

Proverbs 29:19-21

Sunday 1/26/2020

SEC: The Importance of God's Vision for Nations

If you have your Bibles this morning, we are going to turn back again to Proverbs 29. You will remember, just by a quick going back over last week for a few moments, we finished our section that really dealt with getting the vision. We talked about how that it is true of a church, and how it is my responsibility to go through that process last week, that you as a church, our church, understands the burden of God and the vision of God.

It is also true of a parent. Our success will depend on us getting God's vision, whether it is a church or whether it is your family. Through that burden, God will reveal, of course, the vision that He has for us. It was a two-week study running through verses 14 through 18. As you now can see, it was really loaded with some great practical principles, not only for pastoring, if you ever find yourself in that scenario, but certainly also for parenting.

I did not have time last week because I wanted to really focus on it, but it is also true of any nation. Where a church, or a school, or a nation, or an individual loses contact with God and God's revelation of history and its purpose, it is going to perish.

Psalms 9:17

The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.

When a man or a nation's vision becomes some pragmatic goal with no real truth or meaning to it, in time it is going to self-destruct. History is the greatest witness to that. We think about the Egyptians, or the Babylonians, or the Hittites, or the Assyrians. Where are they now? They are gone. They are gone to the dust of the earth. They do not even remain. People do not even know anything about them.

It is so true; it is just a great principle. The book of Ecclesiastes talked about how everything that man tries to do outside of God is vanity. Certainly, we see it. The unsaved nations or man, their vision for the future of man is just a one-world system that they run. We find it first in Genesis 10. That is where it starts. A place that they want to have a false peace and love and all getting along together in harmony, without God or without any reference to His word or anything of its principles.

It is so true, where God is not the vision and the revelation of His word is not your burden, you are done. I do not care if you are a parent, I do not care if you are a church, I do care if you are an individual or the United States of America. Again, we see in the book of Ecclesiastes, I forget how many exactly it is, thirty-four or thirty-five attempts recorded for you in Ecclesiastes talking about "under the sun" on this earth. Thirty-four or thirty-five attempts of man to come up with a system, a government, a plan that will replace God's plan. Of course, it just will not work.

All unsaved leaders, the visionaries that we talk about or you hear so much about, they share the same opium pipe dream when it comes to the future of man. These will be the one-worlders, the tree huggers, the kingdom builders, the international socialists, the left-wing politicians, science

and education. The vision that they have, no matter where it is in history, no matter who it is, it all follows the same pattern:

- Get everybody together.
- Get rid of the Bible and churches that preach contrary to what we are trying to do.
- Have everyone share equally.
- Eliminate capital punishment and all war.
- Find a dream world in outer space through space exploration.

I enjoy listening about what they find in outer space. I have always been interested in astronomy and all of that, but I am not under any illusion that every time that NASA does something, no matter what it may be, it is for one fundamental reason: that is to discount the Word of God and come up with an alternative plan to the Bible. Without a doubt, a false vision will be a thousand times worse than no vision at all.

Now we know from last week that whether it is a church, a family, or a Christian, or a nation, we will be dead in the water without a burden from God and then a vision from God of seeing who we really are and what God has for us to do. Last week we built around the last couple of weeks of a key verse in Proverbs 29:18: "Where there is no vision, the people perish."

There is no greater truth anywhere in the Bible. Man's quest for a one-world system, a perfect utopia where everybody is happy and gets along, is just a retread of what they tried to do in Genesis 6. The Bible is a complete circle, and the Bible says, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the coming of the Son of Man." Here it is, just like it was back then: everybody trying to get together, everybody trying to put God out of it and make their own plan. The only thing missing today is the sons of God in Genesis 6, but if you listen carefully, I think they are pulling into the driveway any moment now. That is where we are at today.

SEC: Building a Biblical Relationship with God

Today, going with last week's vision and burden, I want to spend some time. It is one thing to tell you about getting the burden, getting the vision, but I want to do more than that because you can give somebody all of that and then they walk out of here saying, "Well, that is good, but how do I get there? How do I do that?"

I want to talk to you today on the next set of verses that when you read these verses, I will be honest, you would not get it out of there, but once you start to look at it and put it in the context and start to think about it with the rest of the Bible, it becomes a pretty powerful idea that I want to talk to you about today. I want to look at our building that relationship with God to have that burden and have that vision, because I want you to know there will be no burden nor will there be no vision without a biblical relationship and fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is a lot of misconception about that today. A lot of things that people do not understand about building that relationship or how to do it. Most churches today, as most Christians today, think they have an okay relationship with God, and the truth of the matter is, if you put it up against the Bible, they are so far away from a real biblical relationship with God, it is unbelievable. Yet every Sunday, all week long, we hear it, we see it.

Today, I want to look at Proverbs 29:19-21, just three short verses today. Let me read it and then we will come back and we will pray about it and we will go from there.

Proverbs 29:19-21

A servant will not be corrected by words: for though he understand, he will not answer.

Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him.

