

## John 1:14-17

Sunday 11/8/2020

Last week, we saw one of the most undeniable places in the Bible that is evidence that we do have a perfect, complete, inspired Word of God. I have believed that for over 50 years now. I have been in the ministry almost 50 years, but before I even got into it, that was the first thing. I remember when I just got right with the Lord, I did not have a Bible. Years before that, my dad, back at the old Canton Baptist Temple, which was right across the street, had a Sunday school campaign, and my dad won it. What he won was a red, old Scofield Bible. I did not have a Bible at the time, and my mom said, "Here, this is the one that Dad won." So she gave me that. I actually started out with that Bible.

I remember when I first went to camp to help them there, one of the kids looked at my Bible and said, "What kind of Bible do you have?" I knew nothing about the issue at that point. My answer was, "A red one." He said, "No, it's a King James Bible." He looked at it and said, "Oh, it's okay." That was my first introduction that there was really an issue. Of course, I had been out of it for so many years; I had no clue about the battle that was going on over the Bible that was really just beginning to take off and lift. But that was my first encounter with that, and from that point on, I fell in love with the book. I realized that I had the greatest possession that anybody could ever have on this planet: the perfect, absolute, true Word of God, inspired and preserved without error, that I could have the mind of Christ.

I have talked about 1 Timothy 3:16, how God was manifested in the flesh, the Lord Jesus Christ. But then we talked about in John 1:14 last week that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. You cannot separate God, the Lord Jesus, or the Word of God; they are all one and the same. I gave you one of the great key aspects to understanding how you got your Bible, and your Bible in a general way. That was the word that I looked at last week and showed you the word "translate" or "translation." You find it only five times in your Bible, but every time, and I gave you examples last week, every time that you find it, you will find that it never in the Bible is used in the sense that it is used today in Christianity and the world as going from one language to another. Obviously, when you do go from one language to another, you do translate. But the Bible does not use it that way. Again, the Bible is its own dictionary. Rather, the word "translate" or "translation" in the Bible is from one place to another. I showed you how that worked to show you how you have translated for you from heaven to Christ to you, the perfect Word of God.

The standard argument today, and you will get into these as you grow and learn if you decide to do that, is the fact that the reason why they are so hip on going to the Greek and the Hebrew is because they will tell you that coming from the Greek or the Hebrew into English, you will lose some things in the translation. No language will translate to another language perfectly. Of course, that is true; there is no question about that. So they say that when you go from the thing that just makes this, your King James Bible, just a translation, and the original autographs, as we talked about last week, as the true pure Word of God, is that when you take that original and you translate it into English, you do not get what exact translation would be. So therefore, you do not have it perfectly because the Greek and the Hebrew in the original is the perfect thing. That is

what they teach. They call those "idioms" in the translating world. They call them idioms. The guys who tell you those things, I call them idiots, but it is okay, it kind of rhymes.

That is true; there is no question about that. You go from one language to another, you will lose some things through the translation. But you also gain some things, and they do not want to talk to you about that. Just as God defined the word "translate" and "translation" for us in the Bible, He also defines for us the word "inspiration." Again, God does not use the word "inspiration" the same way that Bible scholars use it, and you will see that very clearly. It is never about the exact word-for-word translation. Listen to me now. It is never about the exact, "You have to have a word-for-word exact translation from the original Greek." I use the original Greek when I am talking about it because they do. But we saw last week that there is no such thing as original Greek. The closest Greek or Greek testament that they have to the Bible time is 400 years later. You are going to think that those were the originals is a pipe dream. Of course, that is what they want you to believe.

But in God's definition of inspiration, it is never about an exact word-for-word translation. Rather, it is more about what God wants you to get or have out of that translation. For example, and I do not know why they cannot see this, if somebody as stupid as I can pick it up, they ought to be able to get it. You take Moses and Pharaoh back in Exodus 4:12. Moses goes in before Pharaoh. Here is a good example. Moses goes in before Pharaoh, and they converse; they speak. You know they spoke in Egyptian. Pharaoh cared nothing for the Hebrews; he would not lower himself to speak to Moses in Hebrew. Moses was raised in Egyptian, so he spoke in Egyptian. So when they have that conversation in Exodus 4, they are speaking in Egyptian. But in your Bible, it is recorded in Hebrew. So you did not get exactly what they said, because when it was translated from Egyptian to Hebrew back in the day, it did not line up either. So there is your first case in the Bible where it does not have to be a word-for-word because it cannot be a word-for-word. When Moses spoke to Pharaoh, they spoke in Egyptian, but it is recorded in Hebrew for you to have it in English, and it did not line up.

I will tell you another one. Over in Genesis 44 and 45, when Joseph is down in Egypt. He is second in command in Egypt, and his brothers, the Hebrews, who sold him into slavery a while back, finally get together, and he is very harsh on them. They have conversations. You know that he did not speak to them in Hebrew; he did not want to give himself away. He spoke to them in Egyptian through a translator. Again, the conversation that they had is recorded for you in your Bible, and it is spoken in Egyptian, translated into Hebrew, and then translated back into your Bible. Again, you did not get exactly what they said.

You see, inspiration in the Bible will never be about a word-for-word match-up in the translation. Inspiration is God can go from one language to another, and this is the key to it: you do not need exactly what is said. What you want, what you have in the King James Bible after the translation was done because of God's hand in the translation and His preserving the translation and His inspiring the translation, you may not have a word-for-word across the board, but you have exactly what God wanted you to have. That has to be the key. That is Bible inspiration defined for you through the Word of God.

