

Last week, we went a little deeper in John chapter 8, and we looked at the importance of truth in our lives. Obviously, you can probably say this at any time in the world, but there's no greater time in our lives when truth was going to be more important. We talked about how that truth will never change; it will change us, but it will never change the truth. We saw how the people, whether they're saved or lost, will either embrace the truth and run to it or they'll run from it.

When any issue arises, it's going to be the Word of God that you're going to go to to work it out. Nothing cannot be worked out through the Word of God and fixing it. When there's an issue and a person won't use the truth and sit down to deal with it, then we have learned from the patterns, like through the scribes and Pharisees and the Sadducees, and Cain and Abel in Genesis chapter 4, we now know exactly what you're dealing with. Really, all through the Bible, you'll find the same examples of people who just won't simply follow what the Word of God says. My favorite phrase through John chapter 8 is, "Some things never change."

## I. The Importance of God's Love and Hate

We talked about the seven things that God loves, and how that would be a great homework for you. Several people this week on the phone that I've talked to, who are trying to work through some issues, I gave this as a homework assignment: that they get a notebook, and then they begin to listen to the CDs, and then they lay out everything in it, and then look up all the references, and then get it into your Bible. The key is getting it into your Bible first, and then getting it into your own life second.

When you got saved, 1 Corinthians chapter 3 says you laid the foundation in your life, and that foundation is Jesus Christ. Then, learning the things that God loves and the importance of getting them down, getting them laid out, getting them where you can put them into your Bible, and then learning them in time will be the first building blocks that you build on that foundation that will lead to the right kind of relationship with Christ. We saw that in Isaiah chapter 28, many, many, many times ago, where it talks about line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. This is how God gets you His mind, that you let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, and that the mind of Christ will instruct us. This is where you start to know God and who He is and what He loves. This is the basis that you get into when you get into the Song of Solomon, because it really shows you that intimacy of what He really loves, and you see the most important thing probably to Christ is His love for you. Unfortunately, in our lives, it's not returned the way it probably should be. So, you can make them yours in time as you learn the things, the love that things He loves, and through a biblical process, then through your local New Testament church, then you get the seven things that He loves.

Then we looked at the seven things that He hates, and we covered that in Proverbs chapter 6, verse 16. He divided that out: six things, and then put the seventh through it as an abomination, clearly giving us 666. Just so you can kind of open it up a little bit and do a little expanded study: when the Bible talks about God hating, I know everybody thinks it's wrong to hate. Well, it's not

wrong to hate unless you have the wrong motive in your hate. The Bible says in Psalms 139:22 that God hates with a perfect hatred. In other words, His hatred is based on what He loves versus what sin is or what the devil loves. So, those are things that you want to just put in there.

Also, it talks about these six things that the Lord hates, and you have the seventh, and there's an abomination. When you go over to Matthew chapter 12, verses 43 through 47, you'll find the parable there of how an unclean spirit goes out of a man, and then that spirit comes back and brings with him seven other spirits, and the last state of that man is worse than the beginning. Of course, the man there is the nation of Israel and their spiritual condition, and those seven unclean spirits are right out of Proverbs chapter 6, verse 16. So, you begin to put all that stuff together.

## II. The Two Families and Mindsets

We talked about the two families spiritually speaking, and the two mindsets spiritually speaking, that will in one case or the other bring the Word of God or not the Word of God into your life. This is where you start right here. If you're a new Christian and you're somebody that's got saved, or maybe you've been saved a while but you're trying to get it all put together, this is where you start right here. You've got to clear off a spot in your life, which many of you have done, and then you clean house on the wrong thinking. You get the old things out and put the new things in.

We use a lot around here that little three-by-five card system where you take a three-by-five index card and you put a principle on it. When I'm working with people, I'll give them maybe 20 or 30 of those, 10 or 15, and every verse on there will be something that they're dealing with. I do that because they're young, they're trying to learn, but they don't have the ability to have the Word of God in their heart yet. So, I'll put it on the three-by-five card, and they carry those with them wherever they go. When they start to have an issue, when they start to feel this or feel that, then they pull those cards out and they start going through them. In time, you can throw your cards away because, "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee." So, getting God's mind into your mind and let it change you.

Facing your real issues, that is the hardest problem for God's people. Facing your real issues and quit blaming them on somebody else. Taking your own responsibility for the bad choices, the bad decisions, or the disasters in your life, and then allowing God through His Word to find a way out of that for you. This is what we were told to do in 2 Corinthians 7:1, when we're to use the promises of the Word of God to cleanse ourselves of all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God and the transforming of your life.

