

Proverbs 29

Sunday 2/16/2020

If you have your Bibles this morning, I want you to turn over to Proverbs chapter 29. We will close out chapter 29 today as we move on through here. I always like to give a bridge from last week to this week. If you are visiting here today, we have been in the Book of Proverbs for quite a while now, going verse by verse, and in many cases, word by word. We are coming down to the end of it, with chapter 30 and then chapter 31. We will finish it up, and then we will see what God wants us to do from that point on.

Last week, we examined Proverbs 29:25, and it was on the subject of fearing man and that being a snare to us. We talked about, and I preached about, the concept of having courage and not allowing the world, or even in some cases, Christianity, to bully us. I showed you that the model example in the Bible was the Apostle Paul and how he never feared the face of man, neither when he was dealing with the churches that he was working with and establishing, nor in the face of the world when he went before Rome at the end of his life in the last part of the Book of Acts. He is a great example for all of us.

He declared one of my favorite verses in the Bible, and I am sure it is many of yours too, in Romans 1:16.

Romans 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

That is such a true statement. As you study his life, he lived his life as he preached, powerfully preaching the gospel, declaring the gospel wherever he went. As I said, he never was afraid or ashamed of anything that God had done for him. It seems today, and we talked about this last week, that God's people are basically afraid of everything. They fear everybody; they fear everything.

I talked last week about cowards in the ministry. I have seen it all my life in the ministry, and seen it in many ways and many cases. It has always been strange. I told you about Ian Paisley last week, who is actually a hero of mine. It is just what it is. I had another friend of mine who has passed away now, but he was probably one of the greatest street preaching evangelists that you would ever meet in your life. This guy was fearless on the street, and he worked down through Central America and in all those countries down there. Literally, he was a powerful preacher, and he would go into any scenario to preach the gospel. It was an incredible situation.

I watched him; I was on many trips with him, and I watched him in his element down there. We would go into these little cities in Central America, and we would spend the day passing out tracts and flyers that there was going to be a movie in the square that night. They would show some goofy, stupid Christian movie in Spanish that nobody up here would even watch, but five, six, seven hundred people would come out for it. After the movie was done, he would get up and preach, and there would be one hundred, two hundred people get saved. He was an incredible guy.

I watched him one time where this little girl was selling baked goods, and he went over there and was talking to her and invited her. She said that she would really want to come, but her mom would not let her unless all of the baked goods were sold because they needed the money. He went back and he bought everything that she had just so she could come to that meeting that night, and that little girl got saved. It was incredible when it came to those kinds of things. But at the same time, when it came to an issue on the Bible or it came to standing up for something with the other pastors, he just did not have it.

I have always been amazed at these guys that can do it in a situation like that, but when it comes to their peers, when it comes to the people who they are shoulder to shoulder with, people that they know, they just cannot stand and take a stand for anything. I have seen it all my life, and it bothers me because I would think that if a guy could take on the lions in Central America and hold the line, that when you come back to your own contemporaries, you ought to be able to do the same thing, but in many cases, they cannot.

I. The Danger of Cowardice

Back in World War II, General George Patton was one of the greatest generals that we ever had. Most people do not even know who he is today or was today. During World War II, in France, he was going through a medical hospital. He always went through and visited the guys that were wounded under his command. He was very sympathetic toward that, even though he was one of the hardest generals that you could ever imagine. He was not called "Old Blood and Guts" for nothing, believe me. There was a private there that had succumbed to battle fatigue or a mental breakdown because of all the battle. He was never really wounded. Patton was so enraged by him being in the hospital with men who were wounded in battle, he slapped the guy and was going to take his own pistol out and shoot the guy until he got him out of there. He was severely criticized for that and almost lost his command over it.

While I do not agree in any way, shape, or form with his action, knowing him the way you can study who he was, I understand his motive. He knew a great truth that has been lost today, and that is that cowardice or fear will spread through an army like a disease unless it is kept in check. That is so true in ministry today. He stated one time, "I will have no cowards in my army." To him, courage was the key to winning battles or winning a war. He just could not comprehend a man who, in his eyes, was a coward, even though it was, in my mind, legitimate what this kid was going through.

In ministry, leadership to me has to have the element of courage to it. We are up against a lot of things in the ministry, not only with the world, as we are going to talk about today, but also within the ranks of Christianity. There is a great departing from the faith today in many, many areas. It is hard to find a church that will not only stand on the truth but will tell you the truth, because it is so easy today to fall back into that gray mush that everybody just wants to kind of play the game.

When I begin to build people, and that is what God has called me to do, taking young men and young ladies and couples and moms and dads who really want to make their life count for God,

there are certain things when you begin to build them that you look for. One of them, as far as I am concerned, is core character qualities, and that is courage. How will we stand in the face of the adversity that will come our way in ministry, because I guarantee you it will come. Christianity did not get where it is today, down through the 2,000 years since the time of Christ, by weak people. It was people who were willing to pay for what they believed with their own lifeblood and their family's lifeblood.

It brings about three things that need to be in a person's life to really be used of God and to be any kind of effective.

1. Honesty and truth, being honest.
2. Being open, allowing God to change in our lives on a daily basis if that needs to be what needs to be changed.
3. Courage, the ability to stand and take a position when it needs to be taken.