He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child shall have him become his son at the length.

SEC: The Servant's Inward Rebellion

I want to show you, as I stated a moment ago, I want to walk you through a biblical process for you to build a relationship with Christ that in time, you will get that burden and in time, God through that burden will develop your vision for you. The verses here, fundamentally, are a general truth that will fit in many scenarios, but I want to keep it in the context of last week.

Verse 19 says, "A servant will not be corrected by words: for though he understand, he will not answer." When I saw that verse this last Monday when I started looking at it to put it all together, I thought to myself in an instant, "Man, I do not know of another verse that fits God's people better than this verse right here." It really does. I want to look at it for a moment here.

First of all, let us talk about our servant. The servant here will be a slave within our context, someone who has no freedom, someone that is under the bondage of a master, and he has been bought and sold, and he cannot have the freedom to go wherever he wants and do whatever he wants. In our verse, this guy knows the system. He knows how it works. He has learned to play the game, so to speak. He knows that for the rest of his natural life, he is going to be a servant. He is never going to be able to make his own decisions. He has learned the best way to survive in this given situation. He has learned what to say and what not to say.

Verse 19 says that when he is under the control of his master, when he is corrected, he knows exactly how to respond to it. He understands what he is saying, but he will not answer to it. It is an incredible concept. He knows what to say, but he will not say it. He obeys his master, even though to him, it is a game. It is a game that he has to play to survive. He does not serve his master because he loves him. He serves him because he wants to survive as a servant and make the best life in the circumstances that he can. He really has no alternative. So when he is approved or he is corrected, he only changes his action. He does not change his attitude about his master or being a servant. He pretends on the outside that he is okay with it all, but on the inside, he is in rebellion.

It reminds me of a story I heard years ago about children. A guy was driving and his seven-year-old, six-year-old son was in the car in the front seat with him. The kid was kind of a rebellious kid. The kid, like all kids, his dad is driving and the kid is standing up in the seat so he can look out the window. We all know how dangerous that can be, especially if you have to stop suddenly. So the dad says, "Son, you need to sit down and buckle your seat belt." And he said, "No, I do not want to do that." And his dad says, "Now, come on, we need to do that for your own safety, just sit down and snap that seat in." And he says, "I cannot see. I do not want to sit down." Well, after going back and forth for a few moments, the dad was getting quite irritated with the defiance of his son. So he reached over and grabbed him and threw him down in his seat and said, "Now buckle that seat belt." And of course, the kid complied and he did that. And the dad said, "That is better." And the kid looked up and said, "I may be sitting in this seat, but I am standing in my mind." That is what a servant does.

Inward rebellion. That is the context. This servant, he hears the rebuke and the reproof. He pretends that he is okay with it, but inside is an inward rebellion. In other words, they will tell you what you want to hear. In Christianity, you will find that ninety-five percent of God's people are the same way. At least I have found that over my years.

The great verse for it actually is in the Old Testament in Psalms 78. If you turn back there to it for me, we will not read the whole chapter, but it is dealing with the nation of Israel and their same kind of rebellious attitude that they had toward God that so many of God's people have today.

Psalms 78:36-41

Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues.

For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant.

But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath.

For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.

How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert!

Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.

This is what I call lip service Christians. That is what Israel was. Israel flattered Him with their words, but their heart was far from Him. I found that that is what a servant does. He flatters the master or the guy in charge, but he himself, he is far from any kind of relationship with him.

I just need to stay here for a moment because this jumped out at me the other day, and I thought what an incredible thing this is. Look at verse 41: "Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel." We do not think much about the fact that when God saves us, He saves us for a plan, and He wants to enact that plan through us, and He will not enact that plan without us. When we turn back and go back to the world, or at least turn away from God, we do the same thing that Israel did: we limit God. That is quite a concept. God who can do anything is

limited by you and I not doing anything. I will tell you, that is an incredible thing that you need to stop and think about today, and I will inject that throughout the morning as best I can here. It is a thing when we turn back.

These people will serve God out of fear or obligation, sometimes guilt, sometimes spite, or sometimes for just personal gain. Sometimes they will just give God the absolute minimum, or they give God nothing at all. You see this all the time in dealing with people, and I am sure many of you who work with people with me, or just come to this church for any length of time, you see that happening.

My favorite verse when it comes to lip service Christians and people who are like this is found over there in Luke 6:46. I think it is the greatest single verse anywhere in the Bible that God asks us.

Luke 6:46

And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

Boy, I will tell you what, that is so true. Let me just clarify a point here. I totally understand the aspect of a child of God, us being a servant. I get that.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Here is a great verse that tells us right out of the gate that we are a bond slave if you are saved this morning. We do not have any rights. We were bought at Calvary's Cross, and now we are a servant. That is the context of this passage today, a servant that just stays a servant and never develops a relationship with the one who bought him.