## I. The Worthlessness of Originals

When it comes to your Bible and learning it, the reason why, and we talked about this last week, the reason why there was never a Bible—Bible means books—the reason why there was never a book or a Bible that had all the originals that they like to throw that word around, the originals, the original, the reason why God never put all the originals of the Greek and the Hebrew in one book to have an absolute Hebrew Old Testament and an absolute perfect Greek New Testament, is because they are worthless. God never saw fit to preserve them. If you think for a moment that when David wrote or 1 Samuel or any of those guys were talking and quoting the Old Testament that they had the original that Moses penned, you are out of your mind. If you think that Paul had the original of whatever Moses said or whatever Samuel said or whatever Joshua said, you are out of your mind. God never preserved or kept the original Hebrews or the original Greek, whatever it was written on. He never did because He knew they were going to be worthless.

That is where He drew the line. In 1532, a guy by the name of William Tyndale gave us our second English translation of the Bible. Wycliffe was the first one back in 1200, but William Tyndale in 1532 gave us the second English translation off the right text in English that was a forerunner for your King James Bible. When the King James Bible translators sat down to give you the King James Bible, they had both Wycliffe's and Tyndale's Bible on their table. 95% of your King James Bible is Tyndale's Bible. The second English translation, these guys saw it. They had a burden to get the Bible to the common man. In fact, in 1532, with the scholars in a little room, Tyndale defending his Bible looked out the window at a boy that was plowing the field right across the road. He said to the great scholars, "There will come a day when that plow boy shall understand God and the Bible more than all the scholars in England." He saw what God was doing. He was talking about an English Bible in English to the common man that was formalized and finalized in what you have in your lap today if you have a King James 1611 Authorized Version.

Also, you remember last week we looked at the word "dwelt" in the phrase "as He dwelt among us," Christ. We connected it with the seven feasts in the Old Testament, the Tabernacle of New York, and the seven months of the feast, and came down to show you how that it was dealing with the Feast of Tabernacles. The Feast of Tabernacles in the Bible time was around September 22nd or 23rd. That is the original time of the month of the creation in Genesis 1:2 anyhow when He restructures everything. It is also the time of the first coming of Christ. When He came the first time, He came during the Feast of Tabernacles. It also will be the time of the second coming Feast of Tabernacles where God comes down and tabernacles among men. I explained that to you.

When we looked at the phrase "we beheld His glory," I focused on the two aspects. At the first coming of Christ, we beheld His glory through the very person of the Lord Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word. Today, we behold His glory through the written Word of the Word of God in your lap today, King James 1611 Authorized Version, through God translating it not from one language to another, though it was, but in God's mind from one place to another. We laid that out. Then we looked at the only begotten Son. Christ, the first in a long line during the church age of spiritual sons of God who were transformed at salvation and then conformed as you go through

life to the image and the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. So John 1:14 last week, without a doubt, and that is all the farther we got, was that one verse, was one of the greatest verses in all the Bible that shows us that we have the true, complete, absolute, perfect Word of God.

## II. John the Baptist's Witness

Today, we are going to get a little bit farther in this, and we are actually going to look at John 1:15-17. I want to read it here.

*John 1:15-17*

*John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.*

*And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.*

*For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.*

Josh, would you stand up and ask God's blessing on the message this morning for me?

Again, we will break down this passage into three or four sections to see all that God has for us. There are different ways to teach the Bible, and of course, the big wigs would call what we are doing here "expository preaching," and that is their big twenty-five-dollar word for just going through the Bible verse by verse, looking at everything word by word, establishing the context. But they cannot just leave it alone; they have to give it some big fancy name. So if you would, up in the upper echelons of preaching and pastors and theological guys, they would be called, "Today we are doing expository preaching." Some of the great pastors out there that you would not waste your time listening to are billed as the greatest expository preaching of our day. In my mind, it is more like they are great suppository preachers because of what they put out, but you can figure that one out yourself.

With our approach to the Bible, each word is important, each verse is important, and when we lay it out the way we are doing it, I do not teach the same way everything. You will see on Thursday night I teach differently, and in Bible Institute, I teach differently. There are times that I will preach on a topical subject, but when you get to do a book, and you will find out whenever if you ever pastor a church, I never forget I asked Mel years and years and years ago, I thought it was really easy to pastor and just preach every Sunday because you like to preach and you want to preach. He told me, "Well, you cannot preach on a constant basis to a church on topical subjects. You will run out of topics very quickly. You have to do a book series or you have to do something where you teach verse by verse and lay it out, otherwise you will be out of material very quickly." A lot of guys do not understand that, so they will get up there and they will have maybe 10 firecracker sermons for 10 weeks, and then they are out of gas. That is why so many of the guys today, honestly, there are churches that you go to that every time you go there, I do not care where the pastor starts, he will give you a verse out of Psalms, and then he will depart and he will preach on getting saved and trusting Christ as your own personal Savior. Wherever he goes, whatever he does, he will teach you nothing about the Bible itself because all he knows is to get saved, and that is why his sermons week after week after week are salvation sermons.

After a while, I mean, hey, I am all for getting people saved, but you have to feed your people something more than that. What is the point of giving a thousand verses in a sermon about being saved to a church that everybody is saved in? There is no edification in that. That just shows how lacking you are in your ability to be able to lay out the Word of God and give people something that they can deal with. You do not need to know tomorrow how to be saved; you need to know how to get through tomorrow.

Of course, you approach it differently, and a lot of these guys, that is all they know how to do. They will get up and they will preach their candlestick sermons. Some of these other guys, wherever they go, it is always a soul-winning message. The people are so stupid that they just listen to it and think that they are really getting something, and yet that is why they have so many issues in their life because that does not edify anybody unless you are unsaved. So you have, when it comes to the Bible, you can find out very quickly the depth of a man or a woman with the Bible by just what they put out. I listen to them all the time; I hear them all the time; I have heard them all my life, and you can sum it up in about 15 minutes who knows the Bible.