My style of ministry, I am a delegator. I believe that the best training that I can give anybody is on-the-job training. I do not have a lot of stock in going to school someplace to learn something, though I understand it is valuable in many ways, but if you really want to learn the job, get out there and do it under somebody who knows how to do it already. I want people around me who do things better than I do. If everybody did the way I do it, we would not get a lot of things done. Many of you have better ideas than me. Many of you have better ways of doing things than I do it. I build and teach that a church will grow on that if you allow somebody to be who they are.

We have discipleship lessons here, and they are fairly basic. They are designed so that you could actually take them and teach them at face value. But I wanted to put them in an array that gave you the ability to develop your own style with the material. If you veer off the deal here and do this or do that, I do not care, as long as you accomplish those four goals and the person comes out, I am good with it. When I put somebody in charge of something, like a ministry, I do not interfere with it. I really do not. I do not try to micromanage them. I do not try to always go over and say, "Well, you should have done it this way because I know how to do it better than you." That is not my style. I will help them for sure. I will advise them. Obviously, my years of experience, I can help you learn and get the most out of it.

I have learned, unless it is something that is going to be a tragedy, that you can learn more about the ministry by a mistake that you will make than you will somebody just always hanging over you and telling you what you need to do. Honestly, if I did not believe you could do the job, you would not be there, believe me. I have a simple little rule that I follow that I tell people: when you are in command, then you command. It is your deal.

We have a unique church here, and we have a very close personal relationship, all of us. It is a thing where our time and the Bible together has really made us close. We are not where the pastor is up here and you are down here. You know me, I know you, you know how I operate, I know how you operate. I know your character, I know your character. We all work together. I know you know me and how I do the ministry by the book. You know what I expect. If you are going to be in a job, I expect you to do it just like I would do it by the book. You can put your own self in there and be your own person. I do not want you to be me. But at the same time, we

have a way that we do things by the book. I expect you to do the ministry under me as I would do it, exactly. Make sure you cross all your T's and dot all your I's and make sure everybody gets what they need out of it.

It is one of the areas that I watch for, and things like that, is courage. Because when you are in charge of something, when you are put in charge or you are a quote-unquote leader, you will have to make some hard calls. We get the idea that leadership is about ability. Leadership is never about ability. Leadership is about taking responsibility. Sometimes you have to be responsible for the hard calls, just like you have to be for the easy calls. In the ministry, when you are dealing with something or you are in charge of it, you are going to have to deal with some issues that come up. The last thing I want you to do is look over your shoulder. You may come to me and say, "Hey, we have an issue here and a problem here." My answer to you in 99% of the situations is, "Deal with it." You take care of it.

Sometimes it will involve people that are your friends. Sometimes our friends will get into something or decide they are going to do something that we know in the long term is going to be a disaster. You will have to try to tell them this or tell them that and deal with them on this issue, and they do not want to hear it. It is easy for us to be in charge when everything goes good and come to the place where we do not ever have to get our hands dirty or do not have to deal with scenarios. But sometimes it is going to involve people that are your friends. I will tell you something else: sometimes it is going to involve people that are part of your family. I have watched some of you people over the years take a stand against your own family that was not doing what is right. I know that is a hard thing. I know that is a tough thing, but I know that is the right thing to do.

I have seen people who, in any church that I have been associated with, and even in this one in times past, not so much lately, but in times past as we were young, somebody will take an attitude to do something or be against what we do here and try to cause a problem. I have seen them leave the church, and yet I have seen instead of the leadership dealing with it, holding them accountable, they just kind of blow it off and still kind of be quasi-friends with them. I cannot do that. I just cannot.

Galatians 2:11

But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

Sometimes you do not help people by just glossing it over. Sometimes you do not help situations by just going along and playing both sides of the coin. People want to be recognized as a leader and somebody in charge of something, but they never want to get their hands dirty. In my ministry, I had people that somebody did something wrong, and that person was in charge, and I said, "It needs to be dealt with, and you need to deal with it." So they go deal with it, but you know how they deal with it? "Well, Bob told me this is what I need to do." That is not leadership. That is you staying quick and clean and putting it on me. Leadership is about making the hard calls, but it takes courage to be able to do that. Everybody wants to be the bad guy. It is easy for you to let somebody else take the hit, but real leadership is not about that. Real leadership is dealing with it, dealing with it the right way, but dealing with it.

Last week, we talked about not fearing the face of man, which is what will be needed in this spineless generation that we live in. Everybody is afraid of everything, especially in Christianity. I gave you out of Joshua chapter 1, verse 3, three areas about being courageous. I almost said "contagious," but that is good too, because if you are courageous, you should be contagious. I told you it was a great outline and a great little deal if you want to do it for volleyball or softball and a devotion, but it was three things that were to have courage in:

4. Courage to believe the word of God in Joshua 1:6.
5. Courage to obey the word of God in Joshua 1:7.
6. Courage to rest in the word of God in Joshua 1:9.

After the service, Troy McKinney came up to me and told me that Joshua 1:9 was really his key verse in his life and something that he really held a lot in his world, and it really was important to him. I did not read the verses last week because I was just making a reference to them, but Joshua 1:6 talked about courage to believe the book, Joshua 1:7, courage to obey. But in Joshua 1:9, it says:

Joshua 1:9

Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

He has commanded us to be courageous. Like General Patton, He will not stand for cowards in His army. He will slap you if you do. What a great postscript that was to last week's message. I appreciate him bringing that up. His wife heard about it, and then she decided to cook the deer meat for him this week, which is the double blessing of it all, all because of that verse. That is what fear will do to all of us. The fear of man will wind up for us being dismayed. Do you know what the word "dismayed" means? It means to be deprived of courage, to be taken from us.