Remember, I've told you many, many, many times, the world will try to conform you, the world will try to reform you, the world will try to inform you, and the world will certainly misinform you. Only the Bible can transform you, but that has to go through a process. Now, what the Bible does when you get saved to your soul, it transforms your soul. You're now a new creature in Christ Jesus. All things are passed away, all things become new through the new birth. Then you take what God has given you, and after salvation, through the same Word of God on a process

basis daily, God will transform your heart, your mind into His heart, the transformation of your mind by what you think.

### III. The Three Imperatives of New Testament Christianity

Now, when it comes to New Testament Christianity, there are some main components that God will work through, and you need to know this because without these three, you're going nowhere. These three are absolutely imperative in the New Testament, and if you don't have them, you have nothing. Today, in the New Testament, if these three are not in play, then we're just like Israel at the first coming of Christ, an empty shell. Israel's spiritual condition is just bankrupt, to have a form of godliness, but there's no power there. So, we've looked at that.

That's what we looked at. Now today, again, we're going to crack down the magnification a little bit, and our verse today is going to be found in verse 47, just one little verse, and it says this:

*John 8:47*

*He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.*

Let's pray. Father, help us today to take from the Word of God what we need and what we have here. Help us to always stay focused on everything that we intend to do and be. We love You. We thank You, Father, for all that You've given us here in this church, for Your love for us, for the good people, for the Word of God You provided for us, and for a structure here that is conducive to helping people build that relationship with You. Yet today, take us one more time back into Your Word, and we'll be careful to give You all the honor and the glory and the praise. In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen.

Now, what I'm about to give you today will be the bottom line of what's wrong today. There are a lot of things. We talked about it earlier before the offering, a lot of things that went sideways, a lot of things don't work anymore in this country. We have seen unbelievably in the last two or three years a transformation of this country that 30 years ago, if you'd have told me what was going to happen, I would have never believed it. But we've seen a complete total breakdown of not only our country, but these three things in Christianity that must be there.

Understanding God's plan in the New Testament, there are three things that you have to have. Obviously, the first one is the Holy Spirit of God. You have to be saved. The second one is the Word of God. The third one is God's structure for the New Testament, the local church. They all have to work together. Many of God's people make a fundamental, fatal mistake thinking they can pick or choose one or two without all three, and you'll never survive that way because fundamentally, here's the design behind that.

First of all, the Holy Spirit of God, that's going to be your guide through life. The Holy Spirit of God is light. It's going to illuminate your path. You're going to be able to see where and where not to go and understand things because it is a guide, a lamp unto your feet.

The second one is the Word of God. Where the Holy Spirit of God may be the light, the Word of God is the roadmap for life. You'll find everything in the Bible, especially in the book of Acts,

for what we in the New Testament church are to be part of and not part of. You'll see it completely laid out for you, that it would be hard to make a mistake or get in the wrong direction if you just followed that roadmap. So, you have the guide light, you have the roadmap, but then we need a vehicle because God has a plan for each of us, and He doesn't want you to walk. He wants to provide a vehicle for you. Of course, the Holy Spirit of God is your light, the Word of God is your map, and the New Testament local church is the vehicle by which you get where God wants you to go, and that's just the way that it works.

This is where God's plan was to reach the world, generation after generations of families that would raise up their children to do what's right, and God would use them. Four, five, eight, nine, ten generations of family members all committed to doing the plan that God had for them. Of course, now when these are missing, these three, then the family breaks down, and we have what we have today: a complete and total breakdown in our country. I would say it's probably as close to anarchy as it can get, and it will soon get there.

When these things work in the church, then you have the church of the open door, the church at Philadelphia. When they don't work, then you have Laodicea, the church of the closed door. The pattern of history will bear this out. You can go right down and see the history of Christianity versus the history of nations. It's all relative to what they do with the greatest book this world has ever seen.

#### IV. The Devil's Plan: Divide and Conquer

Now, here's what the devil did, and his plan is masterful: divide and conquer. We talked about it earlier, that's always been his plan. That is the first thing you want to watch out for, not just in your church, but in your own life. He wants to divide you from the body. I mean, you're saved, you're going to heaven. Divide you from being here on Sunday, divide you from your discipleship, divide you from your Bible, divide you out of the friends that you have. The moment that happens, you're conquered, you just don't know it yet.

He took it from the church. The scribes, modern-day Pharisees and hypocrites, they told us that there was no real Bible. So, we took it from the church. Pastors went to those schools, bought into that stuff, and then took it into their churches. Not only did the scholarship and the world take the Bible from the church and its truth, then the church took it from its people. Without the Word of God, you get an example of what really is going on in Hosea chapter 4, verses 1 through 3. I won't take time to read it this morning, but you've got to look it up.

