

John 3

## I. Introduction and Review of God's Family

Today, we are going to finish up John chapter 3. As you know, we have been in a study of John, and you will remember that the last time we were here, I laid out a very large piece of your Bible for you when we studied the household of God, or the family of God, whichever you want to call it. That is how the Bible calls it in two different places.

I showed you that there are seven members of God's eternal family that fit into God's eternal plan. They run in our Bible from Genesis all the way up to Revelation and then on out into eternity. They make up the family that is built around Jesus Christ and His bride, which is you and me in the church, because we know that there is going to be a wedding. We showed all the verses on it, and these people are invited to that wedding.

You could take a study on each one of these and you could look at where and how each one of them will fit into what role they will play in God's eternal government, which is laid out for us in Isaiah 9:6-7.

These members of God's family are really key to understanding the dispensations in the Bible. Through Bible Institute, we came through that here not too long ago, and we touched that a while back. All of this is for the purpose of helping you get your Bible to work for you. It makes the Christian life a lot easier when you let the Bible do the work. That is the way God intended it.

What we try to do here is when you get saved, 1 Corinthians 3 says that now you have laid a foundation. Then we try to build on that foundation layer upon layer to give you and help you understand the Bible.

Back in Isaiah 28:13, that little section talks about that exactly. It talks about, "To whom shall thou teach doctrine?" Then it says:

*Isaiah 28:13*

*But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.*

That is how you do it, and that is how we do it. We take somebody that gets saved, and then we work with them, helping them to one layer at a time, layer on that foundation, everything that God wants them to know.

## II. The Compromise of Christianity

Last week, which was Easter Sunday, we had a reality check for all of us. That is the fact that Christianity has totally been compromised today in a great way, to the point where we are taking

the hallowed things of God and then turning them into pagan concepts. If you know your Bible at all, this is exactly what happened to the nation of Israel under the Kings back there. 2 Kings 12 comes to mind, I think around verse 18.

What happened was that there were special things that God had dedicated to Himself. There were holy things, hallowed things that God had dedicated to Himself, that the nation of Israel was to keep in a special place. What happened was as the nation of Israel declined, and they began to be compromised much like the churches today, what they did was as they began to open up these things and allow the pagan kings to come in, they took some of the stuff and gave it to the pagan kings. It really amounted to taking the special, hallowed, holy things that God held dear and wanted for Himself, giving it to the world.

Boy, if there is ever a time when we are guilty of that again today, it would be the day and age that we live in. It is exactly what has happened then is happening now. It is hard to believe that God's people would actually fall for it, but that is the way it has. We have the devil's Bible, we have the devil's music. Now we take the things that should be the most special things in our Christian life and connect it to paganism and all the things that go along with it.

It always amazed me, and I have said this before, God's people are famous for one error that they do. We are all guilty of it. The goal in our life should be to do this as little as possible. When it comes to the Bible, the Bible is absolute. The Bible is fixed. The Bible does not adjust itself to society. It demands society adjust itself to the Bible. The Bible is a fixed book. It is an absolute book. It is not something that we decide what part we want to believe or what part we do not.

But that is what we do in Christianity today. I see it all the time. I have seen it all my ministry. I have seen people come to the place where they claim to love the Bible. They read the Bible, and they do, but they pick and choose out of the Bible what they want to do. You just cannot do that. You have to either follow all of it or you do not follow any of it. That is a disaster today.

I would think that the fact that Colossians 2:14-17 tells us:

*Colossians 2:14*

*Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;*

*Colossians 2:15*

*And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*

*Colossians 2:16*

*Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:*

*Colossians 2:17*

*Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.*

He is saying there that He took everything in the Old Testament and He nailed it to His cross. He took it out of the way that we do not follow it anymore in the New Testament church. "Having spoiled principalities and powers," that is the devil and his crowd. "He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them." Then it says in verse 16, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." Then he goes on to say, "So let no man beguile you in these things." Boy, God's people have been beguiled today, and that is the problem, it really is.

