

I. The Importance of Discipline, Context, and Truth

If you have your Bible this morning, we are going to be back in John chapter 2 today. You will remember it has been a couple of weeks now. I was off for New Year's while the guys all preached, and then last week we did our beginning of the 2021 message. So it has been several weeks ago, but we started John chapter 2, and with our brief time in there, we can see now what a great chapter this is going to be.

I told you when we started studying all of this that when John writes, he writes five books which actually make up the five wisdom books of the New Testament, just like there are five wisdom books of the Old Testament. They are incredible books, each one of them written by John, who is a type of the Christian. He really shows us in each book a different aspect of our Christian life. These books will be key to putting your Bible together, not only for your own personal relationship with Christ, but just in understanding your Bible. John's Gospel will be filled with material that will help us put it all together. You will see as it unfolds, as we come through here, just an incredible amount of material in the Gospel of John.

As I told you last time we were together, if you remember, I basically said it will take three things in your life, which I call the basics, to really make your life everything that God wants it to be as a Christian. All three of these are built around the one key word for Christianity, which is lost today. Unfortunately, most people, God's people, have lost it, and that is the word discipline. I cannot tell you how important it is to build that aspect into your life as a Christian.

In those three areas, the first thing that you build discipline in your life is to always establish the context of any part of the Bible. We talked about this the last time we were together in John 2. We have talked about it on Thursday night. I take every opportunity to keep that before you. I know that does not sound like much, like it is a big deal, but it just amazes me how few people will do this or not do it. No matter how many times you say it, for whatever reason, people will just jump into the Bible and throw that valuable piece of information out and never discipline themselves to that.

My main goal in giving you the Bible will be this aspect, and I just stay on it all the time. Sooner or later, somebody will follow it. You will see on every question that you ask on Thursday night, I make an open public forum about it, or any issue that you have when I preach on Sunday morning or teach in people ministry or even in Bible Institute. I hammer this home.

The next will always be truth. If you do not have the right context, you are not going to have truth. It is just that simple. Over and over again, I take every opportunity to do this. If you want to make it a large-scale concept, the job of any pastor is to always establish context. We always talk about it in the line of learning your Bible, but I am telling you, it is true in everything in your life. Putting life into a proper context, you are going to come to the place where you are going to have issues. You are going to have personal issues. You are going to have family issues. There are going to be issues with other people in relationships.

The key to solving that, and remember now, the number one goal in the Bible is restoration. That was the goal of God's salvation: to restore you to Him. We as God's people are under that same mandate as far as relationships. I am telling you, context just does not go along with figuring out your Bible. When you have issues, no matter what it may be, when I preach, when I teach, or whatever, the first thing we have to do is establish a context. What is the real issue here? Only then, once the context has been laid out, can you proceed from there to try to work the thing out. It is when people do not want to put it into a context that you just cannot solve the problems.

Without a doubt, the lack of discipline in determining the context of any book, chapter, verse, or as I said, anything in life, I think I said this to you Thursday night, the failure in the lack of discipline to establish a context in anything will be the end of Bible truth and the beginning of all heresy. Every heresy starts. Every problem continues to exist without somebody getting the right context, getting the facts, and establishing a context based on what is true. Then you work from there. You never, never, never move past a verse, a chapter, a book without first establishing the context of what is being said.

I get it, it is really hard today. I have been around for a while now, and I have watched how generations of young people have changed, and the generations of even adults in time. You kids, I was thinking about this the other day. When I grew up, we did not have cell phones. We did not have computers. My claim to fame is when the first calculator came out. It was about that big. You had to carry it on the back of a mule to use it. But it has all changed now. The generation that you are a part of, you do not talk anymore. You do not communicate. You talk through a keyboard. You talk through a device. You do it by typing words in. Words are fine, but words lack context. Words lack the emotion behind what you are saying.

People do not speak today. They do not. It is a thing where the kids are so consumed with video games and playing this and playing that, that parents have realized, and wrongly so, that that is a way to keep your kids interested so they are not a problem. Just give them something to do in a video game or this or that or something that they are doing. That keeps you from having to parent them. That is where it all leads. We live in a generation of young people today that people out there, I say, "Call them." When they do not answer their phone, they just answer texts. That is the problem right there. Why should I text somebody and wait for two days for an answer when I can call you right now, and either you are going to talk to me or you are going to hang up? I get my answer, but that is where we are at today. The information age is not necessarily a good thing. We get words, but we get no spirit of the words. We get no context of the words.

The second imperative will be keywords. You want to discipline yourself to learn them. You saw not only last week, but you saw from Thursday night and everything that we do how keywords are absolutely vital. We have been talking about the Day of the Lord and the Day of Christ, two different phrases that will set a completely different format for you to study your Bible. Again, I point out all the time, there are probably 20 or so keywords that if you just get those down and you discipline yourself in two ways:

1. You discipline yourself, first of all, to learn them.
2. Then you have to discipline yourself to use them.

It is just that simple because they will be the key to unlocking the context of anything. Your learning then will be of no value if you do not learn how to use them. That speaks to another issue that we have today that you see all the time in Christianity. People are lazy. We live in a lackadaisical society today where it comes to the Word of God. Everybody is lazy. We are just plain lazy when it comes to doing the work of really getting into the Word of God. We all want the fast track. We all want something right now. That may work with your cheeseburger going through McDonald's or whatever, but it will not work when it comes to the Bible. You have to do the work on it.

It is a lot like my GPS. Instead of finding out where I am supposed to go, we just dial it into the GPS. There again, a device, and it tells us how to get there. But you know what? I do not, you are probably the same way. I could put it into the GPS, and it tells me how to go there, and I am following it, but inside my mind, I think I know a better way to get there than the GPS. I usually wind up lost. But we have come to the place in all of these areas where we have lost ourselves.

The third one will be understanding the Bible, God's timeframe of actually these two days: the Day of the Lord and the Day of Christ. The Day of Christ is the rapture. The Day of the Lord is the second coming, which is the theme of the Bible. It is all built around the times and the seasons. So in any period of church history, and this is what God intended for us, in any period of church history, no matter where, who lived when, that Christian could see and understand how these two days will play out in his life. So those two days, 1 Thessalonians 5, will not overtake him. He understands where he is at and has a better understanding of what he is to do in his ministry based on the urgency, based on where he is at in relationship to those two days. Every child of God, to do his work right, should know approximately where he is at in relationship to Christ's coming, especially today in 2020. God's people are just oblivious to it. We do this by understanding the times and the seasons.