II. Position, Perspective, and Course of Action

Today, I want to close out chapter 29, and I want to look at the last two verses. Let me just say some things to you here to kind of get you set up for this. In ministry, the most important thing in life is position. Most people would not think that, but it is true. Always remember that in combat, in the military, your position will always be the high ground. You never want to fight a battle from the low ground. You never want to concede to the enemy the high ground. For Christianity, it is the same thing. Christians always want to hold the high ground because high ground is position. When you have the right position, listen to me carefully, when you have the right position, it gives you the right perspective. When you have the right position, the high ground, and have the right perspective and see what is really going on, then you have a clear course of action.

Christianity today, most Christians today in their life, in their families, in churches, in their ministry, they have no position, so they have no perspective. So they have no direction of the action. So it is just a lot of hoopla, a lot of service stuff banging around, doing all the funny

things and fun things and doing everything that we do, but never getting really down to what needs to be dealt with.

A while back, years ago, as a matter of fact, there was a movie that came out called *Roots*. It was a series, I believe. The movie *Roots* or the series *Roots* was about Black Americans and tracing the Black roots back to slavery. Very good thing. I have often thought to myself, that is the problem with Christianity today. We do not have the courage we have because we do not even know why we even believe what we believe. We have no roots. I think that an understandable history of Christianity in America is something that is totally gone today.

In our verses today, in Proverbs 29:26-27, we are going to talk about some of this, and hopefully you will get a better position in life and a better perspective in life, and hopefully a better course of action.

Proverbs 29:26-27

Many seek the ruler's favour; but every man's judgment cometh from the LORD.

An unjust man is an abomination to the just: and he that is upright in the way is abomination to the wicked.

III. Seeking the Ruler's Favor

Verse 26 says, "Many seek the ruler's favour." I want to talk about that for just a minute as we dissect these verses and look at the principles involved in each one of them. In a nutshell, that is the world system. It is not what you know that gets you ahead in life, but rather who you know. That is not always a bad thing, but it is true. Aligning yourself with somebody of power, importance, in this case in the verse, a ruler, to gain the advantage and favor and position by associating yourself with them, getting riches, power, or as I said, position, status, moving up that proverbial ladder of success that we hear so much about.

We call this, and just being open and honest, we call this bootlicking. We call this apple polishing. We call it sucking up. We call it buttering up. You know what I am talking about. You see it in politics. When a man becomes president, any president, being the president of the United States is without a doubt being the most, you are the most powerful man in the world. There is no question about that. You always see it, no matter whether it is a Democrat or Republican or wherever, people will then align themselves to that man. They will support him even when they do not agree with him or even do not like him. They will help him. They will stand by him, but they always want something back. That is just the way that it works.

President Trump, I am not political, so it does not matter one way or the other. Somebody said the Democrats are full of crooks. Somebody said the Republicans are full of crooks. They are both right. Politics without Jesus Christ coming back and sitting on the throne is going to be corrupt. Just that simple. Having said that, President Trump just got acquitted of his impeachment charges, almost one hundred percent by Republicans. I think one guy voted against, but he had an attitude about him anyhow. Do not be fooled when you read that. Most of those guys who voted for him to protect him and do what they did, they do not like him. They

did not do it because they are buddies. In Washington, D.C., you do those kinds of things along what they call party lines to gain favor. It is the, "Oh, you scratch my back, I will scratch yours. You take care of me here, I will take care of you later." The rewards will be down the line, not maybe the next day, but in time, it will be the assignment of cabinet positions for somebody. Somebody wants an ambassador job, and he says, "Well, you stood by me. So yeah, you can be the ambassador here." It will be some kind of, "You are going to go up for reelection, and I will come and campaign for you. You took care of me, and I will say all kinds of nice things about you to get you reelected." That is how it works.

In Washington, this is called the "old Potomac two-step." The Potomac is a river that Washington is built on. It is simply you align yourself with a president, a ruler, as the verse says, and then you seek his favor. It is business as usual in politics, certainly in the business world. It happens all the time in the corporate world too. Yet you will also see it in Christianity.

One of these days I am going to write another book. I can see John cringing now as I say that. I come out with a five or six volumes on church history, and we are working through that. But at some point, I would like to focus on what I would call an understandable history of Christianity in America, going back from the beginning of America and then right up to where we are at today. I think it is probably, you talk about gaining position and perspective and then getting a course of action. It would be a study of a religious political science of a system. How America in the last 200 years, you will see the rise and the fall of religious groups that will follow the exact same agenda as they do in Washington. That verse in our text today is exactly what Christianity gets into. Maybe I can just give you a little light on it this morning, but it is one of the most incredible things.

I am just going to tell you right now, you will never be effective. I read a book one time, and I have told you this many, many times, and I cannot remember the guy who wrote it. It was some guy out of England years and years and years ago, and he said the job of every Christian is to determine what is the spirit of the age in which he lives and then take the word of God and everything that he has within him and spend the rest of his life going against that spirit. That was one of the most profound things I ever read in my life. It is so true because God's people today, they do not know where they are at. They have no roots. They get up and they go to church on Sunday just like cattle go to the slaughter. They follow the crowd. They go because of the music. They go because of everything that goes on. It is a light show. It is a smoke screen show. They are dancing on stage. They are doing all these things. It is an entertainment center. But they come away with no perspective. They go to churches like that five, ten, fifteen years, and they grow nowhere. There is a reason for that.