Last week we wanted to focus on bringing into reality where we are really at in the time period that we live in the midst of, as we know, the Laodicean church period, the last church period before the Lord comes back. I will tell you, I have never, never, never seen a Christian world and the unsaved world more compromised in such a mess as it is today.

I built last week around the old message, an old throwback message that I preached many, many, many years ago, basically a reality check for all of us on "A Letter from Hell." We are God's people who we believe, we say we believe in hell, but we never tell anybody about it. We are kind of like Jehovah Witness Christians. They do not believe there is a hell either.

I know a lot of people out there, and I got email after email, text after text of people out there that just really thanked me for telling them the truth and all the things that they learned and that they never knew those things before. I have always said this: I know that in the world and in the Christian world, there are a lot of goofy people out there who buy into everything that goes on. I get that. But I want you also to know that God always had His remnant. Within that crowd, there are plenty of people out there who hold and believe the real truth of a biblical old school mentality that really understand what the ministry still should be.

God keeps bringing them to us and us to them through the website and everything. They come here and talk to me as visitors, and they are looking for the truth. They are tired of the phoniness and the pretense of Christianity that does not work. They are tired of the Madison Avenue three-ring circus that does not really accomplish anything.

This is why we established the Lifeline Ministry. For many, many, many years, we had our prayer groups upstairs that met before church, and they served a wonderful purpose. But things change. Times change. When COVID-19 hit, we no longer could do that. So instead of just running away from it, we just found an alternative. In that plan I gave you of four, five, six things that we were going to do, one of them was the Lifeline Ministry. Now that is spread across the country, where every week the girls have their groups, the guys have theirs, and they get online and they share things, they work together, they help each other.

Then we have online the Discipleship One, a young man that I just talked about. Somebody took him already this morning to disciple him. And then past that, Discipleship Two. Banding together in these last times. That is available for anybody that is out there listening to me today or anybody here. We want to be here together to get through everything that we are at right now. I will say it again, what we are experiencing right now is nothing to what is coming. If you do not see that already in the handwriting on the wall, you are blind.

I preached last week the lost reality of a place called hell. We fundamentally say we believe it, but we really do not follow it. I preached that of Luke 16 with the rich man and Lazarus. I talked about how incredibly terrible it is to wind up in a place like that when God never intended for any man or woman to go there to begin with. If a man or a woman winds up in hell and ultimately the lake of fire, it is because they have chosen to be there. So we talked about that and we kind of just got us all a reality check of where we are really at and what we really need to be focused on.

### III. The Current State of the Church

Today, I am going to go back to John 3, as I said, and we are going to finish chapter 3 out. We will deal with yet again, another issue that we find lacking in and actually filled with bad teaching today within the church. I hear this stuff all the time. Today, the New Testament church is filled with endless issues. It really is.

I had a guy tell me this week that he knew that the Lord was coming back very soon. I said, "Well, yeah, amen. I get that." He said, "Yeah." So I asked him, I said, "Well, I mean, I believe that, but what brought you to that conclusion?" He said, "Well, President Trump." I said, "Okay, President Trump." He said, "Yeah, the Bible says that the Lord is going to come back at the last Trump."

It kind of reminded me years and years and years and years and years ago, when I was in the army, I really got sick really bad. They put me in the hospital for like four days. I had pneumonia. After about the four days, I started feeling better. I started to get up and, you know how I am, I got to walk around. So I was walking through this hospital and I got into this, I found out later, was a psych ward. I did not know it at the time. So I am walking around looking at things and checking things out. I see this Marine standing over here. He is a big guy. I thought he had his arm up. I thought he was hurt, wounded in the arm. So I am talking back there and I walk up and I say, "Hey, Mac, how you doing?" You call Marines Mac. You call Army guys Joe. You probably do not need to know that, but in case you are ever running one, Marines are Mac, Armies are Joes, okay?