II. The Laodicean Church and Indifference

We have talked a lot lately about the book of Colossians, and I have a feeling we are going to be dealing a lot with it as we move on through this year. I have told you before that the book of Colossians is really an incredible book. In fact, it defines for us, when you read in Revelation 3 where it talks about the Laodicean church, just the people, the church of the closed door. You get some details there, but if you really want the context of that period of church history, which is the one we are living in, you have to go to the definitive book on it, and that will be the book of Colossians. It shows us the indifference in Christianity.

I have told you before, chapter 1 and chapter 2 tell you what happened and why it happened and what you are up against. Then we talked about this Thursday night. Chapter 3 and 4 tell you how we respond to it. Somebody asked a question that says, "Set your affections on things above." I said that a couple of weeks ago, and I told you there were 12 in the Bible. Somebody asked that Thursday night, and I walked you through those 12. The book of Colossians, once you let it define for you our time period, and you know where you are at in relationship to all this, it tells us what we are to stand for, how we are to stand for the right things. This will come by disciplining yourself to those three areas that I just talked about.

Today, God's people are standing for all the wrong things. They have no idea where they are at in relationship to those two days. The devil, he masks that. The devil is great, and we know this from Job 40 and Job 41, he is great at putting up a smokescreen, masking the real issues by putting up issues that mean nothing, but everybody gets focused on them.

III. Historical Smokescreens and Modern Distractions

I remember back in the 50s and the 60s, we had just ended World War II, and the Russians came really out on top, and all of Europe began to fall under communism. Country by country by country fell under communist rule, and we saw it in South America, Central America, and it was like they were taking over the whole world. For Americans at that time, I was a kid then. I was born in 1950, so I was 10 years old in 1960 when all this was going on. Most of you have no idea about the Cuban Missile Crisis. I lived through it. I remember like it was yesterday.

There was parents' night at school where the parents go and meet with the teachers and tell them how good or how bad you are doing. I remember my dad saying, "We may be at war tomorrow." Now I knew what was coming when I went to school. I would just as soon have gone to war that night because I knew I was not going to get a good report from the teacher. But it did not work out that way, and I had to deal with those issues too.

I remember that time. I remember that in Look magazine and Life magazine, in the 60s, everybody was building bomb shelters. We were scared to death that a nuclear war was going to break out because the Cold War was going to turn hot. I remember that. I lived in Canton, Ohio. Canton, Ohio at that time was the number one steel-producing city in the world. You had Republic Steel, Timken Roller Bearing. It was loaded with steel groups. On the Russians' target, it was number two. How do you think a little 10-year-old kid dealt with life? You wonder why I am the way I am? I went to bed every night thinking I wish Blam was going to blow up Canton, Ohio and kill all the steel people.

Everybody was building bomb shelters. Life magazine came out and said, "If you make \$200,000 a year, build this bomb shelter, you have a 99% chance of surviving. If you make \$50,000 a year or \$100,000 a year, you build this bomb shelter, and you have a 50-50 chance. If you make under \$20,000 a year," which my parents did, "you were told to go to the southwest corner of your basement." I knew what that southwest corner of my basement was. I was scared to death. But it was the wrong thing to be scared of. Communism was not the problem in the 50s or the 60s. It was the smokescreen.

When we got into the 70s, we got into all the social issues. We got into the abortion issues and legalism and all of those things. We talked Thursday night about conspiracies and all that. I know that I do not worry about those things because when you have been around for a long time, you see history repeating itself. Back in the 70s, there was a young man, and maybe some of you, probably your older guys would, but do you ever remember the guy by the name of Johnny Todd? John Todd was a young man who became very prominent in Baptist circles. He claimed that he was part of a conspiracy organization that was going to overthrow—this was when

President Carter was president. He knew who the Antichrist was. He was naming all these high people who were connected with Satan and satanic things and talking about it.

I cannot tell you the Baptist churches across this country that believed him. They were buying guns. They were buying ammunition. They were stocking up on food. He made thousands and thousands of dollars going from church to church to church. These guys bought into it. They were incredibly fooled by this guy. They were having whole conferences on how to survive the coming apocalypse. Then it was found out that he was a phony and a fake. Then we found out that he had nothing to do with Christianity, was not even saved. In fact, the way they found him out was they found a tape that he was lecturing a coven of witches. That shows you how stupid Baptist preachers are. We still are today. If you get on Dr. Ruckman's website, I am sure you could go back. He did a tape on it called *The Wanderings of Johnny Todd*. He exposed him way back when everybody else was believing him. Do you know why? Because he understood history. He understood context. He understood that the devil will throw up a smokescreen to get everybody looking the wrong way, the way he has always operated. Who did not know that from Job 40 and Job 41?

Today it is the political world around us. I told you Thursday night the guys who were really solid preachers when I was growing up, and some of them were my friends. I know them. They are really great preachers. We have some of their books in our book store. Now they have come to the place where they are all political, instead of holding revivals, they are holding revivals that are political rallies. They are telling everybody what to do. I am telling you, it is just—I am not the smartest guy in the world.

Do you realize that in the Old Testament—and these are things you have to see; they will keep you in the right context—you realize that in Israel and the Old Testament that no king of Israel, which was political, ever came from the tribe of Levi? No priest that was spiritual ever came from the political kingly line of Judah. Other than Christ and David, and that is for a specific reason, there were two separate lines. No king ever came from Levi, and no priest ever came from Judah. In the Bible, there is a clear, divided line. Now, how come I can see that and somebody else cannot? Context.

Understanding that the issues that are presented before you across the world, country, are most generally never the real issues. I told you Thursday night that back in the 70s, Jerry Falwell, who is dead now, started what was called the Moral Majority, which was a movement for Christians to become the moral majority in our country. He ceased from preaching the Bible, and every message he preached from that point on was a political message. Baptist preachers across this country denounced that. We were all over him. I have been in Bible conferences where they just ripped him apart at that particular point in time. Now those same guys are doing the same thing. History always repeats itself.

Back in the 50s and the 60s, the Cold War was with Russia. Now the new Russia is China. Now we are faced with our own worldwide pandemic. God's people have lost the context of the two most important days in the Bible that dictates where we go and what we do and how we do it. The fear, I said this last week, the fear of our day has blinded us to the fear of God's day. I

showed you Thursday night out of Isaiah 8:12 how God defined the conspiracy. God said, "Do not be afraid of who is out there, whatever they are saying. You let Me be your fear. You fear Me. Do not fear him who is able to destroy the body. You fear him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell." That is what He is saying.