You lose what the Word of God's character quality is. It's likened to a preserving salt. Salt is a preservation process, and the Bible says when the salt, the Word of God, in Matthew 5:13, has lost its savor, it doesn't preserve anymore. The nation of the United States, as you go to Europe and go back through history and see who had the Word of God, there was one time when Czechoslovakia, under John Huss, probably 95% of that country's population were born again and saved. Czechoslovakia is no longer in existence, all because of what they did with the Word of God. You see it in England, you see it in Germany with Martin Luther, you see it in America with where we are at right now.

The nice thing about history, you can read those facts and read those books, but you don't have to experience it. We're experiencing this one. We're right in the middle of it. I know, I know, I know, I know, it's a thing where the church is gone, the family is gone, and then the country goes because it's the church and the people in the church with the right Bible that keeps the preservation of the Word of God that preserves everything in society.

Now, I know, and I see these guys all the time, they call me all week, and I talk to them all week, and everybody wants to blame the government for where we're at today. Believe me, I have no love for the government. I think it's corrupt. I think it's everything that's against us. But let's just be honest today, how did it get there? We really want to lay the blame, don't blame it on the Republicans or the Democrats. Don't blame it on the liberals. Don't blame it on the conservatives. You know where the real problem started? It started in pulpits just like this. It started because men who should have preached the Word of God to their people, and the people who should have raised their children and built a society based on the Word of God in truth that would have preserved this country, didn't do it. That's where it all came down, and that's why we're in the mess we're in today. So, I don't like it any better than you do, but at least I'll take responsibility and understand where it comes back to. They're only who they are and in power of who they are because the church allowed them to do that, because the salt lost its savor.

Somebody says, "Well, I don't know if I agree with that." Well, then just ask yourself a question: when's the last time you won somebody to Christ? See, we like a Christianity that we can boast we have, but we don't have to really do anything. That's what we want. That's what we like. We enjoy that. We enjoy the fact that we can stand up and shout and scream and believe this and believe that, but God's people today don't want anything to do with other people. They don't want a ministry to change people's lives. They don't want to take the truth to anybody, and that's why the country's in the mess that it's in.

Now, I get it, all this has to happen before the Lord comes back. Honestly, one of the real reasons why I don't really care about the vaccine one way or the other is the fact that hopefully the Lord is going to come back this afternoon and it won't make any difference. I'm okay with that because I know the time is short, and I know that as a church who has the truth, no matter what the world tries to mandate to us or dictate to us, we need to find a way through it, around it, and keep that truth going there till the Lord comes back. He said, "Occupy till I come." I've never met anything with the Word of God in my life in ministry that I couldn't get around or under or through if I just saw it with the Word of God and realized my focus was people and getting them the truth, no matter what price I had to pay.

## V. Seven Things Lost When You Lose Your Bible

Now, when you lose your Bible, you will lose seven major things. Last week, I talked about the seven things God loves and the seven things that God hates. We're going to go a little deeper here based on our verse: "He that is of God heareth God's words. Ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." We're going to talk about the seven things that you lose when you lose your Bible, and this is the answer to why we're in the mess we're in. More than that, this is the answer you're in the mess you're in, and it just depends now on what you do with truth. No truth, no

doctrine, wrong mindset, hanging out with the wrong bunch, we're just a bunch of phony religious leaders that just are playing the game.

In your Bible, and I've told you this before, and some of you have heard this before, so the price of learning is repetition. In your Bible, it's God's book, and because it's God's book, He claims the author's privilege to write it the way He wants to write it, to put in it the things that He wants to put in, and then structure it the way that He wants to structure it. Out of that, for a true biblical Bible study, you will find God's systematic theology. You're going to find the fact that it is a systematic way, it is a system to it, of putting your Bible together. For years and years and years, a guy by the name of Francis Schaeffer, he put out years and years ago a series of books called Schaeffer's Systematic Theology. It was about the Bible, and it is held up even today as the standard by which every Bible college, Bible student, every pastor, if you look at all his books on his bookshelf in his office that he's never read, you will obviously see Schaeffer's Systematic Theology there. It is the hallmark. My advice is, make a bullet stop out of it or a boat anchor, because when it comes to the Bible, it's worthless.

In your Bible, God has put a systematic theology, which I call the seven series, God building His Word around a series of systems based on the number seven, which we know is the number of perfection in Bible numerology. Someday, I would love to do on a Sunday morning a long study and go through every one of the sevens in the Bible. It would take us forever. You think Proverbs took a while, but I would think that it would be an incredible project to do, to really unearth God's systematic theology based on the number of seven. Everything in the Bible that He wants us to study, He puts in that little system. So, when you study it individually, then they all start going together, and that's how you learn your Bible.