IV. The Decline of American Christianity

I think one of the most amazing things of American history is how this thing went from where it used to be to where it is at today. We were talking yesterday with some guys, and I was talking with them, and one of them said, "Can you believe that we have a chance of having not only a president but the first lady will be a first husband? A gay guy running for president who has a husband that is a man, two men." He said, "Can you imagine 30 years ago that would have been

unheard of in America?" But that is where we are at. How did we get there? How did we get to that point? I mean, do you think that 30 years ago that would give you another one? I am not fighting anybody. I do not care. It does not matter who becomes president because at the end of the day, Jesus is going to come back and kick the fire out of anybody anyhow. Could you imagine 30 years ago us putting a socialist in the White House? Now, if I am offending you because you are a socialist, I do not mean to. I am just talking here. I do not care. It is one of those things where a socialist is just a step cousin to a communist. You know how to go back and look at some of the great socialistic countries like Cuba. I will tell you, the greatest socialist that ever was was Lee Harvey Oswald. He was a socialist.

People lose sight of those things. They have completely missed today, and it is completely gone by the writers of history. Nobody even sees it. How Christianity got to where it is at today. I count myself lucky. I was born in 1950. That made me not much to you, but to me it gave me both sides of the century. When I grew up in the 1950s, it was still the throwover from a country that had just licked everybody in World War II and had some great values. I remember when I went into school, we prayed in school every morning. They read a Bible verse every morning. I remember in my day in school that when Easter came about, it was the resurrection of Christ. They would bring a preacher in because I introduced him. I remember I was just a little kid, and they asked me to introduce the preacher. My mom was so proud of me; she bought me a brand new suit. I remember I had a really bad infected finger. It was terrible. They went in and took my fingernail out, and they had it all taped up. I was very conscious. I was just a little guy. I could not be more than a sixth or seventh grade, maybe not even halfway. I was just a little guy. I had this big white bandage on here, and I had to go up there. The teachers had me introducing the pastor. I had to come up in front of everybody and greet everybody. Then I had to say, "Today we have a speaker, Reverend," and point to him. I had this big white thing on my finger, pointing to him. I was conscious. That is why I am the way I am today. He got up and he talked about Jesus Christ in public school. Jesus Christ dying on the cross, shedding His blood for the sin of mankind. Try that today.

How did we get from that point to this point? How did we ever get from when the Book of Acts closed down in Acts chapter 28 and Sears and Kmart and Walmart opened up? How did we get there? I was feeling fortunate in the world. I guess, at least I had to pay attention. I looked back once I got to say, it gave me incredible position, which gave me great perception, which gave me a course of action. Because I actually saw the way it was when it was supposed to be that way. Then I actually watched it change. If I could, when I do this book at some point in time, or I do not know when it, maybe I will never get it done, but I do not know. What I would do is I would start and I would show you that in the 1900s, the very beginning of the 1900s, there were three major Baptist groups that filled America. There were no Charismatics yet. They did not come along till later. There were no evangelical churches at that point. Neo-evangelicalism had just started in 1900. There were no churches that would call themselves or Christianity, which as it is today, which is known as neo-evangelicalism, did not exist. You had Baptists. I am sorry. That is all you had. All you had Methodists, you had Presbyterians, you had your garden variety Protestant churches.

But the main line in America in 1900, going back into the, was the Baptist church. They were in three groups. You had the American Baptist, which is sometimes called the Northern Baptist. Then you had what the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, and Lauren knows about that. He came out of a GARB church up in Iowa. We have talked about it many times. But the granddaddy, the biggest one, was the Southern Baptist Convention. Back in that day, they had 32,000 churches across this country. Seven major seminaries, their number one being in Louisville. 32, what I would call senior seminaries or colleges, 21 junior colleges, and 39 hospitals all across this country. What happened was, by the time they got into the 1930s, the neo-evangelical and all of the stuff had come in, and they were in total apostasy. They were teaching evolution in their seminaries to their students. They were teaching that the story of Adam and Eve was a fable. They were talking about the fact that Noah's ark was not true. They turned out over seven or eight generations of preachers that were in complete apostasy and the whole mess. You take the American Baptist churches, the biggest church they got down in Florida, you walk into the sanctuary there, and there is a statue of Jesus Christ, Buddha, and Confucius. Make your pick.

I am going to come back into this in just a little bit. I am just kind of walking you through. Around 1950, that all began to change, maybe a little bit before that. We see with a guy by the name of J. Frank Norris, which I am going to talk about here just a little bit as we walk back through this, we see what we would call the birth of fundamentalism: 1950s, 1960s, 1970s. This will be the great age of the Baptist fundamentalist movement, the churches. I wish I had time to get into all of this in great detail. This is where you find all these churches called Baptist temples. You had Canton Baptist Temple, which I came from. You had Akron Baptist Temple, you had the Kansas City Baptist Temple, you had the Lima Baptist Temple. You had the Massillon Baptist Temple. These are all churches with guys who broke out of the Southern Baptist Convention with Norris because of the apostasy they were in. I am going to show you in a minute, they started their own system.