So he had his arm up here like that. I said, "Hey, Mac, how is it going?" He did not say anything. I said, "How is the arm? Did you get hit? Are you wounded in the arm?" He looks down at me and he says, "Can't you see my giraffe?" I said, "Yeah, that is a nice one." I was out of there, man. I got the same feeling with this guy about the last Trump. It is just creepy, a little nuts today, just nuts today.

What are you going to do? The church is so filled with issues today. Everybody, it is like the book of Judges. I say this all the time, there is no King in Israel and everybody is doing what is right in their own eyes. The church today is filled with endless issues.

Two great examples of this, if you want to see this at work in the Bible, will be the books of 1 and 2 Corinthians. When I used to teach pastors how to minister, I used to use these two books. I used to take 1 Corinthians, and in the book of 1 Corinthians, we know that there are 16 chapters, I believe. In that book, they have multiple problems and issues within the chapter. These people

are fighting over who baptized who. They are fighting over who won who to Christ. Obviously putting some significance, "Well, if you were won to Christ by the pastor and you were won to Christ by Ralph Schwartz, who is a nobody, that you are more special because of who won you to Christ." I mean, it is unbelievable.

Chapter by chapter, they are messed up on the resurrection, they are messed up on the Lord's Supper. The women have taken over the church. It is an absolute disaster. They are messed up on tongues, they are messed up on everything. In that book, Paul takes them multiple things within each chapter and tries to get them straightened out. They are messed up on every aspect of New Testament Christianity. He tells them in 1 Corinthians 3:1, "You guys are a bunch of babies." He says, "You guys do not know anything about the Bible. You are operating like a bunch of little babies." He says, "Yet you are walking around as carnal men." He says, "You got milk of the Bible, but there is no meat here in the Bible." Boy, if that is not a picture of the church today in the 20th and 21st century.

God's people know nothing about the Bible today. What is more important, they do not care anything about the Bible today. They are content to go to church, do something for God, or not go to church and do nothing for God, but they do not want to commit themselves to the greatest book this world has ever seen that has the answers to every issue that you are going to face in life. It is crazy.

Then he wrote them 2 Corinthians. In the second letter to this church, someplace along the line, the church at Corinth got it together. They got themselves straightened out. Then he writes them a second letter. In the second letter, chapter by chapter, he gives them the information how to operate a New Testament biblical ministry. Just like in 1 Corinthians, when he deals with multiple issues that they are messed up on, in 2 Corinthians he gives us multiple issues that we, if we are going to have a biblical-based New Testament church, it becomes for us our handbook for ministry. Where Romans for us is the handbook of what we believe, 2 Corinthians is the handbook of how we do it.

It is a great contrast between two churches. Way back in the 1800s, Charles Dickens wrote a book called *A Tale of Two Cities*. He really did not have that right because he obviously never wrote the book of Acts, because if he had read the book of Acts, he would have wrote about the tale of three cities because that is what the book of Acts is. But if I was to write a book today, I would write about a tale of two churches: The Church of Corinth, a tale of two books, 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians. The first one, they are messed up in everything they do, and the second one, he does everything and tells them what to do right. That is where you have to really form the base foundation of your ministry if you are going to do it biblically.

#### IV. John 3:31-36 and Prayer

Now, let us read our verse in John 3 today, and this is a great way to end chapter 3. So let us read it together here starting in verse 31.

*John 3:31*

*He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthy, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.*

*John 3:32*

*And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.*

*John 3:33*

*He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.*

*John 3:34*

*For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.*

*John 3:35*

*The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.*

*John 3:36*

*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

Let us pray. Father, help us today to take the Word of God and to glean from it, to grow from it. We thank You for these good people that are here today. We pray, Father, that You will instruct us, that You will rebuke us, that You will give to us and commit to us the truth of Your Word. We do love You. We thank You for all You do for us now. In Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it, amen.