But when you talk about rejection of truth and getting rid of God's Word, in the Word of God, there is a great study on the seven things that we lose in Christianity, in churches, and in this country when you lose your Bible and reject it. When you lose these seven things, then you begin to see the real issue today is, as a Christian or a church or whatever, now it's just an empty shell. There's no real substance to it. You just pretend the game keeps going. Truth, I'm going to tell you something, folks, truth can be the greatest thing in your life or it can be the worst thing in your life. It's all in how you accept it or how you reject it.

Now, let's look at these. The first thing that you lose when you lose your Bible is found over there in 2 Timothy chapter 3, verses 16 and 17. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. The first thing that you lose here, when you don't have your Bible, is you lose the furnishings. Let me explain that to you. Back in the Old Testament, in the book of Exodus chapter 25, 26, and other places too, you have the layout of the building of the tabernacle. Now, that tabernacle was a building of God that was a physical building in the Old Testament. It's a picture of your New Testament spiritual body, which is God's tabernacle. "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought

with a price." So, the literal temple back there is a literal temple that is a picture of your spiritual temple.

Now, back in that literal one, there were seven pieces of furniture. Each one of those pieces of furniture will line up and be something in your spiritual life that God wants to build spiritually in your new temple. First of all, you have the brazen altar. The brazen altar will represent salvation, Christ's death on the cross. The second thing you have is the laver of water. When the Old Testament priest went in and out of the tent, every time he went back in, he had to wash his feet with that little laver. It had little spigots on it to go in there, being clean. That's a picture of your daily cleansing of your life through the Word of God, that you can walk through the dirt of this old earth and stay clean. Then there was a golden censer. That golden censer was a little thing on a stick that had incense in it that he carried back and forth. You see the Catholics imitate it, carry it back and forth, and it's blowing a little smoke out of it. That's a picture of your prayer life. That's a picture of you carrying that wherever you go because the Bible says, "Pray without ceasing." So, you have that. Then you have a seven-prong candlestick, and that's sitting over on this side. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit of God manifested itself in seven spirits. So, in the Old Testament, you've got a seven-prong candlestick that's called a menorah. The hospital over here in Kansas is named after that. So, that seven-prong candlestick is a picture of the Holy Spirit of God in your life. Now, over here on the other side, you have the shewbread and a table. That table is a picture of your fellowship with God, and the shewbread is baked every morning fresh, and it's laid out one, two, three, four, five, six, and then underneath that, another one, two, three, four, five, six, twelve loaves on the table of shewbread. That's a picture of the Word of God in your life. The table's a picture of your fellowship around the Word of God. There's twelve loaves of bread for the Old Testament nation of Israel, but it's laid six and six out for you because the Bible you have in your hand has 66 books in it. See how it works? These are the furnishings. Then you have the altar of incense. That'll be your worship. Then you have the Holy of Holies on the other side of the veil. That'll be a picture of where most God's people never get in their relationship, and that other side of that veil is completely leaving the world, and you're now in a relationship that is just consumed with the Lord of your life. Now, these are the things through God's truth that He will build in you spiritually. He'll build these seven things. The issue today with God's people, remember now, if you're saved, the Holy Spirit of God is inside you. The thing that makes Him comfortable with you is simply this: have you provided Him a room full of furnishings, or is He living in an empty room? You have to answer that one yourself, but it's a thing where most of God's people have left an empty room for Him to live in, and there's no furnishings.

The second thing you lose when you lose your Bible is found in 1 Thessalonians 2:13.

*1 Thessalonians 2:13*

*For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.*

Now, the second thing that happens once you don't have the furnishings inside your life, you know what you don't have next? The Word of God won't work in you. There's no working of the Word of God in you, and the key word there is "effectually" working in you. But I want you to notice first, you must receive that book as the Word of God, not as the word of man. Notice it said, "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, for when you receive the original manuscripts, for when you receive the Greek New Testament or Hebrew Old Testament," no, it said, "For when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."

The Word of God that God gave you, that the man of God, 2 Timothy chapter 3, verse 17, that the man of God, we looked at it, may be perfect unto all good works. Notice, "thoroughly furnished." "Thoroughly" on the inside is where it starts, and then truth starts inside you and then manifests itself outwardly to everybody else. Every new Bible on the market takes out that word "thoroughly" and changes it to "thoroughly." When they do that one little word, they just change the complete doctrinal status of what the Word of God does. It starts in you building furniture and then moves outwardly. When you take the word "thoroughly" out and put the word "thoroughly" in, you've lost a whole sense of it. No book, no truth, no work in you. Remember our key verse, Philippians 1:6, "He hath begun a good work in you." That work is what He starts, and then you begin to build the furniture, and then it goes outward.