When my guys preach here, when my guys preach around here, you get something. They have depth to them. We have some great preachers in this church that really know how to preach the Bible, and when you sit down and listen to them, you get something. What I am telling you is that you do not find that very often, and it speaks well of the men and the women in our church who, and I know women are not supposed to preach, but we have women in our church who really know their Bible. I am not kidding you. I will never forget one time a bunch of us guys, we were just young Christians running around, and we would go to charismatic tent revivals because if you knew what you were doing, and they taught me the ropes, if you knew what you were doing, you would always get a chance to testify and get things straightened out and preach to them. We were at a tent revival one time, and I had been in it for a while, so I was picking up the ropes, and the charismatic guy, he has a whole tent full of people, and he is preaching this goofy stuff. So he says, "I would like the happiest person in this place to come up and testify." Before anybody else, I got my hand up, and I said, "I am the happiest guy here." "Come on up, brother." I preached for the next 30 minutes against the charismatic movement. You had to find a spot.

Anyway, we went one time to this little storefront, and there was a little gal, an evangelist, preaching. This girl, she weighed about 110 pounds soaking wet. She was skinny, nothing wrong with that, but she was just a little thing. What I am trying to say, I am telling you, she flat preached the paint off the walls. She stomped, she snorted, she was into it. I thought to myself at that point, "You know what? Now that gal can preach." She preached better than most guys I heard. So there again, you always get a cross-thing of how this thing goes in Christianity today. A woman is not the pastor, but a woman is to preach every time you sit down and you disciple somebody based on Acts 8, you are preaching. So it is a thing where there are different styles, different things that you do. When we come to a book, I teach you like I taught myself. I do not want to leave any stones unturned. If there is something in here, I want it, and if we are doing it together, there is something in here that I want you to have. Maybe you will not do anything with it, but that is just where it is at.

John 1:15 says, "John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This is he of whom I speak; He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me." Historically, we understand all this. We see John the Baptist preaching to the nation of Israel about the coming Christ, and he was prophesied in the Old Testament to show up, and we will get into that in a couple of weeks. He is telling them that the Messiah that they have been looking for is now here, and there are some reasons why they missed it; we will get into that too in a couple of weeks. But he is bearing witness that what was prophesied in the Old Testament has now come to pass, and Christ is their Messiah. That is the historical thing that is happening; we all get that.

I want to talk about the inspirational side of it, the personal side of it. Inspirationally, we see in John the Baptist, and I do not know if you saw this or not, but we see in John the Baptist exactly what we should be and what we should be doing as Christians. Look at him as an example, and we see five key areas. I want to just briefly go through this.

1. He is totally separate from the world. He came out of the wilderness. The way he dresses is different from the world that he comes into. The things that he eats are different from the world that he has come into. The Bible makes it clear that he tells you about his clothing: camel's hair, and what he eats: bugs, locusts. I have always imagined him as a big guy with the camel hair, kind of a Fred Flintstone outfit on, big burly with a big beard with locust wings stuck all in him. He was totally different from the world that he came into.
2. He is not a part in any way with any religious establishment or group. He has nothing to do with the established religion of his day. He is separate from all that. He will not mess with the scribes; he will not mess with the Pharisees, and he certainly will not mess with the Sadducees. He is completely separated from any religious system.
3. He is feared and hated by the system. Both politically, Rome, and both religiously, the leaders of the nation of Israel. He scares the fire out of them because he is so radically different, and he will not line up to where they are at.
4. He comes to a nation that is in total apostasy and tells them of God's coming judgment. This is soon to follow, which is again laid out in Matthew 3 where he tells them, "There is one coming that is going to baptize you with the Holy Ghost." That is the first coming of Christ. "And then baptize you with fire." That is the second coming and the lake of fire, Great White Throne Judgment. I always thought it was hilarious that the stupid, absolutely ridiculous Charismatics will get up and tell you that once you get saved, you need to pray for the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire, and they liken the fire there in Matthew 3 to the power of God. What they are so stupidly saying is that you need to pray for God to give you the Holy Spirit and send you to the lake of fire, which is a good idea as far as I am concerned, but that is how dumb they are.
5. His whole ministry he does to Israel and the world what we should be doing today to our apostate church and the world system: bearing witness. Bearing witness to a lost Christianity, bearing witness to a lost nation, bearing witness to a lost world of who Christ is and the salvation that has come to all mankind. He is doing as our example at the first coming of Christ what we should be doing right now before the second coming of Christ, and that is being a witness for the Lord Jesus. Not only is he telling us that Christ is the true light that will light every man in John 1, he is also telling us and Israel that Christ is the eternal Son of

God, the Word of God manifested to the world in the flesh, and if and when we receive Him, He gives us the power to be a Son of God. Historically, that is Israel as God's son, Exodus 4. Inspirationally, that is you and me.

### III. The Fullness of Grace

In John 1:16, he says, "And of his fulness have all we received." The Bible teaches us that at salvation, we get all that God is and all that God has.

*Colossians 2:10*

*And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:*

The day you got saved, you have all of God that there is. I know the Charismatics teach that you do not get it all, and so you have to ask for the second blessing or you have to ask for the baptism of the Holy Ghost, which is totally completely just about as messed up doctrine as you could ever hope to find. But when did a Charismatic ever know anything about the Bible? So they say that once you get saved, you do not get it all, so you have to ask God to empower you based on Acts 1 and 2, the Day of Pentecost, and of course, that is where they begin their heresy. But the truth of the matter is, the moment you got saved, you have all of God that there is.

Yet you see that, and you know, but that does not mean that you have the fullness, because in the Bible, the completeness at salvation and the fullness is something else. Completion is when you got saved; you are now complete in Him. Fullness is the basis, after you get saved, what do you do with the grace that God gave you to fulfill you in everything that God wants you to be? So complete will be salvation; you get all that He is. Fullness is after salvation, that daily filling of getting everything that God has for you.

