

Proverbs 29

Sunday 1/5/2020

If you have your Bibles this morning, let us again turn back to Proverbs 29. It has been two weeks since we have been in the Bible together, and I appreciate what the guys did last week. It was a great time with some great preaching and great messages.

You remember the last time we were together, we looked at, I think, one of the best sets of verses to really explain why we, as a nation, are in the state that we are in. Many times we like to blame our problems on the liberals, the politicians, and the government. That is simply not true. I realize that our country is in a very sad state of affairs.

I know across this country pastors are getting into pulpits and telling their people to pray for our country. I am certainly not opposed to that, but I must also tell you that as long as a country takes a stand against the Word of God, you can pray all you want; it is not going to change a thing. This country does not need prayer; it needs to get back to God the way it once was.

Our president, two times a year, every president does it, will have what they call the State of the Union address, where he will go on all the public broadcasting things and give an account of where the nation is and what state it is in. I can tell you that it would not have to be a very long meeting for me. It is in a state of anarchy; it is going to collapse. I have never ever seen this country divided like it is right now. Nothing is getting done. It is not a question of bad and good; it is a question of bad and worse. There is nothing that is going to get accomplished. As we saw last time, it has been destroyed by wicked, scornful men. We went into great detail about how, in particular, preachers. I told you how a country can be brought back to God, as many countries have been through history, but when men who stand in that pulpit reject the Word of God, it puts us in the mess that we are in today. It is not the country that has apostatized, though it has; it is pastors, churches, and Christians that have apostatized. Wherever the church goes, there the country goes.

One of the great lessons of history, and there are many lessons of history, but one of the great lessons that people fail to see is actually when you go back in European history, from 500 AD to the Dark Ages and beyond, you can actually see the impact of the Word of God in everything in Europe: from the language, to the music, to the architecture. The Word of God impacts everything. You will find that if you study history in that light, you will see that it is an incredible thing. When those countries, when Europe rejected the Word of God, Czechoslovakia, at one time, the whole nation was filled with born-again people from Jan Hus. Czechoslovakia does not even exist anymore today. You find time and time again how these great truths and proverbs are impacting us today, and how when they took the Word of God out of our cities, that void was filled with murder, drugs, crime, and violence. It is unprecedented.

I want you to know, and I am not a doomsday preacher, I am just a preacher of truth. A doomsday is an inevitable thing. The Lord is coming back, and if you are on the inside, you are in trouble. It is just that simple. But I want to tell you that there is absolutely no remedy in sight because men are not going to reject the Word of God.

A good example of that, to show you how it works, was last week's shooting in the church in Texas. A guy came in and pulled out a shotgun and killed two people, but they called it the "six-second" incident. The guy on the security team shot and killed him dead. The liberals in this country have been talking about taking all the guns away forever and ever and trying to keep guns out of everything. But the bad guys are always going to have their guns. Here is a perfect example case where a guy did what he needed to do in a church that did what they needed to do. If they would not have done that, there would have been a lot more people killed than two. But you notice how the news media talked about it just a little bit that day, and then it was buried, and you never heard about it again. Do you know why? Because it was a good guy with a gun. In the world today, in the media today, there are no good guys with guns. They do not want them. That is what we are up against today.

Another great lesson from history, and there are so many of them, is that no nation ever survived apostasy and God's judgment that rejected and scorned the Word of God. None of them ever went past 200, maybe 250 years. Europe is a great example of that. Germany, at one time, followed Martin Luther, but not today. England, at one time, followed the great preachers, but not today. Europe is amoral, in total apostasy. Why? Because they rejected God's truth. That is the way America is going. I am sorry; it is just the way that it is. If you know anything about your Bible, you know it has to go that way because of where we are at and the times that we are in.

We all saw how the righteous can turn away wrath and stay the hand of God. I showed you, by the preaching of the Word of God, just a few of the men that God used down through our nation's history to keep our heads above water and to keep bringing us back to God. As long as those men were doing what they did, and this nation took a stand on the Word of God as God's Word, loving God and giving God the preeminence, we had a chance. But now today, just like in 606 B.C. for the Southern tribes and 721 B.C. for the Northern tribes, we have gone into captivity. Christianity is captive of the world today. The world is a captivity of anarchy today. The Christian world is so worldly with its music, its preaching, and its lifestyles; we, just like the nation of Israel, have gone into our own captivity.

During that time in captivity, God sent them the prophets. The prophets were men that God sent to an apostate nation to try to bring them back to God. You have the major prophets and the minor prophets. They all started whatever they said by saying, "Thus saith the Lord." Every one of them went after Israel's real sin problem: their rejection of God and His Word. Do not ever forget, God judges nations just like He judges individuals. Psalms 9 says that the wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations that forget God.

I gave you two great verses on dealing with a fool. I showed you that there are two kinds of fools. We talked about this last Thursday night. Somebody asked a question, and we developed it a little bit. It shows you that there are two kinds of fools. One fool, the Bible says, "Answer not a fool according to his folly." The other one says, "You answer him." I went through and explained how that works. I showed you how, in spite of a bona fide fool who hates truth, who hates the Word of God, who hates you for preaching it, you and I are to go after their soul. We do not take those things personally. You are supposed to realize the situation you are in and why people are

the way they are. I ended that sermon with 2 Kings 4. I showed you a great story in the Old Testament of giving life to dead people and how you reach the world by understanding where they are coming from.

I. The Fool and the Wise Man: Fixed Truth vs. Evolving Knowledge

Today we are going to move on to three more verses: Proverbs 29:11, 12, and 13. Let me just say this for a moment: when it comes to the Bible and the ministry, I am old school. I feel like sometimes Woody Hayes in the world that we live in today. I was taught by the last of the Philadelphian preachers, the last ones who were the last of the last of the remnant of the great men that trained and taught them. When I was trained in the ministry, it was totally different. I use a lot of the things for you, but I understand that there is no way that I could do today what I did back then. I do a lot of it, but I realize that it is a different world that we live in. Christianity has completely reversed itself.