You find this concept of us being a slave. The modern Laodicean church today is called Laodicea. Laodicea means "rights of the people." In true reality, from a Bible standpoint for you and me, we have no rights. We are a bond slave. That is why in Acts 8, the first person who got saved, like you and I got saved, you can actually go down and see every aspect of that salvation just like you got saved after Israel rejected in Acts 7, as a servant of servants. He is an Ethiopian eunuch. That is why at the crucifixion of Matthew 27:32, when Christ was dragging that heavy cross to Calvary, they compelled Simon of Cyrene. Cyrene is North Africa. He is a servant of servants. He is a black man, and they threw him in the mix. As he helped bore the cross with the Lord Jesus Christ, he took the rebuke just like Christ did, showing me again that my attitude of a Christian, once I am saved, is to be a servant of servants. It is so clear.

You will notice here in 1 Corinthians 6:20 that it says, "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." It does not say soul, just like the question we had Thursday night, because it is talking about your soul is already sealed. It is

already glorifying God, but it is your spirit and your flesh we have got to worry about. I get all of that.

SEC: From Servant to Son: A Delicately Nurtured Relationship

I want to jump down for a moment to Proverbs 29:21, and then we will come back in. I want to show you something. Boy, this is something, because I am talking to you this morning about once you got saved, you are a servant. But you do not want to just stay a servant.

Proverbs 29:21

He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child shall have him become his son at the length.

Here is the difference between a Christian who never really develops a relationship with God and just serves Him as a servant, lip service Christianity, versus a child of God who serves Him as his son because he loves Him and because of what they have together through a relationship of love and fellowship.

The book that you want to see for this, if you ever want to really lay it out, and you remember, I do not know, what was it, eight or nine years ago on a New Year's Eve before we got into the bad attitude Baptist blowout, we would take a book of the Bible and we would start around six o'clock and go to midnight and just cover everything in the book and lay it out so you would have it. One time we did the Song of Solomon. I think it is in the back there in the book. We have it back there. John put it out in a book for you.

I am just going to tell you this: you will never have the right relationship and fellowship with God till you first understand the book of Song of Solomon. Song of Solomon is a guy, Solomon, who has got a thousand wives, and of those thousand wives, he cannot find one that is virtuous. When he finds one that is virtuous, read it yourself, she is a black woman. Again, a servant of servants. In that story, in that picture, you will find that that is probably the odds in our relationship with God. Probably one out of a thousand of God's people ever find a true relationship and fellowship that God wants to have with them. That is what that book is all about.

In that book, chapter by chapter, it will talk about God looking at His bride, Christ looking at the church, and laying out through all the symbolism there, laying out how much He loves her. Then the next chapter, or many times in the same chapter, it will just switch roles. Now it will be the church, you and me, looking and expressing what we feel for Him. Most of God's people, they do not know how to love God. They have never went through a process that I am going to show you here to learn how to love God. All of their life, they are saved and they are on their way to heaven, but they are just a servant. They never, from the time that they were born, get developed to become His son.

It is one thing to serve God as a servant. It is something else to be God's servant as His son. That is the difference I want to talk about this morning. Hopefully some of you, many of you, if any of you, will pick up that and begin to understand that.

The key word here is "delicately." That means softly, tenderly, in a nurturing way, kindness, "bringing up his servant from a child." That is the day you got saved. That is a picture of us getting saved, and then through that five-step process that I gave you last week, or it is a picture of you and your children. I gave it to you last week and I gave it to you several times in dealing with it. Last week I showed you how it is the same thing you do with a church as you do with your children.

The five stages that a parent will build into their children, and as a pastor, my job is to try to build it into you:

1. The discipline stage, where you start very, very, very young. When you first get saved, we do the discipline stage. We call it discipleship.
2. Then you move into the relationship stage.
3. Then you move into the fellowship stage.
4. Then you move into the responsibility stage.
5. Then you move into the ministry stage.

God delicately, building a relationship with us through our fellowship with Him, and then developing through these five stages the burden of God, and then in time giving us the vision of God. But it will never come without a relationship. The burden or the vision will never come without a fellowship relationship with Him. Building a relationship with Him that is on that intimate basis that most of God's people never know. They never get to. Churches today will not teach it. They just lost. You could not find two books out there that would tell you the process because it is a lost process.

I have told you how many times I have laid out for you the seven things that you lose when you lose your Bible. One of them is your ability to love God the way you should. We have been through it many, many times.

Nobody ever just gets saved and the next day you love God. It does not happen that way. I know in the big churches, I know Joel Osteen presents it that way. I know all the big pastors present it that way. That is because one, they do not know how to do it themselves, and two, if they did, they do not want to waste their time with you. They are too busy counting their offerings. But I am telling you right now, you cannot get saved and then just suddenly the next day you love God and have fellowship with God. If you think you can do that, you do not know very much about the Bible.