God's people today, they have no fear of God. They fear everything else. They fear getting the virus. They fear this. They fear the government. They fear what is going to happen. They fear what is going to happen on Wednesday when Biden gets put into office. They fear about this, they fear that. They have lost completely the context not only of their life, but the context of what is going on around them. We have lost as God's people the three most precious, valuable assets that any child of God could or should have. We have lost our perspective. We have lost our position. When you lose your perspective and your position, you are going to lose your purpose.

Now, instead of running around fearing God against a day that we are all going to stand to, we are all running around fearing the government and what is going to happen or what we think is going to happen and what probably is going to happen. We fear the things that we really do not need to fear and lose our perspective and our purpose and our position to fear the things that we should fear. We come away as God's people today, spiritually speaking, with no context to our life, no reason for it, no purpose for it. We have lost our position.

It is always a sad thing to any pastor. I talk with them weekly. I had, I do not know, 20 phone calls this week with guys that are on the website who follow us who are pastors. They call, and sometimes I have sessions with three or four of them, and they want to talk through things, and they want to find out what we are doing and let them know what they are doing. I talk with them all the time. They all feel the same way. When you lose somebody from your church during a crisis or some issue comes up or whatever, they always feel bad about that. I understand that. I do too.

I told a couple of them this week, I said, "You know what? Here is the bottom line. When you know you are up against these two days and you understand where you are at in relationship to them, and you also understand the urgency of the hour and what watch you are on, Mark 13, we went through that a couple of times this week with some of them, at what time of the day it is. The question of Matthew 20 was, were you on the job during that time?" You try to hold the line with your church in these last days. I get it. It is very tumultuous days. People are all over the page. I get it. It is a fear-driven Christianity today in these last days.

I told this guy, I said, "You know what? You try to build men and women, you try to build families that hold the line with you." But I said, "The thing you are missing or you do not get, or maybe you do not understand, is you do not realize that you are in a warfare." We do not sing "Onward Christian Soldiers" anymore in churches and the choir. They have all of this worldly stuff now. The reason why you cannot find a good choir to sing "Onward Christian Soldiers" is you have too many conscientious objectors in the choir. The Bible says that we are to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, that we are to war a good warfare.

In the history of any warfare, when a general or a captain or whoever is a combat leader and he leads, he trains his people hard. He trains them long. He trains them with discipline because he

knows that that will probably be the only thing that will keep them alive when the bullets start flying. Discipline in, how many times we were told, "When you get into the mix, remember your training. Remember what we taught you." But in spite of that, I tell this guy, in spite of that, you are going to lose some. It is the reality of warfare. Stupid little issues will come in. Somebody will get an attitude, and that attitude will, it is a thing where people lose their purpose. They lose their perspective. They lose the context of why God saved you in the first place.

Now, you are a young church. We have some old ones like me and John and brother back here, and upstairs we have a few oldies but goodies. I want to tell you, you guys know this, but I am going to tell you the real danger of becoming an older Christian. You do not see it in you guys, and I like that because you guys have another good 20, 25 years where you have to start worrying about this. But the older you get, when you have been in Christianity for 20, 30, 40 years, do you know the thing we all have to worry about? Losing your edge. You have been in it so long.

I saw it in the military. You get a guy that is a 20-year man or a 30-year man, and he has 18 years in, he has only got two years to go that he can retire with full benefits. Do you know what he does? He starts to coast. He is no longer a real soldier. He takes it easy. In his mind, he has done his 18 or 19 years, 17 years, so he thinks it is justified for him to coast up to his retirement. God's people get the same way. They will be in this thing for 30, 40 years, and then you lose your edge. You do not have the drive anymore. You do not have the purpose anymore. You lost your perspective. Now you just coast.

I will tell you what, that may work in the U.S. Army. It may work in the Air Force. It may work in the Navy. It may work in the Marine Corps, but it will never work in Christianity because Ecclesiastes 8:8 tells us that in this war, there is no discharge. You do not get to coast. In fact, the older you get, the better you ought to become. The older you get, the more experience you ought to be getting under your belt to help the young ones. Instead of turning it inward and then turning it outward, we just do not do anything with it, and then we get bad attitudes. We do not want to feel uncomfortable.

Then you young guys, I want to tell you something. You young guys and gals, you take a Christian that has been at it for 30 or 40 years, and he or she has decided they are going to coast, you are going to make them real nervous. They are going to develop an attitude because they do not want you to show them up. You guys are fire-readers. You guys will not stop at anything. I really believe that is why God built this church the way that He did. We may lose the old ones who cannot handle it. We have some old ones that can handle it, but we may lose the ones who are cruising through their Christianity. But the thing that will keep this church on fire is every one of you young people and you older people who never let the fire go out. That is where the difference lies. That is where the discipline comes in.

I am telling you, I told this guy this week, when God's people lose their perspective, when they lose their position, and they lose their purpose, I agree with them. It is probably time to move on. I am sure that you are a nice person. I am sure you are a wonderful person. But just as the military has a process by which they weed out non-combatants, so does God. Not every child of

God has a place in a front-line combat unit. They used to say back in my day that they belonged in the rear with the gear. I understand that.

Up in Fort Leavenworth, up there in Leavenworth, Kansas, you have what they call the General's College, more affectionately called the War College. It is a college for staff officers, majors, and up. It is about command and control. I have known many of the guys that were teachers up there that taught military history. I have sat under many of the guys from other countries that came in and talked about where their country is at. We bring them in, majors and up, from all around the world. They train them there. Its sole purpose is to take the tactics of combat that have been established down through history. They show the modern-day commander exactly what I try to show you, that in warfare, if you want to have a great ongoing warfare, you have to look back in history.

They teach combat tactics that go all the way back to the Roman Empire. Can you believe that? Over 2,500 years ago, the Roman Empire was the greatest fighting force the world has ever seen. Some of the battle tactics that they used, some of the things that they did, are still studied today at Fort Leavenworth, putting into a modern-day concept. They taught it from all wars. They taught it from the Civil War, the lessons of World War I and World War II, the lessons of Vietnam and Korea. They show that the tactics that worked back then are solid tactics that are not just back then, that they are solid tactics that will work today.

I want to tell you something, in Christianity, the tactics that worked back then will be the same tactics that will work today. They teach you that in any battle, in any war, you must have two key things in your favor to win. I had a guy that taught military history, he was a good friend of mine, he is retired now, and we had talked many, many times, we were really good friends, in fact a couple of them up there, and we spent a lot of time together. I would ask him questions, and he taught military history. He told me one time, he said, "To win any battle, you have got to have two things in your favor. You have got to have the high ground, in other words, you must have the advantage of position, and you need to have fire discipline. You must control the firepower of whatever you are in command of, whatever you have, whether it is big, little, or in the middle, you have to control it, and you always have to have the high ground."