I thank God every day of my life for allowing me to live from the 1950s up to where I am at today. I actually got to watch it transition from one to another. By watching it and seeing it, I had men in my life who were pointing it out to me, and at the same time, as Paul said, what I call the Timothy principle, they were committing to me what faithful men are supposed to: that unbroken line chain of Bible doctrine as it comes down through. I will never be able to thank God enough for allowing me to do that, see that, and experience that. I think that one aspect has helped me more to put everything in perspective today.

I feel sorry for young preachers today. I really do. I still feel sorry for young Christians. The book of Hosea tells us that one of the problems Israel had was that they had no comparison of what God really did back in the day with where they were at now. So they thought that what they were doing was the best that they were supposed to do. That is where we are at today. You young guys have no clue what a real revival is. You guys have no clue what a real Bible ministry is. They are caught up in a Christian world that is so tainted, that is so far removed from everything that God intended it to be. Most of the teachings that are taught today are non-biblical teachings. They are Christian and they are spiritual, but they have nothing to do with the Bible.

It is a tragedy today because I see young men who, I think personally, have so much to offer if they would just get the truth the way the truth really is. I preach on the evangelicals, the neo-orthodox, and the charismatics. I pick on them all, but I especially pick on Baptists because Baptists should know better, but they do not. They have gone into apostasy, and they have developed a whole system of teaching that is so adverse to anything that is truth in the Bible that we have lost that. These three verses that we are going to talk about today are incredible verses. I think they are incredible verses because they really open up and help us understand how we are to approach these things.

I have been in the ministry almost 50 years. You could go back and find my tapes from 1988, 1975, 1976, or wherever. If you listen to enough of them, and some of you have those, the problem is you cannot find a cassette player anymore, and eight-tracks are really out. But you

would hear that I have not changed one thing in what I preached 45 years ago. It is the same. Because I have a book that does not change. I have a ministry that does not change because I have been taught by men who understood how important the unchanging truth of the Bible was.

When I graduated from our institute, before any man went into the ministry, there were ten questions we had to answer before four or five of the older guys. You could not use your Bible; you had to give them off the top of your head, and you had to spend at least 20 or 30 minutes on each one of them. It took a couple of days to go through it. If you could not answer that to their satisfaction, they did not send you out. If I would give those same ten questions to young preachers today, they would die of a heart attack. They would think it was heresy. That is how far we have come from the real truth of the Bible.

There are two things that you always want to have in your life that if you do not have them, you are playing with the Bible. One of them is established truth, and the other one is established history. Those two have to mesh together. You have to have established truth built on established history, or you do not go anywhere. This message to me is kind of a personal thing. It brought back my memories of way back in the day when I was just like a lot of you. I had a desire to know the Bible. I had a desire to do what God wanted me to do. Little did I know that it was not about just going to an institute or going to a Bible college or doing this. Little did I know that learning, grasping, and understanding the Bible was going to take me the rest of my life. That is what it is going to take for you. But today, we want everything quickly. We want everything fast. This mindset of easy Christianity, this surface of the Bible that pastors have today, is just unbelievable. It is no wonder that Christianity in this country is in the state that it is in.

Let me read these verses today. Proverbs 29:11-13

A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it till afterwards.

If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked.

The poor and the deceitful man meet together: the LORD lighteneth both their eyes.

Terry Joe, would you stand up and ask God's blessing on my preaching today? Thank you. If anybody understands what I am saying, they understand that he has been through it too.

Proverbs 29:11 says, "A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it till afterwards." Keepeth what? What he knows, his mind. In a practical way, we can all relate to this. We have all been in the company of people who just cannot shut up. They are the minister of information. Men and women who have to dominate every conversation, and they are experts on everything. Whatever you say that you have done, they are going to one-up you. They did it better, cleaner, or bigger, or whatever the case may be. Once they get going, it is nonstop. It is like one of those CD players that you can put 15 CDs in, and it just keeps going forever. But the Bible says the wise man keeps it till afterward.

The wise man is one who will, first of all, say very little. Second of all, he will listen and take in all that is being said because, in his wisdom, he has learned to be a processor. In his wisdom, he has learned that out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. If you want to find out

where somebody is at, just listen to what they talk about. He knows he can learn more from what others say and does not need to take center stage in a conversation, unless he is directly teaching something or laying something out, or somebody asks him a direct question.

The key to a wise man is not what he says, that is not even what he knows, but it has to do with the depth of his understanding and his ability to use that depth in the right manner. A real Bible student will learn very quickly: you never teach all the Bible that you know. There are two reasons for that. One of the reasons is that there are some things that God will give you that He gives *you*. There have been times when I have been coming through something over the years, back in the Old Testament or someplace, working on a problem or seeing that thing, and it was just like God turned the light on, and bang, there it was. To me, that was always an incredible moment in my life. I never just got on the phone and called everybody up and said, "Look what God just gave me!" It was for me. If I had done that, most of them would have just scratched their head and said, "Well, I guess you had to be there." The great things that God gives you the moment He gives them to you are not necessarily great things to somebody else. Do you know why? Because He gave them to *you*. You have got to learn to keep your mouth shut, put it in your heart, and hold on to it. Down the line, if God opens up the door for you to share it with somebody, you are good.

