God's judgment. We send millions and millions and millions of dollars of aid to help these people. In reality, we had to send them millions of missionaries to tell them why God's judgment has fallen on them.

The real aspect of the judgment of God is God pouring out His wrath and His judgment on His own Son for you and for me. Once you understand that, you do not have a problem with God judging everybody else because God's judgment started with His Son. It was God's Son that God poured out His wrath on. It was God's Son who looked to His Heavenly Father and said, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" It was His Son that God turned His back on. It was His Son that from the sixth to the ninth hour, God unleashed all the forces of hell and brought them to His Son. His wrath and His judgment fell on His Son for you and for me.

When a man rejects that, when a man refuses to admit that, when a man refuses and walks away from the Bible, it is easy for us with understanding to realize: you reject the judgment that God put on His Son. God says, "Okay, it is coming on you now." If you reject the payment that somebody went through for you, guess who is going to have to pay it then? You are. It is not hard.

In all judgment on earth today, we go back to Genesis 3 and man rejecting God's government and the plan that God had because he wanted to have his own plan. Man from time and eternity has always had one concept of God that has been his downfall: he thinks he is smarter than God. He thinks he is better than God, and he thinks that his plan will always outdo God's plan. As Dr. Phil says, "How is that working for you?" It is not. The curse that was brought in with it is really Romans 8 and Genesis 3.

You need to know this and you need to understand this. We talk a lot about God's remnant all through the Bible and certainly today in the Laodicean churches. You people here are part of that remnant. You are not the only remnant, but you are part of that remnant who are the last people on this planet who still believe God knew what He was doing when He wrote a book, who believe that book, who love that book to the best of your ability. Most of you try to live that book. You are a remnant. You are an oddball. You are the odd man out. It used to be 120 years ago, everybody was like you, and all the other ones were the oddball out. Now, nobody is like you, and you are the oddball out. That is the way it goes.

I want you to understand that just because you are the remnant, we are the remnant, does not mean that when God's judgment falls on this country that you are going to get a remnant suit that you wear, that keeps you out of all the stuff that is coming. When the terrorists begin to run down the streets and shoot up the malls and kill hundreds and hundreds of people or whatever they are going to do, they will not have a little session before and say, "Now, do not shoot anybody that has a remnant suit on." You will get killed, shot, caught in it just like everybody else. But there is a difference. The difference is that God's judgment will fall on the world, but God's hand will be on you. So it really does not matter. Philippians 4:11 says this is what it really means:

Philippians 4:11

Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

There are great examples in the Bible. You have Noah. I want you to notice that Noah went through the flood. We always think that Noah was spared the flood. No, he was not. He went through the flood. He experienced God's judgment just like everybody else in the world did. But the difference between all the people out there that died and drowned versus Noah was the fact that God had His hand on Noah. God and Noah built an ark. That ark was exactly what got him through the flood. When you go through your trial, we go through our trials, God will have an ark for you. That ark is a picture of a number of things. That ark is a picture of the Jew going through the tribulation period. That ark is a picture of Christ, you being in Christ. There was a hole in the side of that ark, a door. When Christ died on the cross, they put a hole in His side with a spear.

You have Joseph. Joseph was the greatest type of Christ anywhere in the Bible. Joseph is sold into slavery by his brethren. He is a type of Christ. He had twelve brothers, and they rejected him. They sold him into slavery, threw him into Egypt. That is a picture of what the Bible says: Jesus came into His own, and His own received Him not. It is interesting that they rejected Joseph the first time, but when they came back the second time after the tribulation of a famine, they accepted him. First coming, second coming of Christ. Joseph, from an inspirational application, is a picture of you and me going to go through some of those tough times. He was sold into slavery. First of all, he was thrown down in a pit, and they were going to leave him to die. Then somebody got thinking of beer money on the way home and said, "Let us pull him out and sell him to the Midianites." So they sold him out of the hole and gave him to the Midianites, and then he went down into Egypt, and somehow he wound up down there in the middle of that thing, the most godless, perverse place on this planet. But God had His hand on Joseph's life. Here is a situation where he comes down into that mess. Nobody knows him. Nobody is there to help him. He is in the most godless situation you could ever hope to be in, and he winds up, because the hand of God is on him, rising to the second position in the kingdom. Everything that happens to Joseph, God turns it around and uses it to elevate Joseph, to get him through that disaster of his life.