*Ephesians 3:19*

*And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.*

There is nothing more for you to get. The problem is, you have it all, but you must develop it. You have it all, but you must do something with it. You have it all, but now you have to grow it. You have it all, but now you have to bring it to a point where it fills every aspect of your life. I have come over the years to realize that we get it all when we get saved, but I also know that so many of God's people will never do anything with that, and it really comes down to not the fact of how much you know, how much do you have of God, but it really comes down to how much of you does God have? Are you willing to allow that process in your life? Of course, the issue with most of God's people is they will not do that.

I remember reading a story a number of years ago, many years ago as a matter of fact, that this guy in a town in America, I forget even where it was, it was just a story, was intriguing to me, but he died in poverty. They thought that he probably starved to death. He lived in an old run-down, ramshackle house outside of town. He was a hermit, a recluse, and nobody had seen him for a couple of weeks or a month. So the sheriff went out and he found him dead. He died in his own

house, died in complete utter poverty, no water turned on, no heat in the house, no food in the house, and he died. Obviously, they buried him, and the house was such a blight, nobody claimed it, so they were going to tear it down. Once they began to tear it down, they found over two million dollars in the walls of his home. This guy had rattled away, or however he got it, two million dollars, but he died in poverty. I read that story and I thought to myself, "Boy, that is a picture of most of God's people." You have the riches of Jesus Christ, worth a billion dollars in your life right now if you are saved, and yet you are wallowing in poverty spiritually speaking, that you are starving to death. Why? Because you refuse to develop it. You refuse to do anything with it. It is one of those things that the issue is that most of God's people just will not do it.

Ephesians 4:7 tells us that when you got saved, God gave you a measure of grace, just a measure of it. He gave you enough grace for you to get saved. He also gave you a measure of faith, the Bible says. So He gave you just a measure of grace and faith for you just to trust Christ. As we develop that grace, as we develop that fullness, or develop into a fullness, I should say, then we begin to come to the place where we understand the fullness of God's grace and the fullness of God. In John 1:16-17, it talks about grace, and in our salvation, in our Christian life, we are all, we should have a fullness of God's grace.

We think again, wrongly, we have such a limited view of grace. The standard teaching on it, and it is true, that grace is unmerited favor with God, no question about that. But we always limit grace to our salvation: "By grace are you saved through faith." I get that; I understand that. But I want to tell you something, in the Bible, there are many different types of grace that our life, that we should build into our lives as we grow and bring it to a point that as we get the fullness of God, we get the fullness of God's grace, not just for salvation. In the Bible, there are different types of grace. In fact, 1 Peter 4:10 says that we are to be stewards of the manifold grace of God. "Manifold" means diverse elements to it; there are many different graces that are in God that we need to have in our life. But we stop with salvation, and we never experience the fullness of God because we never understand the fullness of God's grace in its manifold form.

We preached the other night, Thursday night, somebody asked about the seven things that we are to be stewards over, and I told you that night that one of them in 1 Peter 4:10, we are to be stewards of the manifold grace of God. It just did not say "the grace of God," but that is what most of God's people do. Most people only understand grace as it relates to their own salvation, and boy, is that a short end of a trip. The Bible says we are to be stewards. A steward is somebody who takes care of something for somebody. You and I are God's stewards. He gave us the Bible; He gave us salvation, and He gave us His grace, and we are to be stewards of that. But no, not us. We just take His salvation and never tell anybody else about it. We take His Bible and do nothing with it, and we take grace for our salvation, and that is where it ends. That is why God's people are so shallow today. That is why they do not really, and I told you the other night again, another Bible study, Hebrews 12:15 tells us that we can fail, we can fail in God's grace. Now that has nothing to do with salvation; once you are saved, you are eternally saved. But if you do not get the manifold grace of God down, you will fail in your Christian life based on not having that grace.

I mean, it is an incredible study that you do not hear preached today. Most pastors are just like most Christians; you are so shallow, all you think about is salvation. You know nothing about the Bible. If somebody had you lay out 1 Peter or the book of Hebrews or whatever the case may be and put a gun to your head, your brains would be on the wall before you would ever open it up. We will accept the basic things for salvation, but why do we refuse to go any farther than that? That is just the way it is today. So you will find that when God gave us a measure of grace to be saved, then we develop that grace into everything in life, and that becomes the fullness. Hence, he says, "grace for grace." What is he saying? He is saying it takes grace, salvation, where you start, to have grace, all the other graces that are the manifold grace of God or the fullness of God's grace in our lives.

We live in the church age in what is commonly called the dispensation of grace, no question about that. We know it as the church age, and right now, because we are in the dispensation of grace, again, we think that just simply means salvation. We are so limited in our depth when it comes to the Bible that we just think that God's salvation is, God's grace is strictly just for salvation, and because we are not stewards of the grace of God, the grace of God has failed in our lives. You are going to see it in Christianity, and I will tell you, this answers so many questions of why Christianity is the way that it is, why preachers are the way they are, why churches are the way they are, and why God's people do the things that they do the way they do.

We look across the board and we see problems in Christianity, we see problems with Christians, and we see it all the time. We are not oblivious to it. In our own church, every church has it, and most people just accept that as the norm. I never accept anything as a norm. For me, as a Bible student, I know that there is a principle behind every action, and I may not be able to fix the action, but I can guarantee you I am going to find out the principle behind it because that is how you grow, that is how you learn. I do not know if you have even stopped and thought about it, this is just a short list of all the things that we are to have grace in our lives that God gives us when He gives us the measure of that grace, and we do not stay as a baby Christian, that we develop ourselves and we grow in grace to the fullness of God.