I thought that was an astounding piece of advice to me, and immediately I could see how it worked in Christianity. He told me this story, which I actually researched it out. There are two movies that you ought to buy and watch with your kids, and they are both about the Civil War. The first one is simply called *Gods and Generals*. The second one is simply called *Gettysburg*. They are without a doubt, if you want an understanding and insight into the Civil War, they are incredible. *Gods and Generals* came out first, and then they put out *Gettysburg*. There was a third one that was going to come out, but they never did it because they flopped in the theater. Nobody wanted to see them. There was not any sex, there was not any, it was just good, solid, documented history about events that shaped this country. Nobody cared.

Gods and Generals starts you from the beginning of the Civil War when it all happened and brings you up to the Battle of Vicksburg. *Gettysburg* picks up after Vicksburg, and the next

major battle there was Gettysburg, and focuses on that. Then the third one was going to bring it all the way through to the end, but they never did it. I wish they would have.

He told me, I had been to all these places, and I wish I had known what I knew when I was there. Gettysburg has always been an incredible, fun place for me to go visit. I have been there several times. I preached a couple of times in Pennsylvania, not too far. When I was off there today, the pastor took me over to Gettysburg, and I just love places like that. But he told me in the Battle of Gettysburg, there was a place called Little Round Top. There was a place called Big Round Top and Little Round Top, and they were high up, and they were in the Union positions. Obviously, the Confederacy wanted to take and wipe the Union off and move right into Washington.

Down on Little Round Top was the end of the Union line. It curved around, and it was a steep hill coming up on all sides, and they put up a beat-up company of the 20th Maine, who had about 50, 60, 70 guys under a guy's name, I think his name was Colonel Chamberlain. He later became the governor of Maine. He stretched his guys out across the top here and around the edge, and he was told that at whatever cost, he had to hold that line of that end of the line, because if they did not, they would sweep right up and sweep the whole Union Army off. So he held off a complete division of Confederate soldiers because he had the high ground. In the middle, it was July 2nd and 3rd, it was terribly hot in Pennsylvania. Wave after wave after wave of Confederates tried to go up that uphill battle, and they got pushed off every time. Why? He had the high ground. He saved the Union line, got the Congressional Medal of Honor for it, and as I said, later he became a governor of Maine. But he kept that left flank from collapsing.

When he told me that story, I thought to myself, what an incredible concept of keeping and holding the high ground. This is one of the main reasons we got beat in Vietnam. The first war America ever lost. We had to fight on his ground. We went into a ground that we had no clue on, that he had fought for 15, 20 years when he kicked out the French. The second reason is we had no fire discipline. Guys would get into a firefight, and they would flip their M16s over to full automatic, and each guy carried about 300 rounds, and he would just spray everywhere and hit nothing, and pretty soon they were all out of ammo. No discipline in firing.

It is what happened in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is called the graveyard of the nations. Do you know why it is? Because there is never a nation able to subdue them. You had the Russians go in with tanks, AK-47s, Chom-Kan 50s, all of the machine guns and things you could ever have. The Afghans are shooting flintlock rifles and old Enfield bolt-action rifles. The Russians could not beat them. Do you know why? They never had the high ground. That is some of the most mountainous terrain you ever saw in your life. When those Afghans got in there, you could not get them out. It is impossible ground to fight on.

For me, I always build people through the Word of God the same way. I will hold those same two tactics that work in warfare. Brother, you better believe and understand you are in a warfare. I will always, to the best of my ability, hold the high ground. In the Bible, that is the Tower of David. That is a high tower on the wall that we are supposed to be watchmen on. You want to make every fight that the devil throws at you, every fight that comes your way, you want to keep

the high ground, therefore making an uphill battle so they cannot get the advantage on you. I will be honest with you. This is where 99% of God's people are defeated right here.

God's people struggle with issue after issue after issue all of their lives. It just goes from one bad decision to another. It goes from one mess to another mess. They never get on top of their problems. Do you know why? Because they refuse to apply the Bible principles that will put them at the high ground. All their life they are fighting an uphill battle they can never win. I tell you something, unless you put the Word of God in its principles, what is the point if you have the right Bible if you do not use it? It is the principles that give you the high ground, the high tower. God's people just cannot, they never hold the high ground.

Then you have to have fire discipline. You have to know how to use your Bible. You ought to be able to take that Bible apart. I think back in David's Mighty Men of Valor, back in 2 Samuel 23, he had Eleazar who killed 600, 700, 800 guys with one guy with a sword. When he was done fighting, his hand was so clenched to that sword, the muscles had wrapped itself around it that he could not drop the sword. He became one with the sword. You need to become one with that book. Now you give me men and women, families that with a commitment to those two things and the courage to endure hardness, and I will hold the high ground till that day. Or as they say in war and battle, we will win the day. For us, the day is the Day of Jesus Christ.

IV. The Three Battles of the Christian Life

In this old world today, we have to fight three ongoing battles.

3. The first one is the battle for your Bible. They want to take that from you. They want to disarm you.
4. The second will be the battle for your mind. Just having the right Bible will not by itself help you. I have met a lot of God's people who have the right Bible, but when it comes to problems and issues and bad times and families and marriage issues and relationships, they will not do what it says and follow the principles. Having the right Bible only works if you discipline yourself to use it.
5. Then the third one is the battle for your family. Make no bones about it, your family is up for grabs today.

I have seen over the years parents get mad over something, and in the long term, the devil plays them like a fine fiddle, and they wind up losing their kids. He will take your church from you first, then he will take your Bible from you second, and then he will take your family from you, your kids, in that order. So when you see how this thing all works, the key is going to be discipline. The key is going to be establishing your context.

V. John 2: The Wedding at Cana

I said all of that to kind of put a bridge from last week to this week, but I want to show you the importance of context in John chapter 2 today as we read these verses here. Let us read John 2:1-11 and use what we have already talked about, establish the high ground, establish a discipline in

those three things. Let us get our perspective, let us get our position, and let us get our purpose back.

John 2:1-11

1 And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:

2 And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.

3 And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.

4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.

5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

6 And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.

7 Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

8 And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it.

9 When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,

10 And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.

11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

Now, Father, help us today to learn from this. Help us to get the right perspective about everything in our life. Help us to establish the right context about everything, Lord, in the Bible, in our lives, and certainly in this passage today. If there ever was a passage that needed a context, it is this one, the way it is so wrongly taught today. Help us, Father, to get back our perspective, get back our position, and get back our purpose. We love You, we thank You, and we pray You will lead and guide us into all truth in Jesus' name for our safety. Amen.