We have the book of Daniel. Daniel is taken into the terrible captivity with Babylon. Daniel 1 tells us very clearly that the devil's plan was to destroy the king's seed, and Daniel is in the line of Christ. So Daniel is taken captive, and the devil wants to make sure that he amalgamates him into the way of the life and the learning of the wickedness of Babylon. The devil orchestrates that Nebuchadnezzar sees these kids. He sees and maybe he even understands the prophecies concerning what is going on here, but he worked double hard to try and destroy whatever God was going to do. All through that, we see Daniel taking his stand for God. In the midst of a time when he could have been killed just like that, all Nebuchadnezzar had to do was just say, "I am not putting up with this, kill him," and he is dead. But he took a stand for God in the midst of the most terrible time. He lost his family. Maybe they were killed, I do not know. He never saw them again as far as the Bible is concerned. He lost everything he had, and he was thrust out of his home and his homeland and his life that he knew in his comfort level and put into the most godless situation on this planet that the world has ever seen. God had His hand on him.

It may be that you and I will go through some really tough times compared to what some of these guys go through. I am not saying God is going to spare the captivity, that you are going to get a captivity suit and we do not have to go through it. What I am telling you is simply this: God will have His hand on you. We look at those things as terrible times, and we look at those things because, let us be honest, we all like our comfort level. Someone likes living and going home to your house. If you had to go home to a cardboard box under the I-435 bridge someplace, it would not be there. But I would rather be there with the hand of God in my life than at home in my nice house without the hand of God in my life. That is what it comes down to. It comes down to you and I understanding what is coming our way and realizing no matter how bad it is, we still have a job to do.

There may be some time when they take this building away from us, and we cannot ever do this the way we are doing it. So we have to break down into small groups, and you will have to take everything that I have taught you for the last time you have been here, and now it will be where the rubber meets the road, and we will have to carry on that way. It would be interesting to see that if it was against the law and you could go to jail and maybe even lose all your property if you came to church next week, how many really would be here? But in Romania, in East Bloc countries years ago, that is what it was. In Korea, it is that way today. In Russia, it is that way today.

I think of Ezekiel. Some great examples. He goes into captivity. He tells us down there that he is sitting down by the river of Chebar in the captives, and he is, everybody is just desolated at the fact that now they have lost everything that they have had. God used him as a mighty prophet during the time of the captivity to preach to the nation of Israel and proclaim God's coming judgment, three different aspects in the book of Ezekiel. I have given it to you before, and I am telling you, I want you to understand this: now is the time to build your life to stand for God and be His man or His woman because there is coming a time if Jesus does not come and leaves us down here a little bit longer. There is coming a time when all you are going to have is what you have in your relationship with God in your heart and the Bible God gave you. You may lose your wife. You may lose your kids. You may lose your husband. You may lose your friends. You may lose everything.

There is always a great question that you have to ask yourself. It is easy to stand for God when we are all here together today. How will you stand for God if you lose all of that? Along with that, the great principle of Romans 8:28, that most of God's people will never be able to grasp or understand:

Romans 8:28

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

No matter what the bad times are, no matter when God's judgment comes, you and I still have a job to do. The difference will be that we will understand it because we seek the Lord, and God's hand will be on us. Even though we may lose the temporal things of this life, and you may even lose your life. Is that a bad thing if you are going to heaven? Nobody wants to die, but if you have got to die, and you get killed in it, you are going to heaven. Everybody else is going to hell. That is still a pretty good deal. When the Bible, the plagues, the disasters, the wars, the pestilence, the diseases, and the judgment of other nations by other nations will always be God at work in His judgment.