## V. The Fullness of the Spirit vs. Measure of Faith and Grace

This is a good chapter because I like it because it ends where it starts: Christ's coming, dying for you and for me, one for Israel, and two, you and me as the Gentiles. I want to focus on just two verses today which I think says it all for where we are at. That will be John 3:34-35. These two verses will really be a help to us in our growth process as Christians.

It says in John 3:34, "For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." That verse says that when Christ had the full measure of God's Spirit, when He came, God gave Him the full measure of His Spirit.

What I am about to show you will completely explain, hopefully for you, God's systematic system of getting you to a spiritual place in your life where God can do something with you. What I am about to show you will completely explain God's system for you and your spiritual growth. If you listen and pay attention, and you have brain cells above sub-plant life, you will leave here today totally understanding why some of God's people get it and some do not.

The Christian life, men, pastors, people like to make it as hard as it can be. In reality, the Christian life is very simple. When you get saved, I want you to know that you too, just like

Jesus Christ, you got all of the Holy Spirit of God without measure. When He came down here, God gave Him the Spirit of God without measure, and the day you got saved, the Holy Spirit of God took up residency inside your soul and you were sealed unto the day of redemption. Just like Jesus Christ, you now have all of the Holy Spirit of God that you are ever going to get.

I know the charismatic crowd and a bunch of people out there teach that when you got saved, you did not get all of the Holy Spirit of God. I have never read a book or heard anybody preach on what percentage of it you did get, but they teach that you did not get all the Holy Spirit of God, so later on you have to get baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost. Then the rest of the Spirit of God falls on you and now you are ready to go. Of course, we know that is not true because the same crowd then believes if you screw up down the line someplace that you can lose it. We know that is not true.

The Bible says in Ephesians 4:30 and Colossians 2:9-10 that once you are saved, you are complete in Him. You got all the Holy Spirit of God that there is. You were sealed with it, Ephesians 4:30, and you, just like Christ, got every ounce of the Holy Spirit of God.

Here is the problem: You get all of God's Holy Spirit when you got saved. But the problem is God's Holy Spirit did not get all of you when you got saved. You get all of Him, but He did not get all of you. We still have issues in our life that we have to work through and we have to deal with.

Now, follow me. There are four aspects of our one, salvation of God, and then two, our relationship and growth with God. I want you to get these.

1. The Spirit of God. The Bible already tells us in John 3:34 that you got all of the Spirit of God, Christ in you, the hope of glory. He is indwelling in you. Just as Christ got the Holy Spirit of God without measure, so did you.
2. Faith. Here is where it differs from the Holy Spirit of God. You got all the Holy Spirit of God that God had when you got saved, but you did not get all of the faith. Romans 12:3 says that you got at salvation faith by a measure. Faith by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. In other words, you got just enough faith at salvation to believe what God told you, but we will get to that in a moment.
3. Grace. We are told in Ephesians 4:7 that at the time of salvation, you got a measure of grace. You got all of the Holy Spirit of God, but when it came to faith, He gave you that by measure. When it came to grace for you having grace, He gave it to you by measure.
4. The Word of God.

## VI. Developing Faith and Grace

Now let me show you how it works.

5. You got all of the Holy Spirit of God the instant moment you got saved, and you got that without measure. But here is the problem: You do not know how to use it. The moment you got saved, I know you do not know this, Psalms 33:6 says: Psalms 33:6

By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

At the instant you got saved, you have all of the Holy Spirit of God and everything you need that God used to create the heavens, the universe, the planets, the galaxies and everything. That same power that He had is now in you. Problem is you do not know how to use it.

So Romans 12:3 says:

*Romans 12:3*

*For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.*

You see, when you got saved and I got saved, He gave us just enough faith to see that we needed a Savior. He gave you and me just enough to see that what we needed, that just enough faith to be able to trust Him as our own personal Savior. Faith will always be in relationship to what you do for God. You walk by faith, not by sight, 2 Corinthians 5:7.