The second thing is that some of the things that you know about the Bible, they scare the fire out of most people. A lot of young preachers do not understand that. So they will get up, and they want to impress people. They want people to see how much they know about the Bible. They could teach all they know about the Bible in 60 seconds or less. But they will do enough damage because they will hear some truth someplace that is way beyond the scope of the person that they are preaching to. Because they want to dump it on them, they want to impress them, it just does not work that way. You always teach the Bible on a parallel level to where the people are at that you are teaching to. But at the same time, you always want to give them enough to bring them along. That is what you do. That takes some understanding and some wisdom of how to handle the truth that God gives you. You always want to challenge them to rise to the next level of understanding. A pastor who understands, or anybody who understands how to do that, will have a definite process by which they try to accomplish that. They are not going to dump everything on somebody at one time. They are going to take you where you are at, listen to where you are at, and then build into you on a protracted scale to get you to a place of understanding.

It is not just enough to have the right Bible today. I wish it was that easy. We have lots of pastors. I know lots of pastors that have the right Bible, and they are teaching some of the greatest heresies that the Baptist Church ever came out with, totally outside the Word of God. So just because you have it does not mean that you understand what you have. We are faced today, much like the nation of Israel, with Hosea 8:12. Many, many times when I talk to people or hear somebody try to teach the Bible, in Hosea 8:12, he talks about the fact that the great things of God have now become strange things to God's people. That is so true today. Most pastors know the terminology they have been taught. Most Christians do too. There is a reason for that, and we will talk about that in a little bit. But Christianity has lost its foundational truth. It has.

In Job 38:6, and we talked about Job the other night in Bible study, I told you how Job was probably one of the deepest books in the Bible, certainly the most scientific book in the Bible. You cannot separate science and everything from the Word of God, and within that is a lot of things that go on in the Bible. He says in Job 38:6, he talks about the foundations: "Where were you when God laid the foundation?" Foundation of what? Then he talks about God laying the cornerstone, and it begins to make sense when you understand what the cornerstone or who the cornerstone is; then you understand what the foundation was. The foundation was the Word of God, because the Bible says, "By the Word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth."

In Ephesians 4, it talks about the four aspects of our knowledge about God. It talks about the breadth, it talks about the length, and it talks about the height. In a spiritual application, they all mean something. When it talks about the breadth of God, that would be God's mercy. When it talks about the length of God, that would be the established history of God and what He is doing. The height of God would be our trust that He is able to be so high, He can see over the problems that we have. Those are three physical dimensions. Every physicist understands those three dimensions. Those three dimensions are what life on planet Earth revolves around. But if you go to Ephesians 4, there is a fourth dimension. Most pastors, most Christians, they have those three dimensions. But then He says the depth of God. The depth of God is much different than the other three. The other three are the physical things that you will understand just coming through your Bible. But you get into the depth of God, now you are someplace where most Christians, most preachers never get to go. They never get there.

Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars:

The Bible is built on seven pillars. God hewed them out of a rock, that would be Himself. Those seven pillars make the foundation and the cornerstone of everything that God did. I am telling you right now, those things are lost today. You will not find them in the little surface acts of the breadth and the mercy and the love of God. No, those things are found in the depth of God.

I want to tell you right now, any pastor, any Christian, any Sunday school teacher who takes his job seriously, who stands in a pulpit—and I want to tell you, the pulpit bears a tremendous responsibility. It is like being in the Navy and you are on a ship. Your life is in the hands of the captain of that ship. Whatever he decides to do does not just affect him; it affects everybody on board. The man who stands in the pulpit, who has not been diligent with the Word of God, who has not hewn out of those seven pillars the truth that God has and has established, he stands in that pulpit every day or every Sunday and every time he does. I am telling you right now, if he does not understand the depth, he is playing with the Bible. Just like the captain of a ship has your life in his hands, the pastor of any church has your destiny as far as the judgment seat of Christ is concerned. I am going to show you that in a moment.

I heard one of these guys one time, I was going through the seven pillars. He said, "Yes, the seven pillars are for the Christian life, and it is such a good thing. The first pillar is to be pure. The second one is to be peaceable. The third pillar is to be... (It was not any good, but I cannot remember what it was.) The fourth one was to be willing to yield. The next one was to be full of

mercy. The next one was to be without partiality. And the last one was to be without hypocrisy." Oh, is not that wonderful? You have no clue. The seven pillars go much deeper than that. The seven pillars are the foundation of the very Bible you are holding in your hand. Imagine pastors getting into the pulpit, talking about something, but if you threw them a Bible, they could not trace it back through the Word of God if their life depended on it. Do you know why? Because they just bought into what somebody told them. They never investigated it for themselves. It sounded good. It was handed down through Baptist tradition, and so that is what became the standard teaching. Oh, "be generous," that is what it was.

Let me ask you a question: what really happened between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2? I do not care what you believe. Did you go into the Bible and lay out the chain of evidence of what you believe? Let me ask you this: what is the definitive passage on the Bible? Certainly, you would have a definitive passage on what you want to believe. It says, "In the beginning, God." What is the beginning? Is that the beginning of time? Is that the beginning of God? How can it be the beginning of God when God has no beginning? That is an excellent question because it is not the beginning of God. But do you know where the definitive verses in the Bible are that tell you what that beginning is, because that is the key that all the rest of the Bible falls on? That is what I am talking about. You say, "Well, I do not believe that." Well, what do you believe? "Well, I believe..." Show me in the Bible. Let us run that through. Show me the definitive verses on that. Guys are so quick to reject truth, but they could not defend their truth if their life depended on it. That is where we are at today.

Let me ask you a question: what really took place in Genesis 3 between Adam and Eve and the devil? Was he that big snake up there in the tree? Was it an apple? My old grandmother used to say it was not the apple that got Adam; it was the pair on the ground: them, Adam and Eve. Pair, two. It is okay. My grandmother was much deeper than most of us anyhow. But come on, what really took place there? What really happened? People can talk about it, but when it comes down to the depth of those stories, what really transpired in that garden?