Then the third thing, the third thing you will lose when you lose your Bible is John chapter 14, verse 23.

*John 14:23*

*Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*

Now, you have a thing here where if you don't have it, then you can't really have a real biblical love for God. You can have that love that you know, like you love your dog, or you love this, or you love your car, or you love your house, or you love the new dress you bought, but you don't love God that way. You've got to go through a biblical process through the system of systematic theology, building the Word of God in your life, getting God's mind and the things that He loves to learn how to love Him, and it's just that simple. Real biblical love for God will only come as you, through the Word of God, you learn to love Him.

Psalms 119, verses 1 through 176, 176 verses in the middle Psalm of your Bible, right in the middle of Psalms, and of course it deals with every one of those: how to love God, learning to love what He loves, and learning to hate what He hates. A real relationship and love for God will not go back to the Greek, as I said, or the Hebrew or original manuscripts, but only through the key words of God. What He's going to do, the real question for everybody today, me and you, do you have the very words of God? Yes or no? Do you have the very words of God? You can't keep them if you don't have them.

Then the fourth thing that you lose when you lose your Bible, this will be John chapter 4, verses 22 through 24.

*John 4:22-24*

*Ye worship ye know not what: for salvation is of the Jews.*

*But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.*

*God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*

Now, the next thing is you don't have any worship. Without a doubt, this is the most fundamental messed up area that God's people get into today, and it's all because they lost the Bible a long time ago. I see it all the time. I'll be driving down the road, and there'll be a church there, doesn't matter which one it is, and on the marquee it'll say, "9:30 Monday, 9:30 Sunday morning worship service." It's a thing where I've seen them say, "Call to worship, 10 o'clock." Now, there is no such thing as a worship service. There is no such thing as a call to worship. I've heard pastors get up and say, "Okay, now we're going to worship God with your tithes and your offering." No, we're just going to take your money. Worship has nothing to do with you giving anything. Worship has nothing to do with a service. It has nothing to do with music. It has nothing to do in the sense of that it is used today.

Worship, real biblical worship, is your spirit inside you becoming one with the Word of God, God's Spirit. He says, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit," man's spirit, "and in truth," the Word of God. You don't have the book, you're kidding yourself. So, what happens? You have no real worship, biblically anyhow. So now you want to pretend you're okay, so you take the thing you don't have and you make it a service, you make it a this or you make it that, when the Bible clearly tells you that if you're going to really have a worship with God, it has nothing to do with this service. It has nothing to do with a time we set up. It has to do with right now in your spirit, where are you at with God's truth? That's real worship. Of course, we've lost completely that.

Then the fifth thing you lose when you lose your Bible, John 15:7.

*John 15:7*

*If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.*

The next thing is no power in your prayer life. Again, this is without a doubt the second thing after worship that God's people are really confused on. It's very clear from Romans 8:26 that we don't know how to pray, and yet we continue to think we do. We are told that prayer is one of our infirmities, that we don't know how to pray as we ought. I'd say based on this verse and the truth of God's Word that most of God's people's prayers just go up through the roof and go nowhere. It's a thing where you know, you have to learn how to pray. It's a thing where it isn't about what you say, it's about the attitude of heart behind what you say. You have to learn when to pray. You have to learn when not to pray. There are some things that God's people pray about that you don't have to pray about. You know why you don't have to pray about? Because God already told you in His Word what you're supposed to do. I never have to pray about, "God, should I do what You

just said?" But we do, and it comes down to the fact that we don't know the truth that well, that we don't know when something comes up, "Should I pray for this, or is this already covered somewhere in the Word of God?" Of course, that's one of the issues we have. We have an issue of what to pray for. There are some things you have a right to pray for and some things you don't have a right to pray for. I know that's foreign to most of God's people. That's because you let somebody take the Bible from you. You need to learn what to pray for, and then there are times you learn what not to pray for.

You need to realize the real position of prayer. You need to understand, I used to read church history about these guys that were evangelists. They would travel 40, 60 miles a day on horseback, and they'd preach at night, and then they'd go on to some place else, and yet they would talk about how that they prayed six or seven hours a day. I would think to myself, "How could that be?" I mean, from what they do, they're traveling. I mean, they didn't like getting on a bus or getting in a plane or getting in a car. They were on a horse, and maybe you had to go 40 miles. Have you ever went 40 miles on a horse? Well, I am telling you. I'd say to myself, but then I figured it out. They were praying all the time they were on the horse. Should we get the idea it's got to be at night on your knees over your bed? No, that's when you're looking for your contact. We get the idea that we have to close our eyes, bow our head, and fold your hand. I get that, that we want to be reverent for God, but you can be praying without ceasing all day long while you're driving. Don't close your eyes. Prayer is not about the position of your body, it's about the position of your spirit. When your spirit is in a mode of worship 24/7, you ought to be in a mode of worship every second day of your life. When you get out of fellowship, you fix that as quickly as you can to restore the fellowship, because fellowship is only based on worship, all under the guidelines of 1 Thessalonians 5:17, "Pray without ceasing."