Obviously, the first one is salvation, and we know now that we get that by a measure. God will just give you enough grace and enough faith for you to trust Christ. Nobody ever got saved and got up off of their knees, though they got saved and had enough grace to forgive somebody that did something wrong to them. Nobody had enough faith to say, "Well, God has called me to be a missionary; I am leaving for Africa next week." Those things take time, and you have to develop them, and if you do not put a process in your life to develop them, then you do not grow. So here you are, preachers, Christians, been saved what, 20, 30, 40 years, and they cannot even ever get past the concept of salvation in their life. These preachers get in the pulpit, and that is all they know. "You have to be saved." Every place they start, they get back to that point. Every verse they give you will just be about getting saved. They could not open up the Bible and teach it and lay it out if their life depended on it, and yet they are held up as great Bible teachers. No, you are an idiot. You are someone who got saved, and then for whatever your own personal reason is, you refuse to take it past that point.

Because once you get the measure of grace, you realize there is grace when you and I get out of fellowship. I guarantee you, all of us got out of fellowship this week. You know what grace is? Grace is the fact that you are still here and God did not kill us. That is grace. In the laity of the church, "laity" is the insurance word. Laity means rights of the people. The only rights you have as a person, saved or lost, is to burn in hell, scream your lungs out for all of eternity. You know why you did not? Because God gave you grace. He gave you grace to get saved, and He gave you grace when you and I screw up. It does not come down and kill us. In the Old Testament, He came down and killed people if they did not do what was right. If you were a rebellious child in the Old Testament, you did not get any grace. If you told your mom and dad to hit the road and would not do what was right, Dad called the elders together, they tried to say, "Hey, don't do that." If the law says, and you say, "Well, I am not paying any attention," they just dug a nice hole, put you in it, everybody got big rocks and mashed your brains out. No grace. Yet, I know I was rebellious; most of you people were rebellious when you were kids. Some of you kids here still are. You know why you are not dead? Grace.

Do you know why some people will go through trials and tribulations and come through shining for Christ, and others will fall apart? Because there is a grace in going through the trials and temptations of life. God's grace will get you through, and when you have never developed God's grace, then you handle it wrongly, and the grace of God fails you because you failed it. We talk about persecution in the Waldensians, and there is a book back there that everybody had to read just simply called *The Waldensian*, just one of the greatest books that you will ever pick up and read about the persecution they went under. We have talked about our own brand of persecution that we are going through and where it is all going. The only thing that will get you through that, God gave you the grace to get through it. You know why some people will fold up and never get through it? Because you do not have the grace to get through it, and it is just that simple.

There is a grace to forgive your enemies. There are going to be people that do you wrong. There are going to be people that do not do right by you. You are going to invest in people and give them things and help them, and they are going to give you a sharp stick in the eye. You cannot go around in life worrying about that. You know how you get past things like that? Grace. God gave you grace to forgive your enemies. God will give you grace to love and to be friendly with the people that you do not like. They do not meet your social standard. It happens in God's people all the time. "Well, I do not like him." "Well, I do not like her." Well, God will give you grace to get over that. You know how you get grace to get over that? You get grace to get over that by realizing that you did not look too good, sweetheart, the first time God laid eyes on you either, but He did. You know why? He gave you grace. See, we want the grace to us; we just do not want to give it to anybody else.

God will give you grace in any given situation to respond to something biblically versus to react to it emotionally. All these things, you see God's people failing in them today, all of them.

*Romans 15:1*

*We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.*

It takes grace to do that. I mean, I see people do some of the dumbest stuff that I have told them for five years they should not do, and yet they go ahead and do it, and then their world falls apart. So now they bring it to me, and I have two choices. I can say, "I told you so. You deserve it. Enjoy it. You made your bed, and I will lay in it." That is not grace. How many times I screwed up with God before He saved me and I ever came to Him? He did not say that. After what, 20 years of doing my own thing, He had every right to look at me and say, "Hey, you made your own bed, pal. Go ahead and do it. I have nothing to do with you." He did not. You know why? He gave me grace.

We are going through COVID-19 right now, the great pandemic coming across America. I saw my doctor this week, and he said, "You be careful now." He said, "Because it is really going to get bad this winter; it is going to be terrible." And I said, "Okay, I will." I said, "I will wear two masks instead of one." All those things. But you know what? You know what is going to get you through this? Grace. God's grace. God's grace will get you through. There are so many aspects to it that have nothing to do with salvation, but it starts with the measure you get at salvation. We ought all be thanking God for every bad thing in our life. You get an amen on that one. You ought to be thanking God for every bad thing that comes into your life.

*1 Thessalonians 5:18*

*In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*

Does not the Bible say in Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose"? Why cannot we thank God for the bad things that happened in life? We can certainly thank God for the good things. You know why? You do not have any grace. You do not have the grace to see the hand of God works better in the bad things in your life, and many times it does, than the good thing. But we do not like the bad things. We need to be a steward of that grace in our lives, and if we do not, then it fails in our lives. You see, we take God's grace for our salvation, but we will never develop in our own life to deal day to day or person to person and bring it into a fullness. So he says, "grace for grace." It is not enough just to get the grace by measure to get saved. You need to do something with it.

I know the standard teaching is, as I said, that grace simply means unmerited favor with God, and it does. We got grace; we did not deserve it; we did not merit it; we got it. I get it. But that is certainly a shallow, limited understanding of grace because once you get saved, grace is simply after salvation and dealing with people or life, seeing them or seeing them and understanding them as you view them through our own failures. You know how you get grace toward people? Because you view them through our own failures in life and realize that God put up with us. Why cannot we put up with them? See, that is grace. But you do not have that grace the moment you got saved because you just got a measure of it. You have to develop that. You have to bring it to a fullness, and that only comes as you look at yourself in the light of God and the Word of God, and you realize, as I said earlier, you did not look too hot the first time God ever looked at you. How dare you or me look at somebody with disdain? How dare you and I not like somebody

socially because we did not fit into our picture mode of what we would be? I guarantee you, none of us did when God first looked at us.