Oh, I love this one: heaven and a harp. "When we die, we go to heaven, get issued a harp, and we pluck our way through eternity." Well, let me ask you a question: what are you going to do when you get to heaven? I do not mean this disrespectfully, I really do not. But if that was all God's plan was, that we are going to get a harp and we just stop there and strum the camel train or something, I know that could get along with that as long as you are going "boom, boom, boom" like you are doing. Is that all there is to it? What is God's plan? Is it that when we get up there and a rapture takes place, and we are saying, "Wow, this is great, God, we are really here," God is over here saying, "Okay, what are we going to do next, guys? I did not think this through here. Where are we going?" What is His plan? When Isaiah 9:6 says, "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end," what is he talking about? What government is that? Why are there so many planets out there in outer space? They just found, they keep adding to it. I get lists all the time. I think they are up to 1500 planets out there that are like Earth that they keep finding. What is this whole universe about? Did God just make that because He wanted to make a pretty picture at night? Where do we fit into that?

Somebody says, "Well, we are going to go to heaven and spend an eternity with the Lord." What does that mean? That is so lame. That is not even true. The Bible says New Jerusalem comes out of heaven in Revelation 21, and that is the abode of the church. But what do we do there? "I got a mansion just over the hillside." A mansion, really? What are you going to do in that mansion? Think of that? It is crazy. Then somebody says, "Well, I do not, I just, I heard a song. I do not want the mansion. I just be happy with a little cabin in the sky." Really? A log cabin? We do not have a clue of what God's plan is. We pretend we do. We act like we do. We get up in the pulpit and we say these things, and the people that we are preaching to are stupider than we are because they believe it. I am going to get to that in a moment, maybe. But it is incredible.

The Great White Throne Judgment. Are you kidding me? Revelation 20:11

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

Are you kidding me? And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God. Do you have any understanding what that day is going to be? I know we do not, because if we did, we would be telling everybody out there about the Lord Jesus Christ to try to get their soul saved before that day comes. We are no different than the Jehovah's Witnesses; they do not believe there is a hell either. We say we do. When was the last time you heard a preacher preach a good hellfire and damnation, "take the paint off the wall" message on hell? It is not popular. It might upset people or give you indigestion during your lunch. Whatever the Great White Throne Judgment is to an unsaved man, I want to tell you something: the Judgment Seat of Christ is ten times worse for the child of God. 2 Corinthians 5 calls it the terror of the Lord. We do not even understand what that means. We live our lives like there is no Judgment Seat of Christ, so we are just going to take our chances because it is no big deal. I have news for you, friend, it is a big deal.

I do not care what a person believes, I really do not. But do not stand there and reject truth when you have some goofy idea that you got someplace, and you could not run it through the Bible if your life depended on it. What kind of body are you going to get in heaven? Oh, that is a good one. I hear all the time, "Am I still going to be married to my wife when we are up in heaven?" "Whose wife is she going to be in the resurrection?" I had a guy one time, I would take prayer requests. He says, "I want you to have prayer requests." I said, "Okay." He says, "My wife is lying at death's door." I said, "Well, I am sorry for that." But he says, "Yeah, would you pray God pull her through?" Okay.

I like tombstones. I love reading tombstones. I love when they have a little picture of the person on there; it makes it more personal. When I used to work down in Osawatomie in some of those places, there is an oldest graveyard in Osawatomie that has people buried back there from the 1700s. It is great. I just like to read them. Some of them are just really... one of them said, "Here lies my beloved husband. The following is true: I am not content, for I am not sure which way you went." I like that. That is good.

The Bible says we get a glorified body. Really? What is that? Your 90-year-old grandmother that died when she was 90, is she going to be 90 for eternity? That would be a blast, would not it? I do not care what you believe, I do not. But brother, you better be able to go through that book

and document it. You better have a chain of biblical evidence that supports it historically and biblically as you walk that thing through with established truth. Are you kidding me?

Salvation in the Old Testament, was it the same as salvation in the New Testament? I get that all the time. Somebody says, "Well, what do you do with Revelation 22:14?" "Salvation is all done. Christ came and died on the cross. We are moving into eternity and Revelation 22:14. You have to tree your life again." When you do not know how to handle that, because there is no depth to you in the Bible, and you do not know how to deal with things like that, which when I grew up was basic one-on-one, you know what you do with it? You do what they all do with it. They say, "Well, that is not in the most accurate manuscripts; that was added by Erasmus. So that really should not be in your Bible." That is how you deal with it. They will tell you, "Well, the only manuscript that that is found in is the one that the King James Bible comes from." You are right, it is. Congratulations, you are not as dumb as you look.

In the New Testament, there are 12 doctrines of salvation laid out clearly. 12 doctrines of salvation. Do you know what they are? What is a guy doing standing in the pulpit on a Sunday morning telling people how to get saved when he does not even understand in the New Testament what the 12 doctrines of salvation are that absolutely nail it down? No clue. There is no depth. They know about the mercy. They know about the longevity. They have the three points down of the dimensions of human in the world we live in. But when it comes to the depth of God, no. When it comes to the seven pillars that this Bible is founded on, which was the foundation for everything that God did, you can go down through those things and answer any one of those questions. As you grow and you learn, you bring yourself along to that point. You do not dump that on somebody right out of the chute. I just use that as an example of what the depth of the Bible is; there is a lot more to it than what I just gave you.

When you do know those things, then you are careful with those things. You realize that you have got to bring people to a point to give them levels of truth. That is why the Bible says that he "keepeth it till afterwards." He does not always shoot everything that is on his mind. It is never good to lay out all the truth you know, unless you are in a special company, a special group that is pretty much locked about it. Most of you, I would put in that category. You are in a special group, you are put in that category for Bible Institute and the people ministry. But it was not always that way. You had to come through discipleship too. You can do discipleship one, two, and came through things through the name Bible study. I bring you along. There are things that you will ask me on Thursday night that I will give you part of the answer, but I will not give you the whole answer because you are not ready for it. I have people out there on YouTube that I am going to be careful what I say. There will be some issues that I will very frankly sidestep, and I will give you the practical thing, but I am not going to take you into the depth of it. Do you know why? Because if we were in people ministry and Bible Institute, we do not cut any slack. We go after everything and everybody. But you cannot do that when you have visitors and you have people who maybe are not on that level. You have got to be smarter than the problem.