I gave you last week that the wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations that forget God. Around 1950, you can still get this on YouTube. I just Googled it, "Billy Graham handwriting on the wall." There is an old message, I have told you about this a couple of times, where Billy Graham back in that day preached to America the handwriting on the wall. It is one of the most powerful messages that I have ever heard in my life. He certainly is Billy Graham, the Baptist preacher who still believes the book. He is tearing it up. I remember about a year ago I heard a

Paul Harvey radio broadcast that was done 35 years ago. Paul Harvey is long dead now. He predicted if America did not stay with God and the Word of God where America would be. He predicted 35 years ago exactly what has happened in America today. He told everybody, "It will be God's judgment."

I gave you also seven parallels between Israel in the Old Testament and America in the New Testament. History will always repeat itself. It is incredible. God had a plan for Israel, and God has a plan for America. We centered it around one verse last week, Proverbs 28:5, that says, "The wicked understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all things."

All this last week and this week will be the real state of the union. President Trump, a couple of times a year, will get up, and all the TV cameras will get up, and he will talk about the state of the union. He will try to paint that picture: good jobs, prosperity, employment level down. We are doing a good job on illegal aliens, terrorist attacks. We are doing a good job on this. He will go up there for an hour and talk about the state of the union. I can sum it up in five seconds. The state of the union is a mess in every aspect of it. A total complete breakdown of society into a complete anarchy, heading for the amoral, just like Europe is today. No one on earth, let me tell you something. No one on this earth is going to fix it. There is not any president you are going to elect. There is not any Congress you are going to put in, any senators you are going to put in, any king, any queen, anywhere across this world is going to fix the world's problems. It is being set up for the Antichrist to come in and do what he has got to do before the real King shows up. Because the wicked do not understand the judgment of God, therefore they can never repent of their sins.

V. Proverbs 28:6 - Riches vs. Uprightness

Now today, let us look at a couple of more verses as we work down through this chapter.

Proverbs 28:6-8

6 Better is the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than he that is perverse in his ways, though he be rich.

7 Whoso keepeth the law is a wise son: but he that is a companion of riotous men shameth his father.

8 He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.

Let us separate these verses out and let us just see what we have today. Proverbs 28:6 says:

Proverbs 28:6

Better is the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than he that is perverse in his ways, though he be rich.

Like many verses in the Bible, many passages in the Bible, on the surface they are very straightforward and plain and simple, but they all carry a great principle. He is simply saying

this: you are better off poor with the Bible in your life than you will be with your house filled with boats, cars, motorcycles, big houses, and all the possessions that we will fill our lives with but never fill it with God. So the true wish is, I like the word "better" here. The word "better" is a good word to study in the Bible, and that one little word is really the key to understanding the book of Hebrews, which nobody can get today. Just one little word opens up the whole book, the word "better."

He is asking here, "What in life will make you better?" The greatest single truth in life in the Bible is that money and possessions will not make you any better. We think it does because for a moment of time we look good. For a moment of time we are happy. For a moment of time that empty hole has been plugged with something that we bought or getting our bank account statement, and for a moment of time it looks like everything is going to be okay.

There was a commercial that was on TV, I do not see it much anymore, I always thought it was a good one, and it was about the ability to learn another language, which frankly I think is an incredible feat. I think that the more multilingual you are, the better you are as far as it just broadens you. I think it is a great thing. The commercial says, "Will a new pair of shoes or a new car really make you better?" The answer to that is no. But then they say, "What will make you better is learning another language," and that is true because it expands you; it causes you to move from your own culture into another culture.