So at the moment you got saved, He gave you a measure of faith to trust Him, but you do not have the faith yet to go to the mission field. You do not have the faith yet to get over some of the issues you are struggling with in your life. You do not have the faith to be able to trust Him in things yet, and that is why so many people get saved and then they spend the rest of their life worrying about things. What I am about to give you is the absolute reason why some of God's people will make it and some of them will not.

Then the third thing, Ephesians 4:7:

*Ephesians 4:7*

*But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.*

Not only when you got saved did you get just enough faith to believe what you needed to believe to get saved, but God gave you grace by measure. For us, grace will be the ability to use the Word of God. I am not talking about God's grace and you and me being by measure to get saved. I am talking about after you get saved, you have grace. But just like you cannot step out by faith and do some great thing the day after you get saved, you do not have the grace because grace will be the ability to use the Word of God that God has given you through faith.

So with salvation, you get all of the Holy Spirit of God. But grace and faith only by measure, and now you have to develop it. This is totally foreign to what you hear today. All of my life, I have seen young men and young ladies come down and get saved, families get saved. They get up off their knees and a pastor slaps them on the back and then puts them to work in a bus ministry, puts them to work here, puts them in a Sunday school class, puts them here. Then wonders why a year from then you do not see them at church anymore. Then have the audacity to blame them for not being spiritual. That is just the way it works today. I am sorry, I have been in it for almost 50 years now.

Let me tell you something. For you to develop faith and grace in your life, which you get by measure. You got all of the Holy Spirit of God there is, but He gave you grace and faith by measure, and now it is up to you to develop that. There are three things that you must have in your life to be able to do that.

6. You have to have obviously the Holy Spirit of God. You have got that without measure.
7. You have to have the Word of God.
8. You have to have God's program in your life, and that will be a New Testament local church.

I have told you this many, many times. I do not know if you all remember it or not, but when Jesus Christ went back to heaven in the early part of the Book of Acts, do you ever notice how He replaced Himself with three things?

9. The Holy Spirit of God came at the day of Pentecost, so the Holy Spirit of God was the first part of replacing Himself.
10. The Word of God. By 90 AD when John writes the final chapters of the Book of Revelation, you now have the complete Word of God.
11. The local New Testament church because God has got a job for you to do and God has got a way to get you to the place that He wants to do it.

Here is how it works. The Holy Spirit of God, you got that at full measure. As you develop grace and you develop faith, that Holy Spirit of God becomes the guide through your life. The second thing He gives you is the Word of God, and He has got a plan that He wants you to accomplish and He has got something that He wants you to do and someplace He wants you to go. So the Word of God becomes the road map that shows you all of those things. Then you have to get there, you have to have a vehicle. The vehicle that God gives you that will develop faith and grace in your life is the local New Testament church that will get you to the place God wants you to be.

You develop faith and grace as you grow and you grow in these three areas. You put these three areas in your life and let God work through these three areas and you will see some real changes in your life.

## VII. Reasons for Lack of Spiritual Growth

What I am about to show you will be the number one reason why people never grow spiritually. There are fundamentally two reasons for it. The first one we will just get out of the way, and that is because they have never truly been saved. I know that that sounds hard for some people to accept, but if you look around you today and understand the Christianity that we have, I say this all the time, it worries me today about so many people who claim to be saved but you never see any change in their life. We live in a Christian world now where people think that is all right.

I told you a couple weeks ago, I am old school. When I grew up and when I came through this thing early on, Christians were different than the world. I am sorry. Christians were different than the world and Christianity still had some standards and it was kind of separated from the world. That is all gone today. You can walk into the average church and if you close your eyes, you

think you are in a nightclub someplace. We have lost that separation. God's people have lost any kind of moral compass in their life.