Most of you have been given a great blessing by God, and you probably do not even see it. That is that you are stupid. Do not take that in a bad way. I am one of the stupidest people you are going to meet on this planet. Maybe a better word would be oblivious. You have never been in an

apostate church. You have never had to unlearn a lot of bad, stupid things. Jerry Bop and Sunday talked about this church thinking outside the box. Then he made the reference that it would never fit in the box. The reason why we think outside the box would never fit in the box is because we fit real good in the book. When you are in the book, you do not need the box. But that is where they are at. They get in that little box with a little mindset, with a little teachings that they are all dressed the same way. They all talk the same way. They all believe the same thing. If you put a Bible in front of them, they could not figure it out if their life depended on it. The majority of you came here just a good old lost sinner. Praise the Lord. You did not have to unlearn anything except your sinful ways, and that was easy. All you ever got was a heart. All you ever got was a 100% Bible that is right the way it needs to be and in pure established truth. You gravitated to it. You did not have to undo a lot of things that you had to struggle through. I know some of you were former Jehovah's Witnesses, and some of you were former Mormons and things like that, and you had to unlearn some things. I get that. But the bottom line is, you got there. I have had guys and girls come in from other churches that they had to be patient with them and give them some time. There is no hurry on it; you take your time. I have had people come into this church with an NIV. In most Baptist churches, if you were met with an NIV, there would be some three-headed monster asking you to leave the church or "Do not bring that Bible in here because it is the devil's Bible." I believe it is the devil's Bible. But I will tell you what, if that is where you are at, that is okay with me. I have had them come up to me and apologize, "Well, I heard what you said this morning. I feel bad. I got it." I said, "Do not feel bad. It is okay. If that is where you are at right now, then that is where you are at. Do not get rid of your NIV." I told them to keep coming, keep growing, and I guarantee you, if you do what you need to do, God will tell you to dump it. I have four or five at home that people have given me that said, "I do not need this anymore. You were right. Here, I am going to give it to you." I do not want it. You have got to bring people from where they are at. You cannot judge them for where they are at. I am saying some pretty harsh things here, but I am picking on preachers today. I feel all the sympathy for a lot of preachers who do not know. Then you have the ones who are the scorers.

II. The Corrupting Influence of Leadership

Proverbs 29:12 says, "If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked." That is a great principle today. If the leader sets the wrong example, the people are going to follow the wrong example. That was so true with Israel. When they had a good king, they were on top with God. When they had a bad king, they were not. To separate the good king from the bad king were the lies that the good kings would not believe and the lies that the bad kings did believe. If the root is corrupt, then the whole tree is going to be corrupt. Romans 11:16-18 tells you that if the root is holy, then so is the branch. Plain and simple, if a pastor gets caught up in all the non-biblical junk he is taught and believes that cannot be found anywhere in the Bible and falls apart the second you put a Bible to it, then he will provide that same ungodly mess for every non-biblical Christian in his church, and they will follow the same mess that he is following. That is how it works. That is why the pulpit is an absolute. It has to be done correctly. It has to be exact. You cannot get in the pulpit and teach something that you thoroughly do not understand yourself, backwards, forwards, frontwards, upside down, and inside out. Because when you do, then you

are just going to follow what everybody else has told you, whatever you learned in school, whatever this person told you, whatever you thought sounded really good to you. It sounded workable, sounded plausible, but it just was not very biblical. In most cases, we have lost the truth so long ago that the great things of God are strange to us now.

I have found that in dealing with pastors, and I have dealt with them all my life, that many of them have more allegiance to their school that they graduated from than they will to the Word of God that God gave them. The reason for that is because in most cases, the school took the Word of God away from them. That is where they are at. I have always followed one rule in the Bible, and I have never deviated. I have done many stupid things in my life, and I am not standing up here pretending that I am not a Christian. I am not standing up here pretending that I am better than anybody else or holy, or I have my problems like everybody else does. But I will tell you one thing that I never changed in my life: from day one, I always said to myself, "I know what I believe. I know what the Bible teaches. But I do not have anything that I really want to believe other than truth." My philosophy has always been, if somebody sits down with me and shows me from the Bible where I am wrong and the Bible is right, I will dump it. If you can sit down and show me that tongues are for this day and age, I will thank God I speak with more tongues than all of you. I want it. I do not care what it is. If somebody showed me that amillennialism and post-millennialism were the way to go from the Bible, I would be in it. If somebody showed me from the Bible to baptize and sprinkle babies is the way to do it, we would have a baby baptizing and sprinkling service next Sunday. I do not care what it is; I want the truth. That is all I want. I do not have any pet hobby, "Well, I have got to believe this." No, the only thing I want to believe is truth. But you are going to have to show me in the book. I have been through that book a few times; I know where the truth is. I am telling you right now, these guys have more allegiance to where they were taught, or the denomination that they are in, or the fellowship that they go with, than they are to the Bible itself. When I say I am a Bible believer, I know you hear it all the time, but you do not understand, in my mind, the depth of that. I believe the Bible has the answer to everything. I do not think the Greek and the Hebrew will help you one bit; I think it is a waste of time. I do not believe that I do not go to Bible college to do one thing for you because God's program is a New Testament local church. Do you know why Bible colleges are coming on the scene? Because churches will fail to do their job. That is why. I get it.