As we moved on through up to the 80s and to the 1980s and the 90s, those big churches are all gone today. Now we have seen the redevelopment and the establishment of what we would call the neo-evangelical churches. Also connected with the neo-orthodoxy movement and the charismatic movement, of course, went in the middle of it. Neo means new, and it now means a new evangelism. It takes the Bible from the common man, that is what neo-evangelicalism was all about, and puts it back into scholarship. Now we have seen all this happen in just 100 years. God's people know nothing about it today. The average Baptist going to a church today is buying it like a sucker, like cut off baloney, and they do not even understand their own roots. If they did, they would be out of those dead Baptist churches and out of those dead neo-evangelical churches that used to be Baptist that took it off, where they have the dancing on the stages and they have all the smoke and the lights come down and the pastor comes out in a cardigan sweater, mine is in the laundry today, and sits on a stool and gives you whatever they give you.

God's people today have no roots. It is not enough just to know what you believe. It is just as important to understand why you believe what you believe. You can never get a perspective, a position, or a course of action without two things: a witness of history lining up to a witness in

the scriptures. If you do not have that, then you have nothing. Do you know what the most tragic thing is? God's people today do not care if they do not have nothing. As long as you have the band up there, as long as you have the dancers, as long as you have all the fun things that are going on, you do not care about those things because Christianity in a Bible format has died in America, and nobody even went to the funeral.

On each of these three, you see Proverbs 29:26, our verse today, playing out, politically, the favor of man. In Christianity, in churches, the jockeying for position of pastors within the hierarchy of whatever movement it is. For me, I can speak about fundamentalism. I can speak about neo-evangelicalism, and I can speak about the Southern Baptist mindset on that back there because to me it is a 50-50. I was born at the time when I could look back and see one thing. I watched it and lived through this, and I saw where it went, and here I am today. I am not somebody who got it out of a book. I knew these guys. I preached for these guys. I heard these guys preach. I watched a man stand in a pulpit when he was 20 and he is 30 and talk about the King James Bible being the Word of God. By the time he is 50 and 60, he no longer believes it. You may have been satisfied to not find out why. I have always wanted to know why things are the way they are. I have never been satisfied with a status quo. A guy starts in a pulpit when he is 20 and he is 30 and he preaches the book and declares it, and then by the time he gets into 50, then I say, "I want to know why that is. Maybe I missed something. Maybe he is right, and I need to be where he is." I do not think so, but I want to know. I have never been satisfied with that just the way that it is. I have never been satisfied with a little cliché in Baptist churches, "Well, don't rock the boat." I am a boat rocker. I am sorry.

J. Frank Norris could be called the father of fundamentalism. He was the fair-haired boy back in the 1900s and the 1920s and 30s of the Southern Baptist Convention. He grew up in it. He was their protégé preacher, and brother, he could preach. But he started to preach against the system that had produced him because he saw all the corruption, all the ungodliness, all the filthiness that was going on in what they were teaching in the seminary, denying Jesus Christ, virgin birth, denying the Bible itself, denying. He took a stand, and he turned his preaching from that to that. He left the Southern Baptist Convention and broke with it around 1930. When he left and went out of that, he took a bunch of preacher boys that were in that that were where he was at. That became, this is the key word now you want to remember, this became, he started what has been known as the World Fellowship. It was all these guys that were in the Southern Baptist who came out of the Southern Baptist with him because they took a stand because of the courage that they have against what they were teaching.

I am from the Canton Baptist Temple, Dr. Harold Henniger. He is gone home to be with the Lord now. He ordained me and sent me out back in the 70s, and I grew up there, got right. My mom and dad were charter members in that church. He was one of J. Frank Norris' boys, as was Beecham Vic, as was John Rawlings. All of these guys came out of that, and what happened when they left, they began the World Fellowship movement, but God was not done with that. This was a character. There are people down in Texas that they will spit every time they say his name. That is where he was from. He started two of the largest churches in the world. He pastored them both. One was in Dallas-Fort Worth area. The other one was up in Detroit,

Michigan. Between the two churches, over 30,000 members. He would fly back Sunday morning, Sunday night, and pastored both churches. I do not agree with that, but that is what he did. He had an associate by the name of Beecham Vic. Beecham Vic came to the place where David Norris had a falling out. No, he had an earthquake. No, it was the first atomic bomb way after the bomb in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It blew up. All of the guys that came out with Norris, Norris took the church down in Texas. He died in 1950. Norris took that church, but the church up in Detroit, Michigan, Beecham Vic, his associate took, and then they took all of those guys. Here it comes. All of those guys now, this is the beginning of what we know as fundamentalism. I am going to get to a place here to show you how this verse plays. I just got to get you there.

This is where all these great churches came from. Akron Baptist Temple ran 10,000 on Sunday morning back in the day. Great Baptist Temple ran 5,000 at their heyday. All across this country, I am telling you, it was a thing where they were just absolutely building tremendous churches. This was the great heyday of the Baptist fundamentalists. Most people know the word fundamental. They do not even know where it came from. It was a thing where they were called fundamentalists because they left the Southern Baptist Church to get back to the fundamentals of the Bible. Unfortunately, as you will see here in a few moments, they lost sight of that. At the end of their heyday, the fundamentalist was somebody who was no fun, preached a lot of damn, and was mental. Fundamentalist. Completely lost their morals.

I am telling you, it was a thing where they took their stand, and once they left, they started their fellowship. It was called the Baptist Bible Fellowship. Keyword "fellowship" here. Of course, it was a loose contingency of 60, 70, in time, maybe 200, 300 Baptist churches. They followed right into the political system of the Republicans and the Democrats. They started a fellowship. They had to elect a president. They had to elect a vice president. They had a secretary. All elected positions out of these churches. Then they had to have a capital city, which he was going to reign from. For the BBF, it was Springfield, Missouri. Of course, you have to have a Bible college to go along with it. So it was Baptist Bible College down in Springfield, Missouri. It went the same way that it always goes. Once you get outside of a New Testament local church and get into a non-biblical spiritual political system, you are dead in time.