I see it all the time and I do not ever say much about it because it is none of my business, but I just scratch my head and I look at things and you find situations where back in my day, if a parent had a boy or a girl that got pregnant outside of marriage, it was something that you had to deal with, but they saw the terribleness of that. One of the institutions, and I know this is probably way much too Bible for you, what are the institutions that God put together with marriage? I know we live in a Christian world today that we think having children or living together or having children outside of marriage is an okay thing. I am here to tell you that God's standard has not changed on it.

You see people all the time, the boy or the girl. I had my share in this over the year and I just scratch my head sometimes. I know one family that is no longer around here and I think their boy had two or three illegitimate kids, never got married to any of them. The mom would post on Facebook about how wonderful it was that she was going to be a grandmother again. Are you kidding me? But that is where we are at today. Christianity is so far out of reality of the truth that there is no moral compass anymore. Your boy or your girl get somebody pregnant and you have an illegitimate baby and it is a time for celebration. Are you kidding me? What planet did you land on? Did that Mars helicopter hit you in the head? That is where we are at today.

We have come to the point today in Christianity where we have no morals, we have no line of truth. The first thing you have to ask yourself is, is a person really saved that cannot grow? We know from our Bible and with the 12 apostles we talked about a couple weeks ago that of the 12 apostles, one of them was a phony. If you think for a minute that the devil does not use satanic implants in the church, you are out of your mind. It is like, "Oh yeah, the devil forgot to do that." No, you are just too stupid to know that he does do that.

I have had people come into this church at any church that I have been associated with over the years. Terry knows back there, he has been with me probably as long as any of it. Terry, you had your own church, you know it is true. Sean, you know it is true, you had your own church. People will come in and they come in here, and they will just kind of fit in and suddenly the next thing you know, they have got some crazy stuff they are teaching or something off the wall. They start getting a little group together. I do not know how it works, man. I have seen it.

I have said this before, I just worry about the fact that so many people today claim to be a Christian, but there is no real change in their life. Folks, I know this is not popular, I am telling you, if you are truly saved, I keep hating bringing up the Bible, but I thought that is what we came here for this morning. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 5:17:

*2 Corinthians 5:17*

*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

How does a person claim to be, and never for a split second do the old things pass away? That bothers me. I am not making a judgment on somebody. That bothers me. I will tell you this, I would not want to take that chance. But that is their deal.

There are three or four characteristics of a satanic implant, and if you do not see it and understand it:

12. There is no real evidence of their salvation, nothing. They are not involved in spiritual things. When they come to this church or some other church, when we are having church service, they are upstairs talking about whatever they are talking about. Some of them have not been in church forever. They just do not want to sit under the preaching of the Word of God.

I want to tell you something. If you are saved here this morning, you ought to love preaching. It is the reason you came this morning. If you want to talk about your bass boat or your motorcycle or your trailer or whatever, then go to an RV show. But when you come here on Sunday morning, I do not know where I even got this from. I would think it would be because you just want to hear the Word of God preached to you. Because you know as well as I know about me and you too, we have got things we need to fix.

One of the first things you are going to find out when you buy a house. You kids bought a house yet? Yeah, well, you will. You bought a house, did not you? Who else has just recently bought a house? There are people who asked me, who asked me, you just bought a house? Good. Alex, are you still homeless or did you buy a house? You are still homeless, okay, well, okay. I am going to tell you, you bought a house not too long ago. I am going to tell you the first thing you are going to learn about the house, you get into this house and they say this is great, this is wonderful. "Oh, I just think this is beautiful. Well, this is my dream house." Six weeks later, the air conditioning goes out. Four weeks after that, the dishwasher goes on the blink. If you are lucky, you will get the demon possession like we had that in the middle of the night would just turn itself on. Your ministry experience will never be complete till you exercise a washing machine. I want you to know, it was a dryer, was not it, it was a dryer, yeah. I did them both, I covered the bases.