III. The Bible's Definitive Books and Structure

I will tell you something else: the book of Acts is our definitive book on the New Testament that defines everything for us, and it certainly does. Acts is the key book to unlock everything for the New Testament church. That is the way God designed it. Genesis is the definitive book for everything in the Old Testament, and Acts in the New Testament is the definitive book for everything in the New Testament. If you do not know those two books backwards and forwards, inside out, and can take them apart and bolt them back together like a Chinese kid can do blindfolded with an AK-47, you have no business being in the pulpit. Pardon that illustration, but you got my point.

Let me ask you a question. This is question day. Genesis is the definitive book in the Old Testament. So you have Genesis, then you have four historical books. In the New Testament, Acts is the definitive book, but you have four historical books first, and then the book of Acts. It is reversed. Why is that? If you do not know why that is, you are not going to kid me for a minute that you know anything about the Bible. You may know some things about the Bible, but let us face it, you are playing with it. There is no depth to it. There is no depth to being able to see that.

The book of Acts does everything for me. It is the key to unlock it.1.) It shows me established truth, and it shows me established history.

The book of Acts, first and foremost, is the transition from the Old Testament to the New Testament. Secondly, it is a transition from the nation of Israel to the church. The book of Acts will show me there are just two lines of Bibles in the book of Acts. As you guys get out there, guys in theological seminaries will tell you this and tell you that. The definitive book says there are only two lines of Bibles: one of them is God, and one of them is the devil. It is just that simple.

In the book of Acts, you are going to find that there are three key cities mentioned. The book of Acts is built around those three key cities, and so is your Bible. From that, you find that there are only three families of manuscripts down through history that make manuscript evidence real simple. When you go to Bible college, you are getting a theological talk with some doctor or some "post-hole digger" with a PhD. He is going to tell you, "Well, there are many, many, many families and all these things." He does that to make it as confusing for you as he can so he can stay over you. Stay with the Bible. The book of Acts clearly teaches that there are three families of manuscripts: not four, not five, not two, not one—three. End of story.

In the book of Acts, you are going to find a model church. Every theological seminary on this planet, every Baptist Bible college, every Baptist teaching you to model churches in Acts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. You are out of your mind. You could not divide out the book of Acts if your life depended on it. A model church is found in Acts 11 and 12, and in Acts 20. The first complete picture of how you got saved is found in the book of Acts. This is the good one. It is a place where God... I will get that for you. You are welcome. You cannot have your cap rolled around a church because if you spill it on the floor, you get church-ed. I am just to be a friend of man.

The book of Acts does everything. It shows you the first, where God just kind of takes the TV cameras and pans down into that little story there in Acts 8. It shows you every aspect of salvation for the New Testament church. You have people being saved in Acts 1, 2, and 3, and 3,000 souls were added to the church. Well, that is not this church. Of course, you knew that. A guy said one time, "Well, that is where the church..." and I put him down there, and I said, "And they followed the apostles' doctrine." "Where is the apostles' doctrine?" Took him back to Matthew 10. He had a heart attack. Died on the spot. Luckily, there was a charismatic there; brought him back to life.

Speaking of charismatics, here we go. In the book of Acts, tongues is defined for you. You do not have to go to any other book than Acts to know what tongues really are and expose the heresy

and the goofiness of being a charismatic. I will just throw this in: I never met a charismatic. I never met a hyper-dispensationalist. I never met a Calvinist who ever knew anything about the Bible. The first missionaries were founded in the book of Acts. The first evangelists are defined in the book of Acts. The first pastors are defined in the book of Acts.

The book of Acts does it all for you. Yes, you might have guessed it by now: the first Bible college is founded in the book of Acts in Acts 19, and it is teaching against the Word of God. Take it or do not take it; I do not care. Our verse tells us that if the ruler hearkens to lies, all his servants are wicked. When a pastor or any leader gets corrupted in the Bible from non-biblical teaching and picking up all this junk that has nothing to do with the Bible, his people will follow right behind him because immaturity always produces immaturity. Depth will always produce depth. That is why it is so important to be exact with your Bible. It is always important that you better know everything inside and out before you get up there and take charge and start to take people's lives and their destiny at the Judgment Seat of Christ in your hands.

IV. God's Light and Man's Choice

Proverbs 29:13: "The poor and the deceitful man meet together: the LORD lighteneth both their eyes." What a great principle this is. The verse is basically saying that if you get caught up in bad doctrine or some heresy that you are teaching, or some goofy thing that your denomination or whatever puts out, at some point you had to reject the real truth that God wanted you to have. John 1:9 says that He is the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. Every man and every woman on this planet, at some point, gets lighted with the truth. For you to move past that and to worship the sun, to worship this, or become a Catholic or a Mormon, or to do this, or become a goofed-up Baptist or a charismatic, somebody had to show you the truth, and you walked away from it. Every man and every woman ever born, at some point in their life, God gave them the truth, and they either accepted it or they rejected it. God has an obligation to get every man the light at some point.

I can hear it now: "Well, what about the heathen of Africa?" "Well, what about the heathen of Kansas City?" Do you think there is a difference? Neither one of them wear clothes anymore. They all dance around campfires at night. They all follow a witch doctor. In the Bible, and this is really a deep thing here, there are four things that declare the glory of God. Maybe you never thought about it. Of course, we know the glory of God is Jesus Christ. So God has created or put together four things that will declare that glory, and God will use all of these, one of these, two of these, whatever He wants to do to His own pleasure, to get light to somebody. Obviously, for you and for me, the first one is the Word of God. The second will be the Son of God, and connected with that will be the Holy Spirit of God. That is what they use, but I am listing these two separately. The third thing is the Bible says the heavens declare the glory of God. Psalms 19 and Psalms 33:6. So He uses the heavens. The fourth thing that declares God's glory is you and me. Do you know which one of the four will fail? You and me.