Obviously, there are some great examples of that in the Bible. To me, the greatest one is Abraham and God. In Genesis 12, where God really calls him out and begins to work with him, Abraham cannot trust God for anything. Yet he believed God enough to count him for righteousness when God told him about the stars. He cannot trust God in anything. God said, "Leave and let all your family go." He took Lot with him. Disobeyed God. He got down there with Abimelech, a king, and said, "Hey, is that woman your wife?" And he was afraid to trust God because he was afraid if he said yes, they would kill him in his sleep and then take her to be his wife. So he lied and said, "No, she is my sister." He got the promise from God that he was going to have the seed, but he is eighty-six years old. So he cannot trust God in that. Then he

winds up taking Hagar and making a mess for the next five, six thousand years for the nation of Israel.

But by the time you get to Genesis 22, he has learned some things. There is a great pivotal chapter in Genesis and Abraham's life. It is Genesis 18 and 19. It is where God actually changes his name from Abram to Abraham and Sarai's name to Sarah. I do not have time to get into the seven name changes in the Bible and how they relate to us, but it is an incredible thing. We have talked about it many times.

So now we see by the time he gets to Genesis 22, he has grown some things. Abraham is called the friend of God. He is one of only two men in the Bible that is called that, but he did not start out being called God's friend. God wants to be your friend today, but you will not just simply start out being God's friend. For Abraham, there was a process. He had to go from Genesis 12, where he could not trust God for anything, to Genesis 22, where he was willing to lay Isaac on the altar, put the fire and the wood under him, and take a knife and would have plunged that chest if God's hand would not have stopped him.

What happened from point A to point B? Whatever happened, what needs to happen in our lives? How he got from the place where he could not trust God for anything, but yet he was going to serve God. But he had to get to the point where he had a relationship and fellowship that he was not just God's servant, that he became something special to God. Right there, folks, will be our issue of just staying a servant and never growing up to love Him as a son loves his father.

I get it. I get it. The Bible says in 1 John 3:2, I understand all the verses. You are not going to give me anything I do not already know. It says, "We are the sons of God." I get that. That is absolutely true doctrinally. But that does not necessarily mean that in our personal relationship with Him, that may be true doctrinally as far as God is concerned, but that may not be true in our own personal relationship with Him of how we look at it and how our attitude is about it.

You see this model, and I do not want to belabor this point, but you see this another model in the twelve apostles themselves. You had twelve apostles. They will picture for us what you have in the church today. You have one in there that is a phony. That would be Judas. That tells me that probably not everybody here today is saved. I wish that was not true, but the model says that it probably is true. That left eleven. Out of the other eleven, they all went out and did everything that God wanted to do, but out of that eleven, there were three guys that did it closer, cleaner, and had a very close special relationship with the Lord more than the other guys. You know who it was? Peter, James, and John.

Go through your New Testament. Every time there is a great miracle, the Mount of Transfiguration, the rising of Jairus' daughter, wherever you go, it will always tell you that the inner three, Peter, James, and John, were there. Where are the other guys? What are they doing? Then when you take that inner three and you want to really crack the magnification down on it, you will find out of those three, there is only one that goes all the way. That is John. Where everybody else has run off at the crucifixion, where is John? He is at the foot of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross.

John is the greatest picture in the New Testament of what a Christian should be in his relationship with Christ. He is the only apostle that Jesus said He loved, and yet Jesus loved them all. He did something that nobody else would do with the Last Supper. He leans over and here he puts his head on the very breast of Jesus, which is found in the Song of Solomon, and he hears the heartbeat of God. Nobody else in the Bible did that, and the only other person in all the world who can do it is you, and you hear the heartbeat of God through this.

John is standing down there at the cross, Jesus's mother, who is a type of the nation of Israel, is there. What did Jesus do? He looks at John, type of the church, and He looks at His mother, a type of the nation of Israel, and He gives the watch care of His mother, Israel, to John the church. You will find out in Romans 9 and Romans 11. Incredible stuff.

When Christ, through His established structure, the church, He will delicately bring you up from the day you get saved as a child and develop you through these five relationship things that it is my job to build into you, just like it is your job to build Him into your children, and He will build you and develop you into a son that serves Him because you love Him, not because you are a servant, and that is what makes the difference.

But the spirit of our time is so far from this principle and this great teaching of the Bible. We fall in love with Christ, but we never really get to know Christ. Song of Solomon: Him and me. In two or three months, I have seen it all my ministry, somebody will come on Sunday morning or Thursday night or whatever special thing, and they will get saved, and they will show up for a week or a month, we will start to disciple them, and then they are gone. They are gone. They are no longer around. Why is that?

I will tell you why it is, because you fell in love with God. You never understood the concept of you have got to know how to love Him and let Him build that relationship. So because you fell in, three months later you find something better, something more shiny, something better and more glitchy, and then you fall in love with that and fall out of love with Him.

Your whole life, if you do not know this, your whole life is a world that is after your affections. Your whole lives, they want your affection and they want your money. They want you to go to the mall and look at all the windows to see what you do not have. They want to portray everything out there that the world will make you think will make you happy and complete. From the good times, good friend, good Lord Brown, to this Budge for you, to everything the world has to offer to try to get you to believe that that is where it really is. Your whole life will be a race with the world for your affections. You cannot have one foot in the world and one foot in your Bible and build a working relationship.