Next week we will get into and dive into this passage from a doctrinal application. There are some things here. But today, given where we are at in the Laodicean Church, given everything we are faced with in Christianity that we have just now talked about, this is why I laid such a lengthy introduction on you. I need to go through here and clarify some issues that are within the church of Laodicea today. As I have said many times, when you lose the battle of your Bible, then you will lose the battle of your mind, and you will do some of the craziest, stupidest stuff on this planet, and you will find yourself right back with the world. Yet you will be claiming that even though you are with the world, you are really still in Christianity the way you should be. Of course, your family goes without saying.

We talked about the book of Colossians, our definitive book. In the book of Colossians, we saw in Colossians 2:8 very clearly what four things came in and destroyed the body of Christ during the Laodicean church period. Along with that, we were told in Colossians 2:6-7, once those things happened, it told us in verse 6:

Colossians 2:6

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

No matter what is going on in the Laodicean church age, we are told to walk in Him. Now that means something. I know to most people it means, "Well, it just means hand in hand walking with us." No, walk in Him. If He is the Word of God, John 1:1-2, then our walk in Him has to be in His Word. It did not say walk with Him. It said walk in Him.

Now look at verse 7. This is what we do here for those of you who will allow it to be done in your life.

Colossians 2:7

Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

You have to get rooted and grounded up in Him. How do you do that? By walking in Him. You will notice that you have to get rooted, get your roots down in a church and a Bible before you can grow and be established. There has to be a process built up in Him, and when you get to that point, you are rooted and built up, you get established. It is just that simple.

Most of you work with people, so you will understand how this goes. Most of you have worked by this time, you have been around a while, you have worked with multiple people, and certainly you have seen it happen. Joining a Bible-believing church is a lot like getting married. You make a commitment. It is a thing where you get committed, you come to church, just like when you get married, you get committed to the marriage. In marriage, there is a honeymoon. A honeymoon lasts for a period of time. It can go, every marriage is different. It can go six months, it can go a year. But my point is this, sooner or later, in any marriage, the honeymoon is over. Now you have to deal with the reality of things.

Leaving the hair in the sink did not bother you before, but now suddenly it is an irritation to you. Not even putting the toilet seat down now is an irritation to you. Not putting the cap back on the toothpaste is now an irritation to you. Little things now begin to, when you were first married and the honeymoon was at its peak, those things did not matter. In every marriage, the honeymoon gets over sooner or later, and you have to deal with the reality. I am not saying the marriage is bad, I am just saying now the reality sets in of two people living together.

Many times when people do not follow the principles of the Word of God, once the honeymoon is over and now you see that there are issues that before you did not think about or did not see or did not care about, now suddenly you have to deal with them. If two people are not willing to work through that with the Word of God, you are going to have some problems. It is the same way when you join a church. You come here, and it is wonderful, everybody is happy, we sing

good songs, everybody does a lot of fun things, and you will say, "Well, I am going to get disciplined," or "I want to do this," or "I want to do that." It starts out wonderful, but it is the same way like marriage. Once you start to get into the Bible, the Holy Spirit of God is going to point out some things in your life just like you see some things in the marriage, and you are going to have to deal with them.

What I am saying is this, just like in a marriage when a honeymoon is over, when you join a church after a short period of time, you have to face the real issues that you have to deal with, the honeymoon is over. Now you have to decide, "Am I going to fix what is wrong with me?" I do not have the joy, joy, joy down in my heart like I used to, and now the Holy Spirit of God is pointing at things in my life that I know I have to face, deal with, and change. Now you have to decide where you are going to go with that. They are the same, it is an incredible thing.

Christianity not only is there a complete lack of discipline, but there is a complete lack of commitment. You are going to have to realize that when you get into a church, it is like when you get into any relationship, the honeymoon lasts for a period of time, but then you have got to come back down to earth, and now you have got to pay bills, you have got to deal with this, you have got to deal with that, you have got to face this, you have got to face that, and if your commitment is not strong, it is going to pull you apart. In your Christian life, you can come to a church and be the happiest, "Oh, this is a great church! Oh, everybody eats the Bible! Oh, they have got a King James Bible! All the great people are great!" Yeah, right up to the point when the Holy Spirit of God starts to deal in your life, and you have got to face some issues, the honeymoon is over. Now, you have got to decide where you are going to go from here.

When this fails in Christianity, then Colossians 2:8 will and has, and I might add will, replace all that the Bible did for us.

Colossians 2:8

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

You get spoiled. Last week I showed you how God's people got wasted. This week I want to show you how He got spoiled. With all the rudiments of the world that has come into Christianity, we see it most prominently in four areas today. Very quickly, because I want to get to the one that I want to talk about, very quickly the first one we see it is in music. It is all back to the jungle, man. If anybody ever figured out that the first choir director in the Bible was Lucifer, you missed a great aspect of studying your Bible. He is always coming against music. Music is one of the greatest studies you will ever study in the Bible.

If you want to study in the Old Testament, it all forms itself around a guy by the name of Asaph, who was David's chief musician. You ought to study his kind of music. The definitive passage on music in the New Testament will be Colossians 3:16. The definitive passage on music of how it relates to you will be 1 Samuel 16:23. When you come through the New Testament, just like in the Old Testament, you want to study it through Asaph. In the New Testament, you study it through the development of the church and the Word of God, and you find that there are five

stages of development and a device of music in the New Testament. Just right there. One of our boys, Jared McClanahan, taught up at the—in Lincoln last time for their thing up there. He was teaching on music. Kids need to know it today. Most churches, when you go to their music services, it is like a half-time presentation at the Super Bowl. It has nothing to do with God or the Bible or anything of those passages that I just listed. They fail. The greatest failure is not understanding 1 Samuel 16:23, what the design of music was for and what it will do for you or not do for you.

The second will be no preaching of doctrine. This will be on the rise of—we have talked about it many, many times, so I am not going to spend a lot of time with it—the neo-evangelical crowd and the New Orthodoxy crowd getting rid of the doctrine in the Bible.

The third one, and this is where John chapter 2 comes in, is God's people going back to the world and doing all the things that the world did. Back in the 1920s, Billy Sunday was probably one of the greatest evangelists that America has ever seen, if not in the world. He single-handedly brought in prohibition, which was making alcohol illegal. Prohibition lasted for a number of years before they got rid of it, but he preached on it and preached hard on it and on the rise of alcohol and bootlegging and all the things that were going on that time and social drinking and the drinking of alcohol.