Now, let me give you a little tidbit here. We talked about the Old Testament and the tabernacle, and that's a picture of your body, and the furnishings in it are a picture of the things that God wants to build in you. You had the seven golden candlesticks, and then you had the altar of incense that was a picture of your worship burning, and then you had the laver, which was incense that the guy carried around, which is a picture of your prayer life. When you get deeper into this, you will find that everything in that tabernacle, on the incense and the candlesticks, had to be lit and burned from the fire off the brazen altar. You remember one time God killed some guys' kids because they offered strange fire. It meant that they got the fire for the inside of the tabernacle some place strange. It wasn't off the brazen altar. I've had people say, "Why would God kill them?" It's because of what it represented. That brazen altar represents Christ's death on the cross. Now listen to me, when you pray, when you lay out your heart to God, when you pray, if your prayer, laver of incense, altar of incense, if your prayer and your worship does not go back to that brazen altar where Christ died on the cross for you, and that is the start of your prayer, you're wasting your time, going nowhere. Now, to some people, you would say, "Wow, that's complicated." To me, I simply say, "See how easy that is when it was it ever complicated to give God everything in your life until you don't want to?" So, there's the fifth one.

Now, the sixth one, the sixth thing you lose when you lose your Bible, Jeremiah chapter 1, verses 4 through 10.

*Jeremiah 1:4-10*

*Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,*

*Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.*

*Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.*

*But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.*

*Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD.*

*Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.*

*See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.*

Now, the sixth thing, when you lose your Bible, you have no power in preaching anymore. There's no question about it, and anyone who understands church history, that the church was and will be built and maintained on good, solid biblical preaching, not teaching. The mark of the Philadelphia church age, the church of the open door, 1600 to 1900, Revelation 3:7, was preaching. The greatest preachers the world has ever seen came out of that church period. The mark of the Laodicean church, church of the closed door, Revelation chapter 3, 1900 to 2021, where we're at today, will be teaching. Nobody preaches anymore, and the good balance of both needs to be in any church.

You know that you've got to know the purpose of preaching is twofold. Verse 10 says the first thing it does is He starts with this: He says, "root out," then He says, "pull down," then He says, "destroy," then He says, "throw down," then "to build and plant." Now, if you're going to grow, and I'm speaking to all of us here, if you're going to grow and plant and build, before you try to do that, there are some things you need to root out of your life. There are some things you need to pull down in your life. There are some things you need to utterly destroy in your life, and there are some things you need to throw down in your life. Then after you do that, you can build and plant.

Now, teaching will never accomplish any of these things. Teaching will not get you to root out. Teaching will not get you to pull down. Preaching will do that. Preaching the hell out of you, literally speaking. Preaching the Word of God to you right across the plate, waist high, where you can take a swing at it. No fooling around with it, no hiding it, no masking it, no cloaking it, giving it right to you straight across the plate, and you have to do something with it. Preaching forces a decision in your life. Preaching will force you to trust Christ or reject Christ. Preaching will force you to root out or not root out, to pull down or not pull down, to destroy or not destroy, to throw down or not. But you will never accomplish those things in your life through some wishy-washy guy getting up and just talking to you like he doesn't want to offend you. Preaching is designed to offend you if you need offended, and most of us do. You've got to learn to like

somebody slapping you in the face with cold water. You've got to enjoy somebody getting up and preaching on your private sins that you want to keep. You need to enjoy somebody getting up and just laying it out, man, that when you walk out of here, you're under conviction. Teaching won't do that. You see, teaching will puff you up. It'll give you knowledge without ever keeping you honest. That's what preaching does.

I could get up here and say, "Well, thank you for being here today, and you're all such lovely people, and oh God today, take us ugly ducklings and make us swans. Turn us into Your instruments of peace. Use us, Lord, and as the Bible says, 'Do unto others before they do it to you.'" Go on with that stuff, that doesn't do anything. You need somebody up here saying, "You know what's wrong with you? You've got sin in your life. You need to change some things. You need to get on your knees and ask God. He saved you. He died for you. What are you doing?" That's what you need.