My Bible says in Colossians 3:2 that you are to set your affections on things above. Your affections need to be settled and set so that the world can never get it again. Clearly 1 John will teach us the great truth that to know Him is to love Him. We live in a world where we love all the wrong things.

I am going to hit this one kind of easy because we all do this, and I do not mind preaching to myself as long as it does not get to me. We love based on sight. The phrase is "love at first sight."

"Oh honey, I think it was love at first sight." "Darling, I think it was love at first sight." Love at first sight usually translates to alimony payments every month, about five or six years down the line. That is because we live in a world where we fall in love with things. The degeneration of our society, we have lost the concept of love. I am not criticizing anybody because we all do it. I do it. But listen to me. "I love this house. I love this car. I love this dress." We love things that do not have the ability to love us back.

I get it. There is nothing wrong with that as long as you understand that our society today is based on falling in love and starting learning how to love somebody. And then later on we fall out of love with somebody when they come along. We do the same thing with God. This will answer so many questions for you and me why a man or a woman will get saved and three or four months later never see him again. They turn back. When they turn back because God wanted to be the step for them to be the structure that He worked through and God had a plan for their life, when you turn back and you reject that, then you limit God. Because God has to do it through us.

There are two great examples of this in the book of 1 John and in the book of the Gospel of John. I mentioned 1 John a few moments ago. Both of them are written by the greatest Christian that ever lived, which I have already told you about, John. Now get this down. The Gospel of John was written for one purpose mainly for you and for me. There are a lot of doctrinal things in it, but fundamentally, inspirationally, it was written to you and me to lay out salvation. If you want a definitive verse on why the book was written, it is John 20:31.

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.

John was primarily written to you and me to get you saved. There are times when, I know Bearing Precious Seed does this and other churches do it too, when they do not print all the Bible because they do not want to give out a whole Bible to somebody, but they want to use a verse or a book that will get people saved. They will give them the Gospel of John because John was written to show you your salvation.

The second book is the epistle of 1 John. John writes them both. There are five wisdom books in the Old Testament written by Solomon and a couple other guys, and there are five wisdom books in the New Testament all written by John, and they will line right up with you. Where the Gospel of John was written to lay out your salvation, 1 John was written to lay out your relationship, fellowship with Him. A definitive verse in the passage will be 1 John 1:4-7.

1 John 1:4-7

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

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.

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

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.

There is a definitive verse on your fellowship. John, the Gospel, laid out, "You need to get saved." And in 1 John he writes about once you are saved, "How do you build that relationship?" You build it by fellowship and relationship.

Having said that, every commentator I ever read, almost without exception, every pastor I ever listened to on the book of 1 John said that the theme of 1 John was love. You will find that in probably all your study Bibles. You will find that. I have never understood things like this. I really do not. I mean I do but I do not. I do not think anybody is that blatantly stupid. I mean maybe they do not read the Bible. I do not know. Maybe they get all of their stuff out of somebody else's books. I do not know. But I ask myself, how would a man come to the conclusion that the theme of 1 John is love when in five short chapters, twenty-seven times, he tells you that the key to God is knowing Him?

You see, that is what we do. We try to love Him before we know Him. That is where the breakdown comes in. You think somebody might catch that. Clearly 1 John will teach the greatest single truth that I could ever give you. That is to know Him is to love Him. Trying to love Him without knowing Him will never work and you will never build a relationship and you stay a servant all of your life but you will never be allowed to be developed to become His son. This will answer so many questions of why so many people will not make it in Christianity today.

Let me tell you something. As a pastor, I am going to tell you to give up this world and the things that are in it, and I am going to. If I am going to tell you to give up booze and give up drugs and give up cigarettes and give up this and give up that. That is all good. Fine and dandy. Praise the Lord. What a great preacher. But I want to tell you something. If you are going to tell somebody to give all that stuff up, you had best better have something to replace it with. That is the problem. We talk about all the things that we give up but pastors are so inept when it comes to the scripture that they do not have anything to give them to replace that void of what they are giving up. If you think for a minute just tell them to come on Sunday morning, Wednesday night and Sunday night, we will do it. You are crazy.

No, you have to, at the time of salvation, you have to begin to know Him. You have to get into a process by which you are going to allow God to take you as a child the moment you got saved and develop you as a servant into at the length His son. You do that through relationship and fellowship.

SEC: Knowing God Through His Power, Suffering, and Death

In Philippians 3:10, what a great verse, tells us that we will know Him in three different aspects. He says in that great verse:

Philippians 3:10

That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

Now let us look at these three things for a moment. Let us talk about it.