Some of the most miserable people on this earth are people who have everything they want and could buy and sell you and me several times over, make six figures a year, and they are the most miserable people on the planet because riches do not solve that. Everybody thinks that if you could win the lottery and win \$268 million or \$500 million, that would make you happy, and you sit around and daydream about it and think about all the things you could do if you won that. I am going to tell you something: if God wanted you to win the lottery, He would have you win the lottery. You say, "Well, God would not have me buy a ticket." No, He would have you find one. Blow one down the street, pick it up and say, "Oh, that is a winning ticket." He does not care if you buy one as long as you tithe off of it if you do win. Nor do I. My point is simply this: God will not give you \$600 million because God cannot trust you with it. That is why. Do not get mad about that. You do not see Him giving it to me either. Riches will obscure your faith. It simply will. It is simply the difference between counting blessings or counting possessions. Name them one by one.

You have got to make a little list if you dare. You have got to make a list of last week what God did for you and then add to that list what you did for Him. See who wins. Did you give more of yourself this week, or did you get everything that you got for yourself and give God nothing? In most cases, we do not give God what is right; we give God what is left after we have all we want ourselves, the scraps of life. If there ever was a single truth about life taught over and over again in the Bible, it is the simple fact that riches and possession will obscure faith. Riches will build an attitude of entitlement.

There was a kid here that killed somebody in a car wreck a couple of years ago, drunk driving or whatever it was, and he got a good lawyer, and the lawyer's defense was that this kid was, which

is true, a rich kid with rich parents, and the judge and the lawyer used the argument that this kid did not know any better because his mom and dad had given him everything all of his life, therefore he was not responsible because of all the affluence that he had. That is the way it works today.

There is a great example of this found in Mark 10:17-22 in the story of the rich young ruler. This is where I try to tell you that all these proverbs, almost everything in the Old Testament, will have a New Testament principle or story to it that illustrates, and here is one.

Mark 10:17-22

17 And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.

19 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.

20 And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.

21 Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

22 And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

How many people just like that have I seen all my ministry and all my life? On the surface, this kid looks like he has got it all together, which tells me that when you find a place like this, you want to look at some key things because it is the same way in dealing with people, because there will be people who on the outside seem to have it all together. But when you look a little closer, you see that is not true. First of all, he runs to the Lord. That is pretty good. Then he hits the kneeling position, that is pretty good. He calls Him good. Jesus says, "Only God is good," so the kid looks at Him as God. This kid seems like he has it all together, it is like a lot of God's people. We get in a little trouble here when he says, "Observe the law, keep the law." The kid says, "I have done that from my youth up." I doubt it. There is only one man that ever kept the law, that was the Lord Jesus Christ. Now the ice is getting a little thinner. The trained eye would get you to notice that when this man comes, he calls Him "Master," he never calls Him "Lord." I would pick up on that.

Everything looks like it is going good right up till you get to the real problem, and Jesus, that is one of the things about the Lord in dealing with you and me. He will always get to the real issue. He will play around with these little things and let you see where you are at, and then He will always catch you with the right cross and hit you right between the eyes. Everything looks pretty good up to Mark 10:21, and then He says, "Okay, well then get rid of all that you have, give it to the poor, and follow Me."

I say this to all of us, and you better learn this lesson: God will always test you with what you really love. He really will. When you say you love God and the Bible, but you love other things more, He will test you with that to find out, and that is where this kid is at. This kid is unlike anybody we have got in Christianity today. Right up to Mark 10:21, he looks really good, but then when it really comes, push comes to shove. When He says, "Come, take up thy cross, follow Me, get rid of everything you got, give it to the poor, get the true riches, come and take up your cross and follow Me." The Bible says he went away sad. Why? Because there are so many of God's people that will not follow God today, but they want to pretend and give the impression that they do, but they will never make Him Lord; they will only make Him Master. If Jesus Christ is not the Lord of your life, then something else will be. It is just that simple. He goes away sad because he had great possessions.