The seventh thing, final thing, the seventh thing you lose when you lose your Bible, Joshua chapter 1, verses 6 and 7.

*Joshua 1:6-7*

*Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swear unto their fathers to give them.*

*Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.*

The last thing you lose when you lose your Bible, you lose your inheritance. You'll have nothing at the judgment seat of Christ. Your millennial inheritance goes right out the window because it all has to go back to truth. It all has to go back to what you do with the truth in your life and how that truth impacted you. If you do anything for God at all, and it doesn't go back for that book of what He did for you, you're wasting your time. When you don't have the Bible, you don't have that. So, you have to fabricate something that replaces that. You have to come up with a program. You have to come up with a halftime show in your church. You have to come up with singers and music. I know a church in town that they spend an hour and 40 minutes on all kinds of music and dancing and this and that, and then when the pastor gets up, he has a 19-minute message. Now, I understand completely, he's got nothing to say. I'm surprised he can get 19 minutes out of it. But I am telling you, everything we do better go back to the book that God gave.

This is why I push and push and push for you to learn biblical principles. Biblical principles will always bring you back to square one in that book of why you're doing what you're doing. It'll always bring you back to the fact that at the judgment seat of Christ, back there in the Old Testament, one of the six questions He's going to ask is, "Whose spirit came from you? The Spirit of God or your own spirit? To whom hast thou uttered words? Are they your words or are they the words of God?" The judgment seat of Christ isn't going to be about what you did or what you didn't do. It ain't going to be about the mistakes you made in life. It's going to be about one thing in your ministry as a Christian: what did you do with the words of God? Because he

that hears God's Word is of God, and you hear Him not because you're not of God. The judgment seat of Christ is all about your attitude toward God's heart, the Word of God, to align your spirit to it. If that book, if that book in 1 Thessalonians 2:13 is not for us and what we do and accepting it as the Word of God, then everything we do for Him is just a waste of time. It has to go back to truth. Why? Because "Thy word is true." Why? Because Christ is true, and it has to go back to Him. That's what saves you. That's what keeps you. That's what will judge us at the judgment seat of Christ, and that's what our millennial inheritance will be based on, and it all starts with you having the very words of God.

## VI. Final Warnings and Future Challenges

There are two final warnings in the Bible. I don't know if you've ever seen them or not. One of them is in Revelation chapter 3, verse 11, where we are told to let no man take our crown. That's the judgment seat of Christ, that no man gives you bad information, wrong information, takes the Bible from you through education, and in the process, you think you're learning some great things. He takes your crown because no Bible, no crown. The second one is found in Revelation chapter 16, verse 15, and I understand doctrine of these other tribulations, but brother, you better put him right where you live according to 2 Corinthians chapter 5, and that is the warning that you keep your garments because somebody in 2 Corinthians chapter 5 is going to show up at the judgment seat of Christ naked. You can read it for yourself.

This is what He's saying in our verse today in John chapter 8, verse 47: "He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." I'll let you take that and apply it to you anywhere you have to. Again, out of our chapter, another great system, another great way to lay on the foundation of your salvation, the corner building blocks that you need to build. Learning first of all to build on there the things that God loves, and then making sure you don't build on there the things that God hates, and then taking and understanding the absolute vital importance of the Word of God in your life. You make sure in your Christian life you always have these seven things. You get them down, another homework assignment. You get them down today. You get them in your Bible, and then you get them in your daily life, the furnishings of your temple.

Don't allow, you know, we, the Holy Spirit of God talks about being grieved, and we think that, and I understand, we think that when we get into sin or do things that are wrong, but that's what grieves the Holy Spirit of God, and I'm sure that it does. But I'll tell you what really grieves the Holy Spirit of God: Him living in an empty, cold room. I remember one time when we first bought this house that we're in now, many, many, many, many years ago, and they built it, and we had just walked through it, and I came down the steps into the downstairs area and walked out into the garage, and I turned the light on, and it was, you know, it was wintertime when we moved in there, and it was cold, it was damp. I put my hands up on the walls, and it was cold, and I got thinking, you know, I thought to myself, and I walked over and I turned the light out, and it was dark. You couldn't see anything. I turned that light back on, and I said, "Lord, please don't ever allow me to have You live in my heart, in my life, in a room like this garage. Don't ever let me put You in a cold, damp, dark room where there's no furnishings, and then turn the

light out on You." And yet that's exactly what so many of God's people do. It's no wonder we grieve Him. It's no wonder that we come to the place in our lives where we have the issues that we have, and we struggle with what we have.