We were only wondering the weird thing, the very next day, once I cast those demons out, the very next day, my neighbor told me that my washing machine stopped last night. I am just kidding, I am just kidding. But the thing you are going to learn is when you get a new house, it does not stay new. You have to be in a constant state of fixing it up and repairing. You say, "Where are you going with this?" When you got your new house the day you got saved, you are in a constant state of repair. There are things you have got to fix this one. Maybe you have got them already fixed, walking down the steps, I do not know. Maybe you get them fixed somewhere in the process, maybe you get them fixed on the way out. But every one of us have things that are dilapidated in our lives today. Preaching is supposed to fix that.

So you see that there is no real evidence in their life.

13. You will find that they constantly, just constantly, are trying to destroy other people with what they say.

14. This is the one, boy, they are like Satan's secret service. He just church hops them from one church to the other and wherever they go, they cause problems. Absolutely, absolutely. You have to wonder about that.

The second thing, and this is where most of us are dealing with today, is the fact that they are saved, but they never allow grace and faith to be developed into a full measure on equal par with the Holy Spirit of God. So when you get saved, you just got enough faith and grace to get saved. You are not ready for the mission field yet. You cannot trust God if you lose your job the next day. You fall apart. You cannot come to the place yet where you say, "Well, you know what, God giveth, God taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. He is going to supply them." You are not there yet. You do not have enough faith in God to claim that. You do not have enough grace in God to believe that, but you got enough to get saved. But you are not ready for ministry yet. You are certainly not ready to pastor or disciple somebody yet, there has to be a process.

Enter your New Testament local church. God's only institution in the New Testament for His people to be involved in and everything has to run through. God has a process within this structure to develop your grace and your faith. As I said earlier, God instituted just three institutions.

15. Civil government.

16. Marriage. You young couples now know that marriage is an institution. That is never mind, it was a joke. You will get it about three o'clock this afternoon. You are happy being married, are not you? You like being institutionalized, correct? Okay, then you are good, then. Sorry I even brought it up.

17. The New Testament local church.

There are only three. You want to, from the Bible, you want to learn the really good examples of that because they are so important. You hear me talk a lot about Abraham's life. I try to steer you to great places where you can see things and learn from them. What a great example and in sample. 1 Corinthians 10, he is for all of us. For all of us, his life is just a simple study of where your life started and where it should end. Unfortunately for us, in most cases, it never gets there. But he is the perfect poster child for that.

In Genesis 15, he gets God's righteousness. He gets saved. Not like you and me, but he gets saved. What you find is he allows God, he does not live a perfect life. He does a lot of stupid things. Just like you and me. But what he does do is what we need to do and he allows God to develop his faith and grace. Where in Genesis 15, he just had enough faith to believe God, what God said about the seed and the stars of heaven. He comes to the place in his life where he becomes only one of two men in the Bible who the Bible claims is God's friend and completely understands what sacrifice really means. By the time he gets to Genesis 22, when he offers up Isaac, his faith and his grace has now matched what God has given him.

What God did in his life is what God wants to do in each one of our lives. He wants to get us saved, lay that foundation, and then through the New Testament church and the process, He wants to take that measure of grace and develop it. Those two, faith and grace, will go hand in hand in your spiritual development through, again, your local New Testament church.

Every pastor of every church, I do not care if he claims to be a Bible-believing church, every pastor should have a plan. He should have a biblical process that everybody that comes, now he is not going to get everybody just like I do not get everybody, but everybody needs to have the opportunity to develop those two areas in their lives. You get the Spirit of God without measure, but God just gave you enough grace and faith for you to get saved. Now it is up to you to do something with that, because God has a plan for your life.

How do you do it? I know most preachers think that you just keep going to church, you tithe, come Sunday morning, Wednesday night, Thursday night, do everything the church tells you to do, and one night after about 10 years, while you are sleeping at night, the angels of heaven, your name will come up on the big clipboard and they will roll the roof back and God will just back the big dump truck up there and sprinkle spiritual maturity all down over you and you will wake up the next morning and there you are. It does not work that way.