When you look at people, I never try to look at people through what they do wrong or right. Now, I get it now, you understand, in some, you have a guy who is a pedophile, or you have a guy who, whatever, that is a whole different ball game. But I am saying, in your garden variety Christian people with your garden variety screw-ups, I always try to look at you through my screw-ups. It tempers me from saying that person is worthless because in my life there were many times when somebody could have said, "Bob is worthless." Thank God that they did not. Thank God the Lord did not. You have to develop that, folks. It does not just happen because you come to church, have a King James Bible, and you get saved. You have to develop that. You have to develop that into a fullness of understanding the manifold grace of God and then being a steward of it. God's people just do not have time for that today; they really do not. It is seeing them and understanding them and then viewing them through your own failures and frailties and then cutting them the same slack that God cut us. Grace and our stewardship of it is the great key in our lives that brings us through our walk and our relationship with Christ. Grace will form the balance of our Christian life.

#### IV. Grace and Truth

In John 1:17, another great verse that goes along with this, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." The New Testament. Now we have grace and truth. These two will form the balance of our lives and in the completeness of our Christian life. You have you in the middle, you have grace on this side and truth on this side, and they balance you out. You are the pinnacle point, but grace and truth are at the outset, balance us. These two will form the balance of our complete life in Christ. You see, it is one thing to have the truth of God, but if you do not balance it out with the grace, then you are out of balance.

You will see this in a lot of young guys today. I have seen it all my life with guys. It is guys who get the King James Bible, they get on fire for God, and they will be around somebody or some preacher that is a fireball. They will never see the full impact of that guy's life. All they get is the militant side of it. So they go out, and there is no grace in their life. They beat everybody to death with the Bible. They have no tolerance for anybody. There are a couple of churches around this town that are exactly like that. They treat the women in that church like they are dogs. They treat everybody in it, and they are so legalistic in their mindset; it is absolutely ridiculous. The women cannot wear slacks; they have to wear dresses or they are ungodly. The thing where the guys all wear ties or you are ungodly. It is the stupidest thing on this planet, but the bottom line is they have no grace. They got the truth. You see, this is the way it is today. They will beat people to death with the Bible, but they will never have the compassion to accept them where they are at and try to help them. Their mindset is, "All you need to do is get saved, come to church, and tithe, then you will solve all your problems." No, you will not.

Yet you are going to find that in one sense, the majority of God's people are the same way. Christianity today will basically fall into two simple categories, and you can see it all the time.

- You will have churches, pastors, and Christians who have grace but they have no truth, so anything goes.
- Then you will have churches and pastors and Christians who have the truth but no grace, so nothing goes.

It is one or the other. Very few you will find have a good biblical balance of the two, and when you find it, you have something special. Much less will they understand how those two things should work in our lives. Grace and truth not only form a balance but also form the depth of our Christian life because both of them, John 1:17, grace and truth, are the two key elements that Christ's death on the cross, on His coming, He came to us by those two. You talk about the depth of God. Ephesians 4:18 says that we are to have the depth of God, and the depth of God, Ephesians 4:19, will always be based on the fullness of God by Him dwelling in your heart, Ephesians 4:17. It is just that simple. Grace will be your ability to use the truth that God has given you in a right way.

Grace will start developing in our lives when we start to see everybody through God's eyes, including ourselves first. Ask yourself, how did a man or a woman like each of us, sinful in all respects, get the salvation and get into God's family and experience the love of God? It is clear in Romans 1 that we do not have anything that God looks for. It is clear in Romans 1 that we cannot get to God. It is clear throughout the Bible that all of our righteousness was filthy rags in the sight of God.

*Isaiah 64:6*

*But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.*

Every place you go, it says that God is holy and we are not. Even in the Old Testament, before God would come down and walk through the camp, everything that was unholy had to be taken out or He would not even come down. How in the world, with sinners like you and me who are a stench in the nostrils of God, how in the world does a holy God come to us, love us, want us, be not willing that any should perish but all should come to repentance, when we are about as far away from God's holiness as we could possibly get? Ask yourself that. How does God love an unsaved man to reach out to him? Because you can reach out to God all day long, and unless He reaches out to you first and gives you the hand of grace, you are dead in the water.

You know what the answer is? He looks at every man and woman on this planet and sees them through the death of Jesus Christ and His blood on Calvary's cross. We got in through His Son's death. That is why in the Old Testament, nobody could get in; He had not died yet. When He looks at you and me, who was unlovable, when He looks at you and me, who was a stench in His nostrils, the only way God can ever have anything to do with us before we get saved is to look at us and see us through the blood of His Son on Calvary's cross, and He has to love us and accept us through the death of His Son. That is the only way. That is exactly how we should look at the unsaved world and the people that we think we are better than, that we do not like, that we do not care for, that they do not meet up to our standards. You have to look at them just like He looked at you. You give them the same grace that God gave us. That is grace.

Get this: in grace, there will always be forgiveness. Write it down if you do not hear anything else that I said today, hear that: in grace, there will always be forgiveness. If there is no forgiveness, there is no grace. Grace will be the entry level to forgiveness. As you grow in grace and truth, John 1:17, I want you to notice that he says that Jesus Christ came by grace and truth. He said grace first, truth second, because grace is the gateway to truth. You got grace before you got the truth. You better remember that because it will form in time a balance; it will form in time a fullness; it will form in time a depth.