Somewhere along the line we have lost the lessons of history, and now Christianity today thinks it is perfectly normal for God's people to consume alcohol, a social drink, or the drinking of alcohol. Somewhere along the line in Laodicea, going back to the world, we lost our separation from the Word of God. Now there is no difference in Christianity. Just pick a church and go to it. There is no difference in the music. There is no difference in the preaching and the way that they conduct their lifestyles.

I have had people that were out at one of the restaurants, Applebee's or someplace, and a group of Christians were there, and they were drinking, and they were putting on Facebook where they were stocking their shot glasses. I have seen pictures where pastors were holding up their beer and saying, "Do not judge me." I have seen it to the place where they have said, "We have got a group of people here, and they are going to Bible study," and a person says, "Oh, I am not teaching tonight so I can have a drink." You probably would teach better if you got half sloused. But that is just my opinion.

We have seen a total complete breakdown and collapse of any biblical doctrine of separation, sanctification by the saved who are supposed to be set apart from the world. In the book of 1 Corinthians, the church at Corinth was the most worldly church that you had ever seen, and Paul deals with it. But in 1 Corinthians, Paul who writes to them in 1 Corinthians 1:1-2, when he opens up, he reminds them. Now he is going to deal with all their issues, but he reminds them before he ever gets into the issues. He says, "The church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ." First thing he reminds them, "Hey, boys, you are supposed to be set apart. There is supposed to be a difference between you and the world."

Now I bring up alcohol because when the Laodicean church wants to justify their action of social drinking or making alcohol consumption okay, they are going to go to John chapter 2. So if there

is any place that needs a context for us today, it is John chapter 2. Now tie this into everything that I have said to you this morning so far, but the standard teaching is, and I have seen pastors on the pulpit get up there and they talk about the fact that it is okay to social drink. One pastor got up and he said, "As long as there are three aspects to drinking. You have users, you have abusers, and you have alcoholics." He says, "As long as you stay as a user and do not ever come in to be an abuser or an alcoholic, you are okay."

To me, that has to be one of the most ridiculously stupid statements. All it shows me is one, you know nothing about the Bible, and two, you have been holed up in your ivory palace for so long, you have never dealt with anybody. In all the 50 some years, almost 50 years, I am dealing with people, I never met an alcoholic who had lost his family, lost his health, lost his job, lost his car, who did not think he was just a user. You never give human nature that luxury. If I tell you it is okay to do this, you are going to take it to the nth degree. That is where you have got to have an absolute standard that does not let you fudge on it, man. But that is just where we are at today.

This will be the main place, as I said, you will go when Christianity wants to justify the drinking of alcohol. So let us lay it out. You will want to get this in your Bible. Next week we are going to get into the doctrinal side of it, but I cannot pass this up. This is something we are all faced with. When God's people lose their perspective, when they lose their position, and they lose their purpose, and they get into the Laodicean church, and then they start fearing everything else but what they should be fearing in God and His Word, this is what happens.

This will, first of all, be Jesus Christ's first public miracle that He does. I want you to know that. So you want to put that down there if you are picking up. This is His first public miracle in the New Testament in the order of His appearance. He comes to this wedding, and there is no wine. So He turns the water into wine. Now you can see where we are going to have fun with this. There is a lot of doctrine here, and we are going to get into it next week, but I want to make this passage clear as He is making this first supernatural still, so to speak.

Now let us get our material together. John 2:6 says that there are six waterpots of stone. The Bible says also in John 2:6 that they hold two or three firkins apiece. The waterpots here, just so you know, the waterpots here are in connection with Hebrews 9:13 and Hebrews 9:19, Leviticus 16:28, and Numbers 19 and Numbers 20 with the purification under the law by water. So just so you know that that is what they are for. I think it makes a reference to that in the passage.

I will be honest, there are some disagreements among men today who know a lot about the Bible between John 2:7 and John 2:8. Their disagreement is they are not sure on how much actually a firkin is. Some people say one firkin is seven and a half gallons. Some other guys say, "Well, one firkin is nine and a half gallons." Either way, when turned into booze, you have between 102 gallons and 153 gallons of hooch. If there were just kibitzing here, if there were 60 people at this wedding, every person here could drink eight to ten quarts of wine. Quite an open bar.

Now I must pause here and give you the standard joke. A Southern Baptist preacher is driving down the highway, and he has got wine in his thermos. He has had a little bit too much to drink, but he has got it here, and he is driving out, and he takes a little sip, and he is kind of weaving over the road. A state highway patrolman goes by and sees him, so he comes out and pulls behind

him. Lights him up, guy pulls over. Southern Baptist preacher pulls over, the highway patrolman comes up, and he says, "Everything okay?" He says, "Yes, sir, officer, just fine." He can smell it. He says, "You have been drinking?" He says, "No, sir." He says, "What do you have in the thermos?" "That is water." Highway patrolman says, "Let me see it." He opens it up and smells it. He says, "Sir, that is wine." He looks up and he says, "Glory to God! He did it again!"

VI. Defining Wine in Scripture: Deuteronomy 32

This is a place in the Bible that most certainly needs a context. Several months ago, it was on a Sunday. I laid out from Deuteronomy 32 probably the best I have ever done it and probably could never outdo it, completely laying out through the Bible the aspect of wine and drinking in the Bible. It is on a website back there. I am not sure where it is. I am sure the guys could find it. But I told you that the definitive passage on wine in the Bible will be Deuteronomy 32. So with that, we want to establish a context to see how it fits into John chapter 2. Because you need to know this because you are going to get hit with it. The next time you meet some of your social drinking Christians and they want to go back to John chapter 2, you need to have this in your pocket.

In Deuteronomy 32, you will find the two kinds of wine in the Bible that is laid out for you. You also will find it in Hosea 4:11 where it calls them by name. You will find one says "wine" and the other one says "new wine." When you get into Deuteronomy 32:14, you will find that new wine is always grape juice. It is the pure blood of the grape. You will find it in Deuteronomy 32:14. You will find it in Hosea 4:11. You will find it again in Genesis 40:9-11. Most definitely in Matthew 26:26-29 at the first Last Supper, He clearly tells you that it is grape juice.

Then also in Deuteronomy 32:32-33, you will have the devil's brew. This will be fermented. You will find that again in Hosea 4:11. You will find it in Proverbs 20:1, Proverbs 23:30, Proverbs 31:4, Proverbs 23:19. In Deuteronomy 32:14, it is called grape juice, new wine. It is called the pure blood of the grape. In Deuteronomy 32:32-33, the devil's wine is called the vine of Sodom. We all know what Sodom was. A poison and venom of asps, and an asp is a snake that bites you and it dies. We now see that from Deuteronomy 32 that the pure blood of the grape, grape juice, is a picture of Christ's blood. Hence in Matthew 26:26-29 when Jesus instituted the Last Supper, which we take to be for our Lord's Supper or communion, He clearly says that you drink the pure blood of the grape. You drink its grape juice very clearly. True to the vine.