6. Power of His Resurrection. That is understanding your salvation. I do not know that you are probably not aware of this, but I want to tell you right now. Psalms 33:6

By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. There was a time when He spake the worlds into existence. He made the galaxies. He put everything in order by His word and the power that He had to create everything that man sees and stands in awe and wonder. I want to tell you today, if you are saved, you have that exact same power inside you this morning. I learned a long time ago that when you are down at Cape Canaveral, when they launch a rocket, rocketry is an incredible thing. What you do is you take liquid oxygen and hydrogen, which when you put them together, you have a terrible explosion. So you put the one in one tank and the other in the other tank, and then you adjust that when you blast off, just enough of each comes out at the bottom where you see the fire and the flame and it causes an explosion that is controlled. If you just put the two together, you blow sideways that way. It is like this, I asked, every time there is a natural disaster and somebody dies in the space program, there are always a bunch of jokes that come out after that. Do you ever notice that? We live in the sickest society. "Where are the Challenger astronauts? What color eyes did they have? One blue this way and one blue that way." That is what we talk about, it is stupid. But that is the mindset. But why did they blow that way? Because those two propellants got together. So when you want a successful launch, you take this volatile propellant here, and you control how much they get together and the explosion lifts off and gets you into outer space. That is what you have. You have the power of God in you that you would wipe out the universe and do everything for God that He wanted you to do. But you have got to get those two components controlled. You cannot just explode all over the faces of everybody on planet earth. You have to have it controlled and you do that through your fellowship and your relationship, through the burden and through your vision. That is the key. If you do not do that, when you get saved, we start to bring you through Discipleship One. In Discipleship One, we talk about the basic things to give you a little firm footing on what Christianity is. So we talk about what happened the day you got saved. We talk about how you cannot lose your salvation. We talk about all those concepts. When we get to Discipleship Two, which many of you go through, that is where we begin to build the relationship and build the power of His resurrection because there we move up to the next level, which all Christianity is, is going up different levels. Now we get into the level where we are going to talk about the seven things that really changed about you the day you got saved. You are going to have a better understanding. Understanding the power you have right now. You are going to understand the power that you have right now that you did not have before you got saved. You are going to answer the question that I guarantee you ninety-nine percent of the preachers in this country could not do, or Christians. That is explain what really happened, the instantaneous moment that you got saved. What changed in your body? What changed about you from the moment you trusted Christ before you were a sinner to when you trusted Christ? What really changed? What were the

dynamics? Do not use the terminology. Do not say, "Well, you got born again," do not give me that. What physiologically and spiritually inside you, what were the seven things that changed? If you do not figure that out, you are never going to tap into the power.

7. Fellowship of His Suffering. We all want to be God's people and Christians to serve God as long as it does not hurt. As long as we do not have to pay any price. I am telling you, the fellowship of His suffering is going to come in understanding the price that was paid for our salvation. Understanding the price that was paid. I am telling you, most of God's people, they just go through Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John and they see the limited effect of the crucifixion and it never really impacts them in any way, shape or form, never changes anything about them. Of course, the reason why God did that is because He wants you to study to show thyself approved. So the graphic passages that will get your attention and show you the price that was paid are not in the New Testament, they are in the Old Testament. He put them in Isaiah 53, He put them in Job 30, He put them in Job 16, Isaiah 50, Psalms 22, Isaiah 52, Psalms 77. That is where you go to get a complete understanding of on that day on Calvary's cross, the sufferings that He went through, the price that was paid for you and for me. When you become fellowship with that, 2 Corinthians 1:5 says: 2 Corinthians 1:5

For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. We understand in fellowship and at suffering what He did for me, so when somebody else is suffering out there and going through it, you can help them understand based on the suffering of Christ for them and for you, how we had better help them. The fellowship of suffering is for three reasons: Understanding His suffering for me on the cross. Better understanding to help you when you go through your tough times. Better understanding how the world hates Him and it is going to hate you. The Bible says in 1 Timothy 3:12: 1 Timothy 3:12

Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. If you are going to enter into this fellowship, it is not at Hardee's, it is not at Jersey Boys, it is not at the sandwich place or the pizza place, it is the fellowship of His suffering. It is Him paying the price for you and now you are willing to pay the price for Him. He paid the price for you and me to have it, now you and I have to pay the price for somebody else to get it, and you are either going to do it or you are going to turn back and limit the Holy One of Israel.

8. Being Made Conformable Unto His Death. Not simply dead to the world but alive to the things of God. In Romans 6:3 it says: Romans 6:3

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? I guarantee you the pastors, Baptist preachers across the city would scratch their head on that when they do not have a clue. Someone would be so stupid they try to make it water baptism, they would not even understand the great baptism of Ephesians 4, they would not even have a clue. The bottom line is simply this: before salvation, and this will be Romans 6 and the whole book of Romans as you bring through the book of Romans chapter by chapter, before salvation you were dead in sin. Listen to me, before you got saved you were dead in sin and on your way to hell. Once you trust the Lord Jesus Christ as your own personal Savior and you get the power of the resurrection and get into the fellowship of His suffering, after salvation you are dead to sin. Sin has no more dominion over you. You are now dead to the world but alive in Christ. He says in Colossians 3:1-3: Colossians 3:1-3

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

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. The victory over sin in your life no matter what it may be, the victorious Christian life that you and I have, we all long for. It comes back to not just being a servant but understanding the fellowship that we have is the power of His resurrection, the fellowship of His suffering and then being made conformable unto His death. When you are in fellowship with those three things you are not just a servant anymore, you understand the price that was paid. You know why you love Him. You have learned the process like Abraham to love Him to be His friend. 1 Corinthians 8:3

But if any man love God, the same is known of him. What a great verse. But just as true is it if any man does not love God it is known of him also because true love will always identify himself with the object.