This balance and depth and fullness is clearly laid out in the book of Philippians. Without a doubt, Philippians is the model church of a good balance, not only as a church but as Christians. I told you before that in the book and in this church, you will find 10 key verses that of a well-balanced child of God. In this book, there are 10 verses that form the depth, the fullness, and the balance. If you have these 10 in your life and they are working for you, you have it. You have the balance, a depth that other churches do not have, a depth that most Christians do not have.

He says in Philippians 1:6:

*Philippians 1:6*

*Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:*

He said in Philippians 1:21:

*Philippians 1:21*

*For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

Do you have that working in your life, really?

He said in Philippians 2:5:

*Philippians 2:5*

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

Is it?

He said in Philippians 2:10:

*Philippians 2:10*

*That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;*

Do you understand that?

He said in Philippians 3:10:

*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;*

Do you understand that?

He said in Philippians 3:13:

*Philippians 3:13*

*Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,*

Do you get it?

He said in Philippians 4:7:

*Philippians 4:7*

*And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

Does it?

He said in Philippians 4:11:

*Philippians 4:11*

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

Oh, wow, is that true?

He said in Philippians 4:13:

*Philippians 4:13*

*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*

Do you understand that concept?

Then he closes out in Philippians 4:19:

*Philippians 4:19*

*But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

Is it working for you? These 10 things here, that is a balance. These 10 things here, that is a fullness. If you have these 10 things working in your life, you have the fullness of God and God's grace. You cannot miss because these 10 verses will be the absolute key to a balance in our life. Grace will always form the foundation by which truth will be built on to form the proper balance, and when a child of God, a church, or a pastor is balanced, you will observe the following characteristics in their life, hands down.

You want to get these down not on just paper but in your life. You show somebody who has got the fullness and understands the balance in their life:

- They will be self-reliant; they will be self-confident, but they will never be self-sufficient because it will always have to go back to God.
- Then they will be steadfast, but they will not be stubborn.
- They will be tactful in their approach, but they will never be timid.
- They will be serious in what they do for God, but never sullen. That means gloomy, sour mood, depressed.
- They will be unmovable in their doctrine, but they are never stationary because they are flexible, adaptable.
- They will be tender, but never touchy.
- They will be generous, but never gullible.
- They will be meek, but never weak.
- They will be gentle, but never hypersensitive.
- And having the truth of the Word of God in all things, but also the grace of God in all things to deal with it biblically through the eyes of the Lord.

One of the great verses on grace that is the master of all verses, which is unattainable today for most of God's people, is Psalms 119:165.

*Psalms 119:165*

*Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.*

Seeing it through the eyes of God. How do we see things through His eyes? Simple, by reading His mind, understanding how He looks at things and why. That mind will be, as we saw last week, the written Word of God in you, Philippians 2:5, that instructs you, 1 Corinthians 2:11, and you are to arm yourself with it, 1 Peter 4:1. A proper understanding of grace and truth will not only produce a good balance, but it will produce a real depth in your life. Depth in a Christian's life, Ephesians 4:18. If you do not have this down, the balance, the concept of grace and truth is a double wipeout for God's people.

This is the reason why God's people today hold grudges against other people. They do not have any grace. They have truth, but they do not have any grace to use that truth in the right way. This is why people today, in God's people, will get bitter. They will get angry. They will not deal with the anger. They will have an issue; they will not deal with the issue, and bitterness sets in. The reason why they get bitter is because you may have truth, but you do not have any grace. It is the reason why people leave churches. You can get your nose bent out about something. There is no perfect church, and as I have told you many times, if you find that perfect church, do not join it because it will not be perfect anymore. But it is the reason why people leave churches. You will get your nose bent out of joint about something. Something will happen. You cannot get 200 people together and everybody happy with everything that goes on. But instead of having an issue and finding out and exercising the grace to solve the problem, they will not do that. It is easier for them to get their nose bent in a joint, trump something up to make himself look good, heavy on the word "trump," trump something up to make himself look good, make up some

reason why they are mad now to justify why they are leaving, and the real reason why they are not dealing with the, hey, I want to tell you, other than a doctrinal issue, there should be nothing that two of God's people cannot work out coming through the scriptures together. But you know what it takes to do that? Grace.

It is the reason why they lose their families. It is the reason why they lose the blessings of God. No grace in your life, then there will be no real truth in your life. No truth in your life, then there will be no real grace in your life. So there is no forgiveness in your life, and when you lose grace and truth, then there is no real witness in your life anymore. I mean, come on, can we talk here? How do you get up and preach or tell somebody or witness to somebody? How do you tell honestly? Are you just as crooked as a bank robber? Pretty Boy Floyd had nothing on most of us. How in the world can we get up and preach or talk and witness about God's grace to somebody else when it has failed in our own lives? The real witness of the believer will be the grace that he gives people based on the truth that he gives to God's people, and grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. The idea that we want to be something for God, but we cannot give grace to other people, or even worse than that, even understand the manifold grace, sticking in that little mindset, we will get up and talk about grace being unmerited favor with God to be saved. If that is all the farther you are, sit down and shut up. God's people today, they are the most graceless people you will ever encounter. We need to be full of grace, but on the other side, we are not; we are just full of ourselves.

## V. The Story of Mephibosheth

The greatest example in the story of grace in all the Bible is found in 2 Samuel 9, the story of Mephibosheth. Here is the greatest picture in all the Bible of God's grace to us and then what we, based on that grace, give to others. I will not take the time to go through and read it all today; I will just tell you the story because it is the moral of the story is what we want.