VII. The Rule of Definitive Passages

What I am about to give you is worth like \$10 million. If you do not get anything else out of the Bible today or what I say, you go home with this. Here is how the Bible works. You have got to get this. This is the greatest single secret to unlocking the Bible, what I am about to give you. This is how the Bible works. Once the Bible sets the context on something. This is why I always give you the definitive verses, do I not? Every time I will tell you, no matter if it is Sunday morning, Thursday night, Bible Institute, people ministry, I am always telling you this is the definitive verse. The definitive verses will always set the context on anything.

Then once you have the definitive verse on this, which is Deuteronomy 32, then wherever you go, you will use the definitive passage to determine the context because God never violates His own principles. Example, Deuteronomy 32, you have new wine, pure blood of the grape, fruit of the vine, versus wine which is the vine of Sodom and a venom of asp. Now, God will use the word "wine" interchangeably and there will be places where it is new wine, but He does not call it new wine, He just says "wine." Somebody says, "Well, why would He do that?" Because He already defined the context for you in Deuteronomy 32. Once I have Deuteronomy 32 defining it, wherever I read the word "wine," I know that if it is in a bad connotation that it is never something that Christ did, and if it is a good connotation, then it is dealing with grape juice. The context is established by the definitive passage. That is how the Bible works in everything. That is just that. This is why it is so vital to get the definitive verses on it and know everything, every subject is in the Bible where you can go to get the definitive because that is where you establish the context. Once God establishes it, He never deviates from it.

So when I get into John chapter 2, let me finish this here, and then we will come back to that. Now, He will use the word "wine" interchangeably just like He does in John chapter 2. He does not say "new wine" in John chapter 2, He says "wine." You say, "Well, Bob, how do you know it is new wine?" Because in Deuteronomy 32, nitwit, He defined it. Stay with me. You are not a nitwit, you are just an idiot. Nitwit is worse than an idiot. When you know the context, the context of the definitive passage will be the rule of law when it comes to your Bible. That is where it is the greatest secret unknown aspect of the Bible. The context and the definitive passages will be the rule of the day when it comes to your Bible and unlocking it. Please God, do not leave it to me to do. Do not leave it to some Dr. Fine, Dr. Howard, Dr. Fine to do. God in His book has defined it for us. Follow the book. Follow the definition.

VIII. Christ's First Miracle and Its Significance

It is in Deuteronomy 32 is where we start to see that the water here was not turned into the vine of Sodom. It could not have been, but rather grape juice. Now let me show you a little deeper in this thing. In Exodus 7:19-20, you have the first public ministry that Moses does, public ministry. The first public thing that he does, I know he goes to Pharaoh before that, but publicly. The first public miracle in the Old Testament was Moses turning water to blood. The first public ministry in the New Testament was Christ turning water to wine, John chapter 2. Do you know why? Because new wine is a type of Christ's blood, Deuteronomy 32:14, Numbers 6:3. So the first public ministry in the Old Testament, Moses is a type of Christ who is turning water to blood, and the first public ministry of Christ who is an extension of Moses was turning water to wine. Clearly showing you the connection between the two.

Now you should know that. So mixing the blood of Christ, here it comes, so mixing the blood of Christ with the devil's brew, the poison of asps, scorpions, dragons, is the most blasphemous thing that could ever be done. There are churches today who when they do the Lord's Supper, they actually use fermented wine based on John chapter 2. Without any knowledge or understanding, and in a ridiculous pit of depravity, they actually take the Lord's Supper, which is the most personal, holy, precious time between me and you and God, and then bring the devil's

brew in to do it. Why do you think God feels about that? Probably the same He feels about everybody making December 25th the birthday of Jesus Christ and celebrating it when it was really the birthday of Baal the sun god. Probably the same way. Probably feels the same way about Easter, Ashtar. God's people are the most screwed up people on the planet when it comes to understanding things about the Bible. Do you know why? No context, no perspective, no position, and no purpose. No discipline in anything. I am telling you, where you stop to look for the context, you start to develop your heresy. I know this is way too much Bible for somebody out there who wants to do your own thing and be your own person. I get it.

Now for a child of God to take and digest that into his body. When the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 6:19 that your body is the temple of God, the Holy Ghost dwells inside you, and you drink the devil's hooch into your body, which is God's temple. That is just as most blasphemous as the thing that you could do. The social drinking today in New Testament Christianity just shows how ignorant God's people are and how they could care less about the body of Christ, their body being God's temple. It is not about what you can do or what you cannot do. It is not about your liberty in Christ. It is about your body is God's temple. You are not to defile that temple, and just as you would not go to a coven of witches and hang out with them, but it is okay to take the devil's hooch and put it into God's temple. That is God's people and the Laodicean church age for you. No context, no perception, no purpose, no position.

If Deuteronomy 32 was not enough for us, as a defining chapter on wine and new wine, here is the real issue. If Jesus at that wedding made enough booze to get 50 people drunk as a skunk, then He violated the Old Testament law in Habakkuk 2:15, which clearly tells us:

Habakkuk 2:15

Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!

If Jesus turned that into fermented booze and then gave it Him to drink, He violated the Old Testament law under Habakkuk 2, and He cannot save anybody today. Because if you break the law at one point, you are guilty of it all. There is not one place that Christ ever violated His own principles. You cannot find one because that is the absolute for us as His principles. So you will never find anywhere in the Bible where He ever violated His own principles. If He did turn that water into wine, hooch, then as I said, He is a guilty sinner, and He could not save anybody.

There is not one place in the Bible where He ever tasted alcoholic wine or strong drink. Even though His murderous enemies, Matthew 11:19, called Him a winebibber, which only goes to show you they lied about Him just like they lie about you and me. Again, in Mark 15:23 when He is on the cross, and again, I just keep bringing the Bible up. In Mark 15:23, they offer Him when He is on the cross, myrrh, that is a painkiller, mingled with wine. Now it was not grape juice. That was the real deal. He refused it. He drank vinegar instead, John 19:30.

You need to know and understand that this wedding and the wine from water, next week I am going to show you the doctrinal application to the water being turned into wine. It is absolutely incredible based on the third day. But today I wanted to lay it out as it is used by apostate

Christians who want to sin with the devil's vine and justify it that they are okay with God. Let me just say this. I do not care if you do or you do not. It does not change my world one way or the other. But as my people in my church, I have a mandate to teach you the truth and to give you the context and to lay it out as the Bible lays it out. You do with it what you want to do with it. But I am telling you right now, it goes to show two things.