Later on, there were scores of fellowships by the time you get into the 70s and the 80s. Everybody, Jerry Falwell had one. Jack Hyles had one, Hammond, Indiana. He ran 26,000 people in his church. There was one on the West Coast. There was one on the East Coast. There was Southwest fellowship. There was a Northwest by Southeast by East West fellowship. Everybody had one, 20 or 30 of them by the 1970s and the 1980s. They all formed a political religious structure that was just like the Democrats and Republicans. You might have guessed it. The big time pastors who had the big churches, they are the big dogs on top. They will elect the president out of the big time guys. They will never elect one out of just a small church because they think that a big church is proof that you know what you are doing. So they became the big dogs. Then you had the middle line guys who became the midline dogs. Then you had the little guys on the bottom who had the little churches, and they became the wannabe big dogs. They would have their little fellowship meetings every three or four months. They would all come in, and the big dogs would preach and lay down the direction that they are going, and everybody

would amen, glory to God. They set up rules and programs, and we are going to follow this and send all your kids to the BBF Bible college. Do not train them yourself. They are going to elect the Republicans and the Democrats.

The pattern for every system outside the Bible structure of a New Testament local church where they try to find favor with man, like we are talking about this morning, will be a simple three-point movement.

- It starts with a man.
- It goes to a movement.
- It turns into a machine fast-slick.
- Then it winds up being a monument, dead.

That is what happened. The Bible colleges got to the place where they became big business. Bob Jones University, Tennessee Temple, Baptist Bible College, Jack Hyles had one, everybody had one. Here is how it worked. This is the verse: favor a man. This is how it worked. Everybody wanted to be a doctor. There were so many doctors around, you would think God was sick. The idea was education. The idea was when a pastor went to a candidate for a church, they did not ask him what he knew about the Bible. They did not ask him how many souls he wanted to cry. They did not ask him what he did with people or what his method was for preaching. They wanted to know how much education he had. That is where it got to. The Bible colleges played on that. Bob Jones University passed out so many honorary doctor degrees. It is unbelievable. It is Revelation chapter 3. God has so many doctors, but the church is sick. The idea was you send your kids down here, you keep your kids funneling into our college, into our fellowship, and we will have you come down, and we will have you preach a graduation. When you preach a graduation, we will put that robe on you, we will put that funny goofing little hat on you, and we will confer upon you a defender of the faith and make you an honorary doctor of theology. Oh, they all wanted that. It was a game. It was a game. It started out, but once it gets outside the local New Testament church and the pastor and the structure that God gave it, and you go into a political structure, I do not care if it is religious, I do not care if it is Democrats or Republicans, I do not care if it is your system of your little fellowship. You are dead.

Fundamentalism died about 1980, 1985. Those big churches are gone. We moved in now to the last phase that we are in in our study, and I wish I had time to develop it properly, but now we are into the neo-evangelical crowd, the new big mega-churches, the mega-churches that run five, six, seven thousand people. The Joel Osteens on Sunday morning, he is an evangelical. Rick Saddleback out there and Rick Warren, he is a neo-evangelical. This town is filled with them. They were once churches that had Baptist on their name, but they took it off. Do you know why? Because they wanted to move into this absolute mess of getting away from hard line preaching and teaching from the Bible, so they all jumped ship, took Baptist off their name. Now they want to say, "Well, we do not want to be aligned with the denomination." Are you an idiot? By taking Baptist off your name and coming in to be a neo-evangelical, you are just aligned with another denomination, you fool. The marriage actually took place. Nobody even saw it. Not only were none of you at the funeral of fundamentalism, none of you went to the marriage of neo-

evangelicalism. What is wrong with you? If you knew what I am about to tell you, you probably would not even go to that church. No, you would, sure you would, like them dancing girls.

In 1994, the marriage took place right under our noses. It was the Catholic Evangelism Accord where the Catholics and all the neo-evangelicals, all the leaders got together with the Catholics, put their arm around each other, cooked hot dogs and marshmallows and sang "Kumbaya" and came up with an accord that the Catholics and the neo-evangelicals signed that gave us and said that we will work hand in hand together for the evangelism of the world in the next millennium, the year 2000 on. Not only did you miss the death of fundamentalism, you missed the marriage between the whole Revelation chapter 17 and 18 and what took over after the Baptist went down this sewer of their world. This is why Baptist churches are taking their names off, jumping ship.

I need to say this to you to put it into some kind of perspective, and I feel like I am doing this a great injustice this morning, not being able to give you everything and just kind of picking shoes here to get you to have a picture here, but I want you to know that all during this time, the Southern Baptist Convention back in the day, the fundamentalists in their day, and then the neo-evangelicals today, all the time that this was going on, God had His faithful few that were still doing the work. In the Bible, they are called the remnant. God always gets the work done with a remnant. There were guys like Charles Billington, there were guys like J. McGinley, there were guys like Parker Daly up the street here, there were guys like Oliver Green, Harold Seidler, Bob Gray, thousands of them that never got their name anywhere, nobody wrote about them, nobody gave them a doctorate. They stayed out of that system, and they just preached the book that God gave them.