In the storyline, first off, David is the king during this time, and he in the story will be a type and a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ in our study. Then you have a man by the name of Ziba. Ziba will represent for us a type of the Holy Spirit of God who gets the sinner to Christ. Then you have you and me, Mephibosheth. The name Mephibosheth means "breathing shame." When you do a little quick study of Mephibosheth, you will find that he is the grandson of Saul. We know that Saul is a type of the devil; he is a type of the Antichrist. So that immediately puts him, John 8:44, in the wrong family. That also immediately, if you know your history, makes Mephibosheth the arch enemy of David because Saul tried to kill David, hated David, was David's enemy all his life. So now we have one of the left of David, of Saul, Mephibosheth, who by birth, John 8:44, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do," is God's enemy, David.

Not only that, but the Bible says Mephibosheth is lame on his feet; he cannot walk straight. He is clothed in filthy rags; he is a beggar. Isaiah 64:6, "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." That is a picture of all of our righteousness as filthy rags in the sight of God. He is a beggar; his name means breathing shame; he cannot walk, and he is David's enemy. He is a perfect picture of you and me who was God's enemy because you and I, before we were saved, we were in the wrong family. We too were breathing shame to a holy God,

and everything in our way of life, we too were enmity toward God. We were alienated from God. God was holy; we were breathing shame.

In our story, one day David, a picture of God, sent Ziba, a picture of the Holy Spirit of God, to go bring this worthless sinner to David, a type of Christ. There was a day in your life and my life when God Almighty said to the Holy Spirit of God, "You can put your name in here, go get that guy, go get that gal, bring him to Me." We were all like Mephibosheth. We were all lame on our feet. We all were breathing shame to a holy God. By rights, God should have had absolutely nothing to do with us because we were His enemy, just like David should have had nothing to do with Mephibosheth. But just like Mephibosheth found grace in David's eyes, praise the Lord, we found grace in God's eyes. We, like Mephibosheth, were so unworthy, dirty, filthy before the King.

I am guaranteeing you, Mephibosheth is scared to death. He cannot run; he cannot get a plane ticket out of town; he is stuck. Now knocking on his door is Ziba, I am sure with a host of people who are going to take him to see the King, and he is sure that David has called him to kill him to settle the last old score with David's arch enemy, Saul. Under the Old Testament law, David has every right to do that. When he comes in there to David, 2 Samuel 9:8, he says, "Why look upon such a dead dog as I?" He is not dead yet, but he is thinking he is soon going to be. But I am telling you, how surprised, how surprised he was to find grace in David's eyes. In David's eyes, instead of getting what he deserved by being in the wrong family, the enemy of God, David made him one of his sons. In 2 Samuel 9:9, David gave him an inheritance. He probably has not eaten for days, and what he does eat, he probably gets out of the garbage cans, and he has nothing to eat, and he is starving to death, and he is a beggar, and what he gets is people's scraps that people leave him. But in 2 Samuel 9:13, David sets him at the King's table, and he eats the King's meat.

You can read the story six ways from Sunday in any way you want to, but I am telling you, the reason why this story exists is to show you a picture of what God did for you and for me because Mephibosheth got that by grace, and you and I got exactly what we got because of God's grace. God made us His sons. God has given us an inheritance, and we sit at the King's table, and we eat this book on a buffet style that you can have as much as you want. But so many of God's people will take the grace to be saved and never do anything with the manifold grace of God of being a steward, and that is why you have been saved what, 15, 20, 30 years, and you know no more about the Bible now than the day you got saved. Your whole world is limited to what you know about salvation and nothing more. You are just like 99% of the pastors in this country; you have never moved beyond that. I am telling you, we can write our names in this story if you are saved today because you and I were that dead dog, dead in trespasses of sin, and God gave us grace when we did not deserve it. Now, being Christ-like with God's mind, we should give grace to each other by developing that fullness.

This is why the Bible scares you. In the church of Jesus Christ, there is no schism. It does not mean you will not have differences of opinion. It does not mean you will not have issues. It does not mean you do not understand something right, or maybe you do understand and you still get your nose bent out of joint. There is a process of grace, grace for grace. There is a process of

dealing with situations with other people just like Jesus dealt with you. "Come now, let us reason together," saith the Lord, because there cannot be, there should be nothing that two of God's people cannot work out coming through the scriptures together. But you know what it takes to do that? Grace.

It is the reason why they lose their families. It is the reason why they lose the blessings of God. No grace in your life, then there will be no real truth in your life. No truth in your life, then there will be no real grace in your life. So there is no forgiveness in your life, and when you lose grace and truth, then there is no real witness in your life anymore. I mean, come on, can we talk here? How do you get up and preach or tell somebody or witness to somebody? How do you tell honestly? Are you just as crooked as a bank robber? Pretty Boy Floyd had nothing on most of us. How in the world can we get up and preach or talk and witness about God's grace to somebody else when it has failed in our own lives? The real witness of the believer will be the grace that he gives people based on the truth that he gives to God's people, and grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. The idea that we want to be something for God, but we cannot give grace to other people, or even worse than that, even understand the manifold grace, sticking in that little mindset, we will get up and talk about grace being unmerited favor with God to be saved. If that is all the farther you are, sit down and shut up. God's people today, they are the most graceless people you will ever encounter. We need to be full of grace, but on the other side, we are not; we are just full of ourselves.

Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and you have got to have a balance of both of them, the two absolutes in a balance in any Christian's life, providing a depth and a fullness. Remember, grace and truth will always lead to forgiveness. No grace in your life, no real truth in your life. No truth in your life, no real grace in your life. Without grace and truth, there will be no forgiveness to others in your life, and in our lives, the grace of God fails. He says, "grace for grace." It is not enough just to get the grace by measure to get saved. You need to do something with it. You need to take it and develop it. You need to bring it through the process and let it become the fullness of God's grace for grace in your life, and you need to then be a steward of it. That is the balance in your life. That is the depth in your life. That is the fullness of God in your life.

We will hold up there. Do not forget, there is the date night out there. There is Jeffrey's thing out there.