The great principle is here, he says, "Get rid of everything that you got, take up your cross and follow Me." Do you want to know why some of God's people will not pick up the cross and follow the Lord today? It is a simple thing; this is not complicated. I have so many of God's people who will not pick up the cross and follow the Lord. Do you know why? Because they are already carrying too much junk from what they got in their possessions. They cannot get the cross on their back because they have all the other things up there. It is just that simple. We just get bogged down with everything that we have. In the Bible, there are two kinds of burdens defined, you do know that. There is the burden that men will put on you or you will put on yourself, which is a grievous burden, and then there is the burden that the Lord puts on you that is an easy burden; His yoke is light. The reason why most of God's people will never pick up the burden of the Lord is because they are so grieved with the burden that they have already got on their back. They are already carrying ten thousand pounds of junk. How are they going to add a cross to that? It will not happen. God wants it all. He wants it all because He wants the total quote of your life; He wants to be Lord. That is just the way it works.

In Mark 10:23, He looks around and He says to His disciples:

Mark 10:23

How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

That is a true statement. Do you know why? Because riches obscure your faith. That is what the verse is saying. This particular story is found three times if I remember right in the Gospels. My favorite account is in Luke 18:22. In Luke 18:22, He says, "One thing thou lackest." He says it a little differently.

We talked about George Whitefield last week. George Whitefield was a great preacher who never missed an opportunity. One cold, cold, cold winter in February, he was staying as he was preaching in some people's homes. He had preached every night to them, to the church, the congregations, and these people never got saved. They were rich folks. They had a very nice house. They thought it was very prestigious to keep the famous George Whitefield. The morning that he was getting ready to leave, he had done everything he could to preach to get these people saved. But you never caught George Whitefield unprepared. The glass windows were frosted over with frost on them. He took his finger and his ring and he wrote on that window, "Luke

18:22, "One thing thou lackest." After he left, the woman came up to make up the bed, saw the window, the Holy Spirit of God smothered in her heart, she called her husband, they both trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as their own personal Savior. But they had everything. Just like most of God's people have everything, "One thing thou lackest." It is an incredible verse.

VI. Proverbs 28:7 - Wise Son vs. Riotous Men

Proverbs 28:7:

Proverbs 28:7

Whoso keepeth the law is a wise son: but he that is a companion of riotous men shameth his father.

Let us remember here that historically, this will be Solomon's son, Rehoboam. Doctrinally, it will be the nation of Israel who is God's son. Inspirationally, it will be you and me as God's son in the church age. We have seen the wise man versus the foolish man all through Proverbs and actually all through the Bible. Here again, this verse in Proverbs 28 will be illustrated by a story in the New Testament to drive home the principle. It is a story that we all relate to because we have all been here at some point in our lives, some probably maybe are here right now. It is the story of Luke 15:11-24, where we talked about the story of the prodigal son.

Luke 15:11-24

11 And he said, A certain man had two sons:

12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.

13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:

23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry:

24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

In these stories here, I have told you before, this certain man here is a picture of God the Father, and he has two sons. By this time, it would be the Northern tribes Israel and the Southern tribes Judah. But it also would be within the nation of Israel a wise son and also a foolish son. Basically, it is actually a story of two boys. Inspirationally, it is a picture of you and me or maybe you and your children.

A couple of things I want you to notice here, and we are looking at Proverbs 28:7, "he that is a companion to riotous men," and Luke 15:13 that said, "he wasted his substance with riotous living." It has the aspect of the far country. That is a place we have all visited. That is a place in our lives we all hung out for a while, got a room, and there we wasted our substance with riotous living. It comes at a place where a number of great principles are here. One of them is that the far country, I have found in most of God's people's lives, is the favorite vacation spot of most God's people. There is a great principle here that when your money runs out, so do your friends.

But Luke 15:17 has always been a great verse because I have always put that in my own life, and I have seen it fulfilled in so many other people's lives who were in the far country. It simply says, "And when he came to himself." God's people need to come to themselves. You need to realize or ask yourself where you are really at today. You need to look at yourself, and you need to really, and most people will never get to that point. The last part of the verse says, "he shameth his father." He brings shame to Solomon historically where Rehoboam does. The nation of Israel brings shame to their father Israel. It brings shame for you and for me to the cause of Christ when you are a child of God getting to the far country. Yet it brings shame to your earthly father and mother when you are a boy or a girl who gets out there in the far country and does not want to do what needs to be done.