You talk about a perspective where the fundamentalists went totally right wing back in the day, if your hair touched your ear, you could not come to church. That was the day of the hippie movement. Most of you do not know what a hippie is. Bozy is a hippie, look at him back there. He is just a hippie that lost his hair, but that is a, but it is a thing where the hippie movement was a rebellion against society. There was a bunch of young people coming up that in colleges went into the communistic movement and was against this country in every way, shape, or form of what it stood for. They burned down buildings, they torched whole cities and burned down cars. They were so bad that they had to call the National Guard out, and then they sent the poor National Guard out, they never gave them any real ammunition. They just had to stand there with a rifle and try to impose and use harsh language. Step to Kent State. I was in the Army back then, and Kent State University was besieged by the hippies. Nobody had thought to tell them that the Ohio National Guard were always issued live ammunition with their M1-grands. They were on a hill bank and felt threatened, and this big crowd of hippies were coming up on them and going to beat them up and throwing dog manure on them and all kinds of stuff and going to beat them up and everything, and their commander lowered their weapons and fired, killed eight. You would have thought the end of the world. I mean, it was a terrible thing. They wanted to put them in jail. They wanted to put them in, they wanted to do this for, they took all the ammunition away from the National Guard. Here were people that were burning down everything, how dare you take a stand and try to shoot them. Everything, it was great. It was National Guard 8, hippies nothing. They tried to take our fort over, Fort Devens. Little did they know right up around the

corner, they were going to storm the gate. Right around the corner was 300 Green Berets with nightsticks that were just chomping at the bit for them to come in. Never happened, but it would have been fun.

It is a thing where they would go to Baptist churches, and because they did not wear the right clothes and because maybe they did not bathe as frequently as your "Starks White Baptist" or their hair was too long, they were met at the door and turned away and said, "Do not come back to this Baptist church until you cut your hair, take a bath, get some good clothes." There was a chance to reach a whole generation with the gospel, but we would not do it because they did not look right, smell right, or talk right. Now you want to know the irony? Those same hippies are now leading in Washington. What the fundamentalist did by going so far right wing that he got such a legalistic mindset that if you did not follow the rules, if you did not do everything the way they said it, you could not come to church. The neo-evangelical today has completely went left wing and went the other way. Now you can do whatever you want to do. You can drink beer and come to this church. You can do this. You can dance. We will put on a light show for you. It is a thing where the great preaching died by the 70s and the 80s, and it was replaced with an artificial light from artificial chapels, by artificial Christians who preached artificial messages. There was no power in it. There was no truth in it. It is situation ethics. Do whatever you want to do, and it is okay. They produced a theatrical church, an artificial church whose job was to entertain you now instead of enlightening you, to excite you instead of rebuking you, to please you instead of correcting you. No doctrine. Bring the world's music in. Bring the world's preaching in. Bring the world's psychology in. Right in front of our nose, we have witnessed the death of Christianity. Because Christianity will only excel and only survive on the preaching of the word of God straight, hot, and true.

V. God's Judgment

Now, look at the last part of the verse: "But every man's judgment cometh from the LORD." Now you have a little basic understanding here of how this whole religious system was built on the favor of man. You do something for me, I will do it for you. Just like the politicians in Washington. It destroyed Washington, and it destroyed Christianity. All three of them went down the same way. Now that we are going along with the last couple of weeks, we begin to see here that all the bootlicking, all of the payoffs, all of the bribes, all the buttering up will do absolutely nothing when Jesus Christ comes back and holds court on the throne of His judgment.

For an unsaved man, it will be the great white throne judgment where he will stand before God, he will give an account before God, his name will not be found in the book. The Bible says God will judge him on the basis of his works of what he did in relationship to what God did for him.

Revelation 20:12

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

That will be the little guy and the big guy. That will be the little guys and the, you are going to give the hot dogs to this afternoon, and that will be the big dogs in Washington that have destroyed this country. There will not be any favors, there will not be any "you scratch my back." But the Bible simply says in Revelation 20:12, "And the books were opened." It is this book right here, all 66 of them. The dead will be judged out of those books which were written according to their works. Every politician, every unsaved religious leader will be lumped together in the lake of fire.

For the saved man, it will be the judgment seat of Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:10

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Romans 14:12

So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

God will judge everything. God will judge every thought, every action for an unsaved man and his debauchery of a government or a pastor or Christians in Christianity who took the very book that God gave them, stepped outside his pages, did your own thing, set up your own kingdom, got your favor from man instead of the favor from God. There is coming a day. God will judge every man, saved or lost. The Bible says when this judgment comes, saved or lost, there will be no bribes, there will be no graft, there will be no gifts, there will be no favors. You will not find favor with God like you found favor with man. It will be based on truth. The day He will judge the world in righteousness.

Job 21:22

Shall any teach God knowledge? seeing he judgeth those that are high.

Psalms 58:10-11

The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.

So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.

Psalms 67:3-4

Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth.

Acts 17:31

Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

Romans 2:16

In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

Genesis 18:25

Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

You bet He will. All the political positions in the world, whether it be in the government or whether it be in Christianity, whether it be in the Southern Baptist or in the Baptist fundamentalist or in the neo-evangelical, all the playing of the games will end. There is coming a day when saved or unsaved will stand before God, and nothing in this life that you trusted in will help you if it was not found in that book. All the deals and all the favors and all the backroom negotiations and all the underhanded favors will do nothing in that day when we stand before a holy God to be judged by His righteousness.