As I said earlier in our little monologue before we got into making the announcements, I'm telling you, unity is all we've got, and it goes back to the book. I've told you 20 years ago, if you were here, that this day would come. I think that when I said things like that, most of God's people thought it was theatrics for a good message. Maybe it was a little bit, but I've always knew in my heart where this thing had to go, and I worked hard, I worked long, I took the time to be diligent with everything I preached you, every Bible study we had, every time we opened up the Bible, I tried to make sure that I was as on target as I could be because I realized that I wasn't just helping you grow to be effective in the ministry, I was helping you to grow against the day that we're all going to face. It's going to put this church and everybody in it to the true test. It's going to bring us to the point where I told you two years ago that there are things coming that are going to make the coronavirus look like nothing, and you're beginning to see it.

You see, up to this point, the attack has been a global, general thing, hasn't it? They never liked Christianity. They've never liked truth. But now we're seeing it refocus itself down to individuals. Now you're seeing where they're going to come after your family. Now you're seeing an oppressive government that thinks they know more about what your child needs to be taught in school than you need to teach them at home. They're going to completely take everything from your family or try to, that you systematically want to teach your kid about living your life. Now, when they're in the second and their third, fourth grade, the teacher is helping your child decide if they really should be a boy or a girl. Are you okay with that? Well, that's where it's going. Then when you raise up against that, our own government, the FBI, labels you on a watch list of being a domestic terrorist. Don't you see what's coming? Don't you see where it's headed? Don't you see? My best advice to all of you would be, prepare yourself, all of us, for a jail ministry. You're laughing, and it's funny, and ha ha he he, I'm with you, but I am telling you, if you think, if Jesus doesn't come, if you think that we are not going to get clobbered, those who have the truth, it happened in the Dark Ages, and we are now again in a modern-day Dark Ages, and they're going to come after anybody with that book. Now we're going to see the consistency of, "Do we really believe what we said we did?" Of course, it's going to come to the place where what you're seeing today is nothing compared to what's coming.

I'm telling you what, it's going to be a thing where they're going to come after your kid. They're going to come after your job. They're going to come after your Medicare. They're going to come after everything that you have to conform you, and then they're going to come after the book we all hold. You see, I can give up my Big Macs. I can give up my gas. I can give up whatever, but I'll tell you one thing I will never give up, and that's the book right here. This is where the rubber meets the road, and this is where I can't speak for you. This is where I need to put the money where my mouth was. This is where now I need to stand. I don't have any alternative to say, "Well, you know what, maybe we can just kind of..." No, at that point, when it comes down to the book, all the everything's off the table. Up to that point, it doesn't really matter to me because I can still function as we can, as we will. But when it comes and they take that book from you,

and they start labeling this church and you as a racist and as a terrorist because we stand for what it is, wait till they come to your house and they sit down and they start to ask you questions about what you really believe, and these guys are big guys with black suits. Don't smile, and they intimidate you up one side and down the other. I want to see what we'll all say at that point in time. I want to see how many of God's people that talk really big right now are going to cave in when it comes to that. I want to see what happens when they say, "If you go to church on Sunday, you'll probably be in jail on Monday." Well, we'll just hold Bible study early that week. Let's all trust God that we all get put in the same cell together. We could really do some damage in that case. But I'm just telling you, you ain't seen nothing yet.

What a privilege. I can't speak for you. What a privilege. Oh, Mel, you know, he didn't get a chance to do it, but he wanted to. He always used to preach when he died, he wanted to die with his boots on. He didn't. That sounds really good, and I like things like that, but you know what the truth of the matter is, we don't always get to choose how we go out. But I'm telling it right now, we may get our choice in this one, and it's a thing where the only thing that's going to hold us together is unity and that book, that no matter what comes, we stand together on a book that God gave us that got us this far. I'm telling you right now, no matter what happens, if the book got us this far, it'll get us all the way to the end. Boy, I, you know, I've always, I've always thought what a great time at the end of time to be standing and preaching the Word of God because of the fact that it's a thing where, you know, no matter how dark it gets, and it's dark, and it's only going to get darker, the great thing about that is the darker it gets, the more this little light gets illuminated. In the Navy, on a ship in the sea, it gets so black you can't see nothing, and when they have a smoking lamp is out, if you're on the deck or you're the bridge, you can't smoke a cigarette on the deck at night in combat anyhow. You know why? Because they can see that light of that cigarette 10 miles away. You know why? The darkness, listen to me, the darkness will always illuminate the light. I don't care how dark this world gets, my friend, I'm telling you right now, what we have as light will only be more illuminated by the darkness, and we just take the time that we have left and focus on what we have to do for the Lord, and then let Him come and pull us out of this mess, and goodbye world, goodbye.

Let's pray. Father, we do thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. Love You. Thank You.