VII. Proverbs 28:8 - Usury and Unjust Gain

Proverbs 28:8:

Proverbs 28:8

He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.

Doctrinally, this will be a reference to somebody in the tribulation period using the Jew and making a profit off them. I have told you many, many times, in the 20th century, the greatest type of the Antichrist was Adolf Hitler. There are so many parallels between what he did in Nazi Germany and what the Antichrist is going to do. It is incredible. He is the last great picture given to us. In World War II, they had what they called profiteering. They rounded all the Jews up out of the ghettos, put them in concentration camps, and then what they did was that they would rent them out to factories or people that needed labor, slave labor, and the people would pay the Germans like 10 Reichsmarks a day, and depending on what your nationality was, how much money you got, but the Jew was at the bottom of it. They would rent out 10,000 Jews a day to go work in these factories and get paid 10 Reichsmarks per person for them, the Germans would. They were making money off the Jews just like the verse says.

The verse is split in two aspects. If you notice, it is separated by a comma. The first aspect it says, "he that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance," and there is a comma. That will be somebody using the Jew. Then it says, "he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor," and that will be somebody helping the Jew. Shockingly again, we talked about it last week, this will be the judgment of the nations in Matthew 25, the dividing of the sheep and the goats, where God actually talks about who helped the Jew and who did not, who used the Jew and then who pitied the Jew and took care of him, exactly what Proverbs 28:8 is talking about.

Inspirationally, it will be a reference to anybody who either hurts or uses people or hurts them for their own personal gain. The example that everybody understands would be like a credit card company. It lends you money, hopes you get into debt over your head so you will never get out because they are going to charge you 18% interest that you will never pay off. Or you see it all the time, the title loan places where you need a payday loan, where you go in and you get a loan and 25% interest. It is all a ripoff. It is people who will take advantage. People who do the same thing, they will work their crowd to get all the money they can for their own pet projects and never think twice about it. It talks about people who will take advantage of other people's misfortune. You get in a bind, you need money, and somebody will lend you the money but charge you an exorbitant interest rate because they are going to use you. We see it all the time; we see it happen all the time.

I have known Christian parents over the years who have a lot of money, and their kids needed money to buy a car or this or that, and they will say, "Well, we will give you the money to buy the car, you can pay it back to us, and we will charge you a very low interest rate." Are you kidding me? I have known pastors before, Jim Lake is the classic example. When Jim Lake went out to start a church, for our New Year's Eve Bible Conference, I have Jim Lake coming and Jerry Bachman coming, confirmed this week, it is going to be a great time. Jim is bringing his son-in-law who is going to preach also, he is a pastor, so we are going to have a great time. When Jim went out to start a church, and he went out after I came out here, he helped me drive out, and then he came out, went up to start a church later. He needed a certain amount of money. So his home church, this was his home church, the Canton Baptist Temple. His home church took up an offering for him, and Jim was very well-liked, Jim was very well-respected. He needed \$20,000 or \$30,000, and that one offering they raised every dime that Jim needed. Then

what the pastor said was that "we will give you this money as a loan," and then made him pay it back with interest when the people of the church gave it to him because they wanted to be part of what he was doing. This is what I am talking about. Jim is such a character guy, a good character guy, that he never complained. He paid back every dime of it, just the way that Jim is. I would have gotten on the phone and called everybody and overthrown the church and stayed there. That is the difference with his character and me just being a character.

The last part of the verse, "he shall gather it for him." That is certainly a reference to the judgment seat of Christ and our millennial inheritance. God simply, as we do the work, God gathering for you and for me, our increase, our rewards as we work to take care of God's people. In two formats. First of all, the nation of Israel, that will be the judgment of the nation, the tribulation. But for you and for me, the people that God gives us right now, do you help them or do you use them? Do you teach them and give them what you give them with a pure motive or do you have an ulterior motive?