VI. Abomination to the Wicked

For a child of God with a Bible, the battle lines are clearly drawn. If you have enough courage to be able to take your stand on the wall, all down through the time in America of Christianity falling into apostasy by a man-made man's system, God's men have taken their stand and preached against it, yes, the remnant. For every guy you write thousands of books about like Martin Luther or George Whitfield or Jonathan Edwards who were great men in their day, and there is probably more written about them than any other guys in history, you will find 10,000 to 1, guys that nobody wrote about that were doing the job. These are the nobodies. Nobody cared about, got no prominence, overshadowed by the big time pastors and the politicians who did nothing but steal the credit for what the little guy did and then boast that they did it. By 1990 to 2000, the lights of truth are completely gone out in America except for a few little holdouts on the night fighters who stand and fight through that night. The lamps, they are out of oil. Now New Testament Christianity has slid into the apostasy of the evangelical crowd, and it is all over.

Look at Proverbs 29:27.

Proverbs 29:27

An unjust man is an abomination to the just: and he that is upright in the way is abomination to the wicked.

This is a verse that you will never want to forget after today. You will never want to lose sight of this. You will never want to kind of water this one down. You will never want to try to sidestep this one because it is simply saying no matter how good it looks, no matter how nice it is to you, no matter how it tries to court you, praise you, or get along with you, the world of neo-evangelicalism will never be your friend.

Amos 3:3

Can two walk together, except they be agreed?

The Bible lays out in 2 Corinthians 6:14-16:

2 Corinthians 6:14-16

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Your body and my body, if you are saved this morning, is the temple of Almighty God, and it needs to stay pure. The only way it can is the doctrine of the book that God gave you.

James 4:4

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

You cannot get along with it. It is like your flesh. You cannot trust it. You cannot parley with it. You cannot pretend it is okay. You cannot make deals with it. You cannot think you can negotiate with it. The only thing you can do is separate yourself from it. Because there is no middle ground with God except in the minds of people who know nothing about God and how He works.

Jesus said in Matthew 12:30:

Matthew 12:30

He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.

The Bible clearly gives you the principle that, "Hey, I am in this world, but I am not of this world." I am a pilgrim in a strange land. I am an ambassador from a foreign country to try to show people the country that I am now a part of, heaven. Proverbs 29:27 is so clear, the system of the world will always hate you. It will always be against you. Whether it is the Christian world that is out of the Bible and the mess and apostate it is in when you have a King James Bible that you love and believe, and they look at you like you are demon possessed. The system of the world will hate you. It will hate you, and your Bible will be an abomination to them. That is okay with me because I am allowing me to return the favor. To us who believe the book and hold to its value system, this world system, this old mess of Christianity, is an abomination of abominations. The world or evangelicalism stands for one thing: to destroy the truth of God and to render Christianity and God's people powerless, to make them afraid, to keep them in dismay, lack of courage. We have seen it. We produce it. While the church is around today, you could not find two guys that are strong enough to stand for anything in most Baptist churches. Not even a neo-evangelical. It has spread into everything. You have guys that believe the book, guys that

believe and preach the word of God, and people in it are afraid of everything. You hate, they hate you, and you hate them, the system. It is the basis for the great doctrine of the Bible called the doctrine of sanctification or the doctrine of separation, lost today. If God saved you, He separated you from the world. In the mindset of evangelicals, God did not separate you from anything. If they did, they cannot find out what it is.

1 John 2:15-16

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

I am going to tell you something. I wish I could have developed this the way I could want to this morning, no time to do it. But I gave enough of it to understand you need to get a position in your life. That position needs to form your perspective, and in that perspective, based on that position, needs to form your course of action. Some of God's people need to stand up and get some steel in their backbone and take a stand on what is wrong, when it is wrong, instead of worrying about what somebody is going to say about you, how they are not going to like you, or what they are going to post on Twitter or Facebook or in your face or up in space or whatever the case may be. I will tell you what, if you have people who spend enough time in emails, they do on email, there would be a great revival in Christianity. In life, seek the favor of God, never seek the favor of man.

I will leave you with that. Jeremiah chapter 1, last week, "Be not afraid of their faces." God has given us a job to do, and there is adversity connected with it. It is going to be unpopular. We are going to be an abomination. We are sitting in a situation where all of Christianity has departed from the truth, and the few guys out there that are holding the line together are going to get severe. So what? Who cares?

Dick Winters was the great commander of Easy Company in the 506th, famous for the *Band of Brothers* movie where they were at Bastogne, and they were surrounded by the German 6th Panzer Division for almost 30 days. Nobody could get in, nobody could get out. They did not have enough warm clothes. Some of those guys only had two rounds of ammunition for their rifles. No food, no nothing. The weather was 10 below zero, freezing frostbite. The Germans came down and captured the whole hospital and everybody, the prisoner and everything, took them out. They were completely surrounded. It was one of the bleakest times, but they came up to him, and he was the 101st Airborne, and they said, "You know, Captain, or Major Winters, you know that you guys are surrounded." He grew up back. "We are paratroopers. We are supposed to be surrounded." We are Christians. We are supposed to be surrounded. We are Christians. We are supposed to be hated. That does not mean that you hate back, but it means that you do take a stand, and you have the courage to take it because greater is He that is in you than He that is in the world, and you have a calling. The problem is you missed your calling because you lost your position, and when you lose your position, you lose your perspective, and then you get caught up in all the other things that do not ever mean anything. When the only thing that means anything

is you declare in this book, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ because it is the power of God unto salvation." Putting it out. Never fearing that face of man.