God will use, as I said, all of these, some of these, multiple of these, to do whatever He wants to do. In some cases, God will use the heavens to deal with man. The Bible already tells us in Romans 2:15 that the law of God is written on His heart. So God takes him out there and shows

him the heavens and shows him that magnitude. I do not think anybody that ever went out and looked up into the heavens, who was just a common, ordinary man, ever thought that Darwin did that. The awe and the spaces of the universe. There are three things that man is transfixed on. Did you ever notice that? He can just stare at them for hours.1.) The first one is the ocean. He can sit on that beach and just watch that ocean for hours.2.) The second one is mountains. He can just stare at that majestic mountain for hours.3.) The third one is fire. He can sit by that campfire and look down at that fire, feel that heat, watch those embers cracking and burning and falling off that log.

When God took Abraham out there in Genesis 15, the Bible says whatever He told him, whatever He showed him, the Bible says that Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. That is the exact spot that Abraham found God's righteousness. He took him out and showed him the stars. Do you know what He said to him? He said, "Someday your seed is going to be like the stars of heaven." The Bible says that Abraham believed God. He did not believe God about the coming death of Jesus Christ. He believed God what He said about the stars. From that point on, Hebrews 11:10 says Abraham looked for a city and a builder whose maker was God. Somebody said, "Well, He told him about the death, burial, and resurrection and the stars." Really? Galatians 3:8 says that He preached the gospel to Abraham, He preached Abraham before the gospel. He is talking about those stars, what God was going to do with Abraham and his seed that was going to fill the heavens. Look out now. What new doctrine is this? It is not a new doctrine; you are just an idiot.

I have seen it at work in this church in my ministry all my life. God will bring somebody here that is messed up in the world, messed up in some doctrine, some religion, some cult, some charismatic; you bring them in from time to time. I believe with all my heart that God will bring people here, as He will in any Bible-believing church, to give you a chance to find the truth because if you cannot find it here, it is unfindable. The reason why you do not find it is because you do not want it. But you get it; you are faced with it. It only takes one word, one time, one sermon; you are nailed. You walk out that door and say, "I am not coming back to that. I cannot believe any of that." Okay, good. That is all God has to give you. Light rejected, my friend, becomes lightning.

Two kinds of fools: the poor, spiritually poor, but want to learn; the deceitful, who cannot teach them anything. The Bible says that God meets them both alike and gives them the light. They are faced with the light of God's Word over the bad teachings or the world or whatever they have been in their life, and now they are at a crossroads. They have to decide because the light has exposed it, and deep down in their heart, God says, "You know this is true. You know what He said nails you. You know you cannot prove what you believe. You know the world is wrong." Some will find the truth and embrace it. Others will hold on to the stupid ways, even though they cannot defend it. The Bible will always separate the poor from the deceitful. Two types of fools we talked about last week: one is teachable, and the other one is not teachable. I have seen pastors over my ministry get hit right between the eyes with the Bible and just walk away from it because they were taught differently, or because they had some status in the fellowship, or

because they had friends that did not believe the way they believed. Let me tell you something: let God be true, but every man a liar.

V. The Custodianship of God's Word

When I was growing up in the ministry, just a young guy, I was a thorn in a lot of people's sides. I still am, but at that point, in a different way. I always was asking why. I would say, "Okay, I am not saying I do not believe you. I just want to know how it works. I am not saying it is not true, but I need to know the dynamics of this. How does it work? Walk me through it. Just give it to me. I will not bug you anymore. Just give it to me one time. I will get it. I need to see it." I only wanted the truth, no matter what it was.

When I came to Kansas City years ago in 1976, I left Canton Baptist Temple. We talk about Mel Baughman, my father-in-law and Jim's father-in-law, and Jerry Baughman. He had so many guys that he took care of and brought along. But there was another guy there that was a music director. His name was Bob Johnson. It was basically light versus darkness. Mel believed the Bible, took a stand in the Bible, and was trying to train guys. Bob Johnson did not believe anything about the Bible. He wanted to send all the kids to Bob Jones University because they gave him a doctorate degree free. He took him back later, but took him for a while. It was a big fight always going on.

I had talked to Truman Dollar on the phone, and they were flying me out, and they were going to hire me to be the youth pastor. This was back in 1976. I was getting ready to come to Kansas City, and Bob Johnson called me in his office. I will never forget this. He said, "Bobby, you are going out to work with Truman Dollar." I said, "Yeah, I know." He said, "He is a big-time guy," which he was. "Big church." I said, "I get it. I found it very privileged." He said, "Well, I want to give you some advice." I said, "Oh good, Bob. I need all the advice I can get. That is fine." He says, "Let me just talk to you a minute. Let me tell you something. You are going to go out there in a big church. You are getting into the big leagues now. I am just telling you, you cannot preach the way you preach. It will not be accepted. You cannot say the things that you say. Those churches are all geared on results." He says, "Bobby, you are just not going to get results preaching the way you preach." I said, "Well, Bob, I really appreciate that. I really do. I will take that as an advisement. But you need to know, I am not interested in the results. I am interested in truth. I do not care a flip about results, because I believe that if you preach the truth, God will bring the results." Boy, has that been true the last 50 years of my life. Because it is the truth that sets you free. It is not a program or what you have or your results or whatever you do.

I would say to these guys, "Will you lay that out for me?" I went to a Bible study on Thursday night that Mel had, just like what we have here. I do not think I asked a question in five years. Do you know why? Because every time I went there, everybody else asked the question. I wrote it down, got everything. My goal was that by the next Thursday night, I had worked that through my Bible completely. I had everything laid out so that if somebody would ask that question again, I could have answered it because I wanted the truth. That is all I wanted. I was smart enough or dumb enough that when I clearly saw it and was right on the money and accepted it, I never bought what anybody told me. I never did.

Many people, many Bible-believing churches, are called a cult today. That is because goofy people just do not get it. The same stuff that we believe today that is supposed to be heresy was standard teaching in 1900. Too many marijuana cigarettes and too much booze. I get it. They do not even know the difference. A cult will always try to control you and tell you what to think. A Bible-believing church will let the Holy Spirit of God control you and just try to get you to think. That is the difference. Go to the book. Let God be true, but every man a liar.

When it comes to the Bible, God has a specific process. It was not designed by the Baptist or the Baptist Bible Fellowship or Tennessee Temple or Maranatha or Bob Jones. No one. The book will define every doctrine in it, and there will be a definitive verse and a definitive chapter to lay it out. There will be a chain of evidence that clearly defines your position that will establish the context. The context, you hear me all the time, is vital. Every book in that Bible has a context. Every chapter has a context. Every verse has a context. Every word has a context. If you do not have a good handle on those things, stay out of the ministry, kid. Please.

There are too many guys in the ministry today who have no real understanding of the Bible. Yet, they have been saved, what, 10, 15, 20 years, and they are never going to get there because they are stuck. You have got to ask yourself why that is. Why can a guy be in the ministry 20, 30, 40, 50 years and never figure it out? They believe all kinds of stuff because they all bought into a system. I am just telling you. I have been in it. I know. I watched it. You are not talking to somebody that did not ride that horse down the road. I saw it for almost 50 years. I saw it. I watched it.

Today, we suffer the same fate as the nation of Israel did. We are in captivity. Again, one last lesson from history today. The Bible in the Old Testament was given to God's people, but the custodianship of the Word of God was the scribes, the priest class. They are the only ones who could touch, handle, copy, do anything with the Word of God, and they gave it from them to the people. That was God's design. They had 100% complete control of the Bible in the Old Testament.

We know by the time that Jesus shows up, all that had changed. Nothing happened in those 400 years when Israel goes into apostasy, and the priest class, the scribes, corrupt themselves because they are totally corrupt when Jesus shows up. Not only that, now you have coming along about 160, 165 AD, two non-biblical groups that God never intended to have anything to do with the nation of Israel. One of them was the Sadducees. The other one was the Pharisees.

When Jesus shows up at the first coming of Christ, the structure of the nation of Israel has been shattered. The priest class is now corrupt. The scribes are against Jesus, and the Pharisees and the Sadducees have taken over the leadership of the Word of God and the nation of Israel. They now have complete control. You do not want to miss this: they came into power of God's Word and God's people through a non-biblical system that God never authorized. Nowhere in that Bible is a Sadducee or a Pharisee ever authorized by God to do anything. They come in at a time in that 400 silent years when a canon is closed in the Old Testament, God is giving no revelation until the first coming of Christ, and this is where Israel was. The scribes, they corrupted themselves. The Pharisees come in, the Sadducees come in, and now they take over God's people, and they

are a completely non-biblical structure that God never intended to run His people, and they destroyed it, and they turned the people against the Lord Jesus Christ. This is why the people embraced Him at the first coming, some of them, but He never received that. Do you know why? Because it had to be the religious leaders that bowed their knee, and they were against Him in every way, shape, or form, and He destroyed Israel. Nowhere at Thomas.

Today in the New Testament church, you and me, if you are saved this morning, we are the New Testament priests. We are of the priesthood of Melchizedek. We are of the eternal priesthood of Jesus Christ, and God's structure for that priesthood is the New Testament local church. That is God's structure that you and I are to be the custodians of the Word of God. Nobody else. It is ours. It is the churches that it is given to His body. It is given to His people. It is given to the priest class within the structure of the church under the authority of a New Testament local church. Without a doubt, the New Testament local church is the only authority structure for New Testament Christianity, said and done. Everything else, no matter what it is, how good it looks, or what good it does, is not God's program. I did not say it could not do some good things. Listen to me. I am telling you, it has to be under the structure of a New Testament local church.

Today, the priest class of New Testament Christianity, just like the priest class in the Old Testament where they turned it over to the scribes and the Pharisees, we have turned it over to the Bible colleges and the Bible scholars. We have lost. When neo-evangelicalism came in around 1900 and neo-orthodoxy comes in around the same time period, do you know what their goal is? To take the Bible out of the hands of the common man and put it back in scholarship. That is exactly what it is, because the devil knew the most powerful thing on this planet, the most powerful thing on this planet, is a common man with a common Bible.

Where the nation of Israel lost everything they had and could not see the first coming of Christ because the priest class corrupted themselves first and then allowed two non-biblical groups to take the Word of God from them, the body of Christ is going to miss the second coming of Christ, and the rapture of the church is going to catch them. Why? There are churches now that do not even believe there is a rapture anymore. They do not even believe in the Judgment Seat of Christ. They do not even think about the Judgment Seat of Christ, and it is going to catch them, just like the first coming did. Do you know why? Because the body of Christ has corrupted themselves, the priest class, and turned it all over to a non-biblical scribes and Pharisees system that has destroyed Christianity by taking, in both cases, the very Word of God from you.

Now we have Christians, pastors, being turned out by the thousands every year, knowing nothing about the Bible. No depth to them. They could not figure out the seven pillars if they were sitting on them. Not a thing they get out of the Bible. It is all little cassettes by little "preacherettes." It is nothing about the little "sermonettes" that they give out. It has nothing to do with truth. It has nothing to do with the love of God, but there is no depth to it. It is the depth that anchors your soul and builds you to love God more than you ever could in your life because you see and understand the majesty of God.

Three great verses. They put it in perspective for us in a very, very, very clear way, and this is why, no matter what, this church will always stand on the truth and always preach the truth. We

will bring you along. We will help you get there. My goal is for you to get there, but I will tell you right now, you will never do it outside the book that God gave us. We will hold up there.