The rapture and the second coming are likened to a harvest. Right now we do the work, but then God gives and gathers the increase for us. We sing the song, "We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves," the sheaves working in the fields. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 3:6:

1 Corinthians 3:6

I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

He is saying, "I preached the truth to them. Apollos prayed for them, but God gave the increase," and He ultimately gathered a harvest for us. That brings up a tremendous concept. There are three aspects to soul winning: there is a sowing, there is a watering, and there is a reaping. Most people, I grew up in an era where the guys were making millions of dollars off of their books and holding conferences on soul winning and putting people under a guilt trip saying that, "I win every, of every five people I talk to, I win three of them to Christ." He would put that on them. He would say, "You want to be winning men and women to Christ. If you go through a day and you do not win somebody to Christ, there is something wrong with you." All this was using the verse we are talking about to put people on a guilt trip so you can get them to buy your books and buy your tapes.

The Bible teaches that there are three aspects to soul winning. You sow the word of God, you pray for that person, and then that person gets saved at some point in a perfect world. But the thing that you have got to realize is that you may sow and you may water, but somebody else may reap. Then you may reap what somebody else has sowed and watered. The key is to have understanding to know when you should sow, stop sowing, always water, but when you should not go any farther in your reaping. You come to the place where you beat people up to get saved, so they get saved to get you off their back. I had a guy one time, we used to go door to door, and he was one of these great soul winning guys, or he thought he was. He used to brag about how many people went to Christ. So I went one time, I just wanted to see his technique. We got into a house, and the guy did not want to believe, he did not want to come to church or whatever. My friend said, "You need to get saved." The guy says, "I do not want to get saved." My friend went on and on and on. The guy says, "I will tell you what." My friend said, "We are going to leave

right now. But would you do me a favor?" The guy said, "Sure, what is it?" He says, "Would you just pray for us? Just pray this prayer." So he gave him the sinner's prayer, the guy prayed it, and then my friend said, "I got bad news for you, you just got saved." That is the kind of people he claimed he won to Christ. That guy did not get saved. In fact, he ran us out of the house. But that is the mindset.

There will be times when all God wants you to do is sow. Somebody else is going to reap. The example of that is the Ethiopian eunuch. Somebody sowed the gospel of Isaiah 53. But Philip got the reaping. Somebody was praying for him. When you have understanding and you have a relationship with the Holy Spirit of God, you know when you are to sow, when you are to water, when you are to reap. You know that when you start to talk to somebody, the Holy Spirit of God says, "Okay, that is enough. Let us go. You gave them all I wanted you to give them." So you sowed it, but God is going to have somebody else reap it. We get the idea that because this person is in my life, my job is to win him to Christ. "I am not going to stop until he gets saved." You are out of your mind. That is not a sensitivity to the Holy Spirit of God. Some people God wants you to sow. Some people God wants you to pray for. Some people God wants you to reap. Your relationship with the Holy Spirit of God tells you which one to do when. It is a great concept. We do the work, but God gathers the increase for us.

The longer I am in the ministry, in a couple more years, it will be 50 years. The longer I am in the ministry, the longer I do this work, the more I realize that I simply do my job, put out the truth, and allow God to do His job, that is the gathered increase. So many of God's people, so many pastors. Jesus said one time, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me" in John 12. The problem with preachers today is that they are too busy lifting themselves up; Jesus never just lifted up. Too many people today try to do God's work and never do theirs. You get into the ministry, and get into it like many of you have, you are going to learn that two key words are vital: patience and longsuffering. In ministry, you never force anything on somebody. You let God do it. You allow God to show them what the truth is and what they need. Your job is just to give it to them. Your job is not to convince them of it. That is the Holy Spirit's job. He may ask you questions, and you show him what the Word of God is. At the end of the day, you are not going to convince them of anything. If you do and the Holy Spirit did not, you are in the wrong pew. The results always belong to God in His time frame, not ours. Remember this: time spent waiting on God is never time spent wasted. You let God do it His way.

VIII. Three Great Truths from Proverbs 28:6-8

These three verses will show us three simple great truths that need to be applied in each of our lives.