This is why some of God's people have been saved five, 10, 15, 20 years. They are no farther along than the day they got saved. They are not bad people. Please, hear me, they are not bad people. They are not drug addicts. They are not selling drugs. They are not, they are not, they are good people. They just have come to the place in their life where they, for whatever reason, do not want to develop those two areas, so they never grow. Spiritual growth, spiritual maturity does not just come because you are saved. He gave you all of the Holy Spirit of God. What more do you want? Then He gave you faith and grace by measure. He said, "Okay, you develop that."

Years and years ago, I figured that one out. There is a lot of stupid stuff that I do not get and understand, but I will tell you when that was an easy one for me. Here you get saved. You want to begin that process, the Discipleship One. The basic lesson, the 15, 16 basic lessons of fundamentally what the Christian life, in a fundamental way, is all about. You get through that. I am telling you, that will develop your senses. It will develop the grace and the faith. By the time you get through that, you will have a better understanding and you will be moving in the right direction. Then for those that want it, Discipleship Two. It is the next level.

We have another process called "The Six or Seven Things That Changed About You the Day You Got Saved." Boy, that will really add some meat to the bone, boy. That will really put it in place for you. Years ago when I started the discipleship lessons and I developed them, I just did not do it so I could have 15 or 16 basic lessons. I picked those lessons based on what I thought a young Christian should know. But as I have said many, many times, I could pick any 16 lessons. It was the goal behind that.

I will tell you right now, this is the problem with most pastors. They meet their people on Sunday morning, Wednesday night and Sunday night teaching the Bible. But the problem is, they do not have any goals for them. They do not have a process. Do you look at that crowd? In his mind, he is saying, "Here is what I want to accomplish with those who will let me do it." He just up there, he looks at you as cattle. He looked at you as you are going to pay the bills, pay his salary. He looks at you as, "We are glad you are here." But he does not ever think about where, he is glad you are here, but he is not concerned of where you are at. He has no process to help you because he has no plan for himself. He has nothing going for himself. He gets up every morning. That is

why these guys, when they hit 60, 65, they all retire to the dinosaur graveyard down in Florida or the golf course. They actually think they put their dues in by being a pastor. You know what? You should have retired at 20. Let somebody else get in there because you had no plan for them. You looked at them as sheep, but you were a terrible shepherd. You looked at them as people that came to your church that they were going to give you something for the church, but you never one time stopped and considered what you needed to give them back. You never saw your people as they do not come to church to do something for you. They come to church so you can do something for them. You are God's structure to help them develop those two areas in their life to bring it up to speed with the full measure of the Holy Spirit of God, and when you do not do that. This is why churches are filled with baby Christians, like the church at Corinth.

I realized that when we disciple somebody here that I have four goals.

18. Obviously, I want to establish you in the Bible.

19. I want to establish you within the church. Get your feet on the ground, start to understand.

20. I want to establish you with other people.

21. I want to establish you in the ministry.

That is why the way we are doing it now, you will take somebody, you will disciple them, and then they will disciple somebody next round and you will help them and you will give them some lessons to do. That is what you do.

On top of that, I saw that you needed more than that. So, we have the people ministry, 80 or 90 people that have committed to really work with me in ministry and everything we do runs through the people ministry. Then I saw another need and that was the Bible Institute, bringing you young men and young ladies and moms and dads and couples up to the level of understanding and how to use the scriptures. Then add to that here a little, there a little, line upon line. Add to that Sunday morning, Thursday night, all the one-on-one time that you need.

Again, you see the contrast between the church at Corinth in 1 Corinthians, where there are a bunch of babies, and then the contrast of 2 Corinthians, where they are now matured for ministry and he can teach them on a level where they can really do something with it. That is my goal, really. There it is, I just said it. As soon as I say this, we are going to go home. That is my goal. I want to teach you to be able to use the Word of God on the right level. I want you to be able to take it and use it and get everything God has for you. That is my goal.

I realize as far as I am standing here, not everybody wants that. That is okay, it does not mean