SEC: The Discipline of Words and Christ's Example

Now back to Proverbs 29:20 for a moment. I kind of jumped back and forth here but there is a reason for that. I wanted you to see that principle.

Proverbs 29:20

Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him.

In our context this will be the son-servant relationship we are talking about. Based on loving Him, based on knowing Him, and based on the fellowship and the relationships that you have or being conformed unto His death, in time God will give you the sermon and discretion in the words that you use to others. I am telling you words can hurt. Hasty words can do damage that in some cases are never repairable. I know somebody says something nasty to you and they said, "Oh I did not mean it and I take that back." That is just words. You cannot take it back. It has been said. You may say, "Oh but you will think about it the rest of your life." You cannot take it back. That is why we need to choose.

Jesus will be our perfect model for this. I mean there are other guys in the Bible that I would say would be really good but they will all fail at some point because they are human. We want to get the textbook perfect picture. That will be Christ. Christ never used words hastily. Did you ever notice that? He always was exact in everything that He said. This is why I try to push you toward that concept that be exact with what you say with the Bible. He always was exact in whatever He said. He never reacted to any given situation but He always responded through it through the principles.

I will give you an example in Matthew 21:13. You know the story. The money changers are down in the church. They are selling their chickens and their ducks and their pigs. When He goes in and He is angered at that and He throws them out overturning the tables. I mean He really tears up the place. At His words in Matthew 21:13 it says, "You have made my house a den of thieves." Someone said that He spoke hastily. No He did not. That is a quotation from Isaiah 56:7. He never spoke out of turn. Everything He said He had a biblical principle to back up what

He was saying. When He said that to them He is quoting Isaiah 56:7. He is right on the line with it. He was never hasty but if there was some servant love relationship He had complete control of His words. For us it is using verses, principles, chapters to form a context of any given situation and speaking within that biblical context.

In your Bible, the definitive book on being a servant, and I said this to the last here even though we have an hour and a half to go yet. But in your Bible the definitive book on being a servant will be obviously the Gospel of Mark. Probably most of you have figured that out. In the New Testament you have four gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Each one of them portray Christ in a different fashion that you glean the whole picture by studying each book.

- Matthew: He is a king.
- Mark: He is a servant.
- Luke: He is the Son of Man.
- John: He is the Son of God.

In the other three gospels you will find three genealogies of Christ. In Matthew you will find the kingly genealogy going back through the line of king because He is presented as the King of the Jews. In Luke He is a human man, Son of Man, so He is His human line going back through Mary. In John it is His deity line so He goes back, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." He goes back in His godly line to His Father. But in Mark, this is interesting, in Mark He is portrayed as a servant so there will be no genealogy in Mark because a servant, a slave does not have any genealogy. He is sold from master to master.

The book of Mark along with the other three gospels will show us the biblical pattern for us through Christ. He was a king. The Bible says that so are you and I, joint heirs with Christ, Romans 8. He was a man, so are you and I. We struggle with things just like He did except He was tempted on all points like we are but without sin. He is God's Son and so are you and I. You will find that He was also then God's servant and there you have it. You have the complete picture of showing you that how Christ was a servant of God but He was yet a Son of God to the point that God looked at Him and said to everybody, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Can God say that about us today?

You see the difference between understanding being and doing the ministry is a simple thing to see. Where the ministry has to be done with the work that we do for God. That is the ministry but you can do that with a bad attitude. I have known many preachers had the worst attitudes on the planet but they were in a ministry for thirty, forty years, I can give you a list of them. But you see a servant and a son will always deal with the right attitude towards God as a son to do the work and you cannot fake that. You cannot be a son and a servant and have a bad attitude because it all goes back to the love relationship with Him and it goes back to Him bringing you up delicately and bringing you from a servant as a child into the position of His son.

SEC: The Son-Servant Relationship and Obedience

Again our text today, the great context that we talk about in people, ministry, attitude versus action. My attitude about Christ will determine my action for Him. I will either be a son and a

servant or I will just be a servant. The book of Mark will lay out Christ's attitude toward God as His servant and also as God's Son. It defines for us Philippians 2:5-8, that great passage there when it says:

Philippians 2:5-8

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Four simple things. The first thing it says that He had God's form and we know that He was a Son of God and from John 5:18-39 we now know that that means He was equal with God. So He was made in God's image. Who being in the form of God, God made Him that way, but He made Himself of no reputation. Then it says He took upon Himself the form of a servant. God made Him to be equal as a Son of God the day that He saved you just like He did Christ when He sent Him to this earth, but I want you to know even with Christ He chose to humble Himself. He chose to be that servant and God developed Him from a servant to be His beloved Son and that beloved Son relationship as a servant the key to it is obedience and here the last thing the fourth thing He was obedient unto death.