IX. Applying Biblical Principles to Life

In the Bible or in life, without a context to start with, you are in trouble. I will say it again. The lack of discipline to determine the context of any book, chapter, verse, or any issue in life will be the end of Bible truth and the beginning of heresy or a bad teaching or a life of deception. John chapter 2 is a great example of that.

Second thing, how in God's people today you will find a complete and total disregard for any Bible, scriptures, principles guiding their life, helping them understand that their body is God's temple. Denying what the Bible says about the devil's vine and justifying what you want to do by just using the scriptures as you see fit to fit into your lifestyle. I know, I know, I used John 2 to show you that that is about wine and social drinking because that was the issue, and I wanted to deal with that. But I have expanded it before I ever got there to tell you, brother, it goes into every aspect of our lives today.

The book of Judges is a book that shows us in the Old Testament, but in a practical application, the Old Testament Jews in Judges going through the same things on one end of the cross as we are. The great thing in the book of Judges, you will find some of the goofiest, screwed up things you ever saw in your life in circumstances, people's lives, people's families, and everything that goes on. You scratch your head and say, "Why is this?" Then you get to the end of the book, you find out why. It says that there was no king in Israel, and every man doing what is right in his own eyes. That is America today. That is American Christianity. That is churches today. They do not care what the book says. They do not care about getting a context. They do not care about anything. All they want to do is whatever pleases them, and then they want to use the Bible to justify it in everything.

We talked about John 2, but before we get into that, I took plenty of time to lay out my lengthy introduction to say it is in every aspect of our lives. When you forget and you lose your perspective and you lose your position and you lose your purpose, you are in an uphill battle the rest of your life, and you will never win. We live in a Laodicean church period. We dumped the Bible a long time ago, and all we want to do now is we want a comfortable Christianity where we can claim we love God but live like the world. We have lost the doctrine of sanctification.

Let me say this. Over the years, I have had to referee problems with families, marriages, kids, between Christians. Somebody feels like so-and-so said something against them or hurt me or spoke against me or lied about me, and they are all upset about it. Over the years, it has been my observation. No, you sit down, and you have got to kind of referee things out. You feel like Solomon sometime when those two harlots came into Solomon. One said, "That is my baby," and the other said, "No, it is mine. She killed hers and took mine," and he did not know who they

were. The Bible makes it clear that they were both harlots, so they do not have the best reputation in town of telling the truth. He did not know who they were. So what he does, he just pulls out a sword, and he cuts the baby, says, "Cut the baby in half, give her half, and you take half." We look at that, and we think that was the dumbest thing that he could ever do. No, that was a very smart thing he did because he knew that the real mother would never let her baby be cut in half. The real mother pipes up and says, "No, no, no, do not do that. Give her the baby." The other one says, "Cut it in half. I do not care whether it is her baby."

My point being this, do you know what brought the truth to the surface? A sword. When he pulled out the sword, it always brings forth the truth. That Bible says that your Word of God is your sharp two-edged sword, and it will always produce the truth. So that is all I use. I do not know who is right and who is wrong. But here is something I found observing over the years. This is worth, what was the other one worth? \$100 million? \$10 million? This is worth \$20 million. Double the ante.

My observation, and you ask yourself, who is really right and who is really wrong? I have learned over the years that it is really determining right and wrong is never really what the issue was. But you have to get a context of the problem. I have learned that at any given situation, it is not who says what or who even does what. It does not matter what it is. If you want to know the real person that is wrong in any given strife, I do not care what it is. Just like John 2. If you want to know who is really wrong in any given strife, it is simply the person who will not follow the biblical protocol and sit down and fix it.

Somebody will say, "Well, you said this about me, so-and-so said me." Okay, let us sit down and find out, get so-and-so, never happened. Do you know why? There was no so-and-so. Sitting down and laying it on a table and holding people accountable with the Bible, if you said this or you did not say this, find out the context. What is the truth? Because the bottom line in Christianity is restoration. It is forgiveness. It is fixing things. When you find people who have an axe to grind but they will not sit down and fix it, here is where the problem is. Running out and shooting off your mouth about whatever wrong or injustice you feel has happened to you will never fix it. You will not, but the bottom line is you will not apply what the Bible says, and you will not do it to get it fixed.

You have to establish a context of everything in your life. A context produces truth. Hear me now. Please be willing to take the issue, whatever it is, and sit down with whoever is involved and fix it because at the end of the day, Christianity is about peace. It is about longsuffering. It is about forgiveness. It is about restoration. When you find somebody who will not do that, most generally, they are the reason the problem was in the first place. It is one thing to have the right Bible, but there will never be enough if you do not do what it says. As Luke 6:46 says, "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" That is the problem. Christianity could solve 95% of its issues that have defeated it if God's people would just follow the Bible principles in solving its issues.

On Thursday night, people get upset sometimes because I will get a little hard on them because they should know better with the context. But that is what it takes sometimes. When somebody

wants to complain about whatever in life, your job is to hold them accountable and say, "Hey, look, have you reached out to that person? Have you tried to fix that situation?" When they say no, then you ask, "Why not?" There is no answer to that. You cannot say, "Well, I know what it would be. I know what they would say." Do not tell somebody what they would say until you have sat down and they have said it. Because you do not want to do it. You do not make up excuses why you do not do it. You do it. Facebook would go broke and out of business.

In everything, John 2 is what we are looking at. You have got that. But I want to make it broader than that. In everything in your life, in your family, in issues that come up with people, establishing a context of any issue will be the biblical way to produce the real truth. Once you have the truth, then it is just a matter of doing what is right and following all the way to the end, problem solved. So you can see, just following the Bible and using the establishing a context, I cannot tell you how important context is. I have told you up to this point how important it is in learning your Bible. Now today you learn how important it is in learning life.

John chapter 2 completely lays out and shows you the issues of social drinking for a Christian. Just going back and finding where the verse, where the subject is defined, and then using that wherever you go. Because God, once He establishes it, He never violates it. He never changes it. He will add to it, but He will never take away from it.

Next week we will look at this same passage. I am going to show you the doctrinal side to this. This is pretty, pretty, pretty, pretty amazing. It goes to show you how that every part of your Bible has a historical application. It actually happened, John 2. It has an inspirational application, how it applies to you and me. Go home and pour out your wine. Doctrinally, it shows you how this thing fits prophetically. We will look at it next week. What is really going on and how again we will learn another piece of your Bible by establishing a doctrinal context. Let us have a word of prayer and then we will be dismissed.