1. Proverbs 28:6: You are better off with the riches of God than you are the riches of this world because they will not satisfy you. They will leave you broken, busted, and empty. At the end of your life, you will have nothing to show for it. The Bible calls it a "bag with holes." You put everything into a bag, and at the end of your life, you realize there was a hole in the bottom, and it all fell out.

2. Proverbs 28:7: To have the true riches, you must separate yourself from some things in this life. There can be no sanctification in your life without separation in your life. For you to have everything that God wants you to have, there are some things that are just simply going to have to go. It is just that simple.
3. Proverbs 28:8: As a child of God, you have to give to people, not take from them for your own personal gain. We live in a day and age of Christianity where pastors teach Bible courses, have classes, have a paid staff counselor on the staff. If you want to go take a class, you have got to pay for it. If you want to go see the Christian psychology, it costs you something. If you want to use a room in the building because you are going to get married or your person died in your family, you have got to pay for it. Churches have lost their minds today. Somehow it all got backwards. We do not exist so you can serve me. We exist that we can serve you. This is your building. You pay for it. It is like you buying a car and you are paying off on a car, and then I keep charging you every time you drive it. It is your car. This is your building, and you can use it. You can have it. How do I charge you for anything I teach you no matter what it may be? Yet it is incredible stuff, not because I am teaching it, well, kind of, but it is incredible stuff, and it is stuff that will change your whole life. How do I charge you for something that God gave me free? If that is not crooks, I do not know what is. All the criminals are not in the penitentiary, I guarantee you.

Rudyard Kipling was an English writer around the turn of the century. He was a journalist, he was an author, he wrote poems, and he did short stories. The one that I read he did was called "The Processional," which was a short poem dedicated to Queen Victoria and her Diamond Jubilee of reigning in 1897. He spent years with the British Expeditionary Forces overseas and was a great wise man and really knew a lot of things, and I kind of think he probably was a Christian, though I never proved that. He spoke to the Oxford body of graduates around the turn of the century, and I read it years and years and years ago, and I keep things like that. I have just blitzed books for years and tried to glean everything I can, and when I found something that really was above the ordinary, I always wrote it down and always kept it. His farewell address to the student body of Oxford University, he said, was one of the greatest things I ever heard, and I wrote it in my Bible years ago. As he got up there and stood in the podium, and a place was filled with graduates from Oxford University, which you had to have a lot of money to go to Oxford. You have got to have a lot of money now.

He said, "I see you young gentlemen here today, and by your dress, by your mannerisms, by your conversation, and certainly by your attitude, it is obvious to me that you have been raised in well-to-do families where all of life's necessities have been taken care of for you, and you want for nothing today, and you live a life of wealth, and you have taken great pains to impress the right people and have laid back enough wealth to buy your way through most of your life." But he said, "I would like to tell you something today and leave you with one thought: someday after you leave here, somewhere down the pathway of your life, you will come across a man somewhere to whom all that you have today will mean absolutely nothing. And when you do, you will then realize how poor you really are."

For me, when I looked at that thing and read that, do you know what that means? That is the judgment seat of Christ for us. A day when we are going to stand there, 1 Corinthians 3, 2 Corinthians 5, Romans 14, and we think that everything that we had, and then we are going to meet a man who gave up everything. The reality of that day is going to be for us who think we have everything and have trusted in everything we have, our jobs, our riches, our money, that we do everything in life to get better, more money, more riches than this. In that day, you will find out just how poor you really were, keeping our perspective to the life we need to live for Him, realizing that we will never bear His cross with all the junk that we have got on our backs that we hold so precious and dear. Christ not just being our Master, but being our Lord. Because in our life, if He is not Lord of all, then He is not Lord at all. We just go through the motions over and over and over again, and we are never happy, we are never fulfilled, and we build around us all the things that we think makes us happy, and when we get to that final place where we meet a man who was rich, yet for your sakes became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich. You will see how poor you really were in His life.