God wants you and I through a relationship of knowing Him not just to be His servant but to be His son. The day you got saved He forms you into the image of Christ and that is defined for you in Hebrews 1:1-3, but you have to choose to humble yourself. He made Himself, you will have to make yourself humble. It says He took upon Himself the form of a servant, you will have to do that. How do you do that? Through your relationship of Him understanding the price that was paid for you and for me on Calvary's cross. It is just that simple. He was equal with God the Son of God but He took on the form of a servant to be obedient to God's work. A servant son has the attitude of obedience to his father based on his relationship and his fellowship and the love that they have for each other.

SEC: The Church's Role in Developing Sons

My job, I do many things here, but fundamentally after you get saved my job and everything that I do should be and is to develop you into that son-servant relationship and I follow what it says and I try to do it delicately to bring you up through those five stages.

9. When you get saved you start with discipleship and discipleship will lay, as I already said, the fundamental foundation things that you are going to build on the rest of your life.
10. Then we will move into the relationship stage and this is where you will get a deeper knowledge of what He did for you, what happened to you, understanding the intimate detail of Colossians when you got saved and bring you to the point where you begin to know Him and begin to build that relationship with Him.

11. That relationship stage then just moves into the next stage which is the fellowship stage. Once you learn to know Him and what He did for you through the relationship that you build, the fellowship will come naturally and that 1 John 1 tells us will be the fullness of our joy. The reason why we as God's people have no joy today, here it comes, you might know it was going to hit you sooner or later, the reason why we do not have the full joy in our lives is because we do not have the fellowship we need to. It is just that simple.
12. Then it moves into the responsibility stage. I have watched so many of you come through this and the joy of my ministry, without ever saying it or putting it out there, is to watch you guys go through this, watch you come in and get disciplined, watch you come into that relationship, watch you build that fellowship, and then watch you take that responsibility stage. It is at this stage, once you have disciplined yourself, once you have got the relationship and your affections are now set on things above, that it is at this responsibility stage that God will give you the burden to show you the vision. Many of us have talked about it in your own life, we have set out and I have watched you come to this point and it is a place where at this point, you know, it is where you are at now, you are never going back. You see now all that God has done for you, you are going to build on that the rest of your Christian life and it is only going to get deeper but you have enough of it now that it is never going to change you.
13. And then you get into the fifth stage which is the ministry stage and you fulfill the mission of His that He has given you.

Just like Christ, He loved you and me enough to die for us. We have to love Him enough to live for Him to finish what He started. I have said it many, many times, you ever wonder why at thirty-three years of age God cut short His life? Why not seventy? I mean the Bible says "threescore and ten" in Psalms 90. Why not seventy? Why did He not let Him live a full life? Why did He just, I mean He was God, why did He just keep Him around forever and run the whole program? I will tell you why. I will tell you why God did so many things biblically and doctrinally by stopping His life at thirty-three, but the main thing for you and for me is the fact that He went back to heaven and then He put into effect the church age which through that structure, through the word of God, through families, through churches, that unbreaking chain of Bible teaching goes on and that we, you and me, fulfill what God started with His Son but never finished.

Now are you the sons of God but it does not yet appear what you shall be because on the outside you all look like who you are but what the son of God about you is on the inside and God loved you enough to die for us we need to love Him enough to live for Him to finish what He started. Dead to the world, alive to Him. He died for me so I could live for Him, not myself, never turning back, understanding through the fellowship of His resurrection, power of His resurrection, fellowship of His suffering, being made conformable unto His death, that I come to the point in my life of building my relationship just like Abraham did, like Jacob did, like Joseph did, and like every one of you are going to have to do. The common thing that you will do, you are going to have to do to come to that point in your life where you understand so desperately the mission He has for us, the urgency of the very hour that we live in, the job that God has for this church but also as you as an individual for us to band together.

The only way that will happen will be through our individual knowing Him, learning how to love Him, knowing what He did for you, knowing what He thinks of you today, knowing what He has for you, and you and I through that love relationship as a servant yes, but also as a son loving our Father, never turning back and never, ever, ever in our lives allow this world, somebody or something to limit God in our lives that we never limit the Holy One of Israel like Israel did. The only way that will happen is for you to love Him more than everything else in this world and the only way that is going to happen is for you to have more fellowship with Him than you do this world and everything else will take care of itself. That is the job of this church is to help every one of you build that working relationship with Him that will not just allow you to stay a servant but will allow you to be a son that you will never look back, will come to that point where you will realize what He did for you and then you will also realize what you need to do for Him. We will hold up there, let us have a word of prayer. Do not forget to sign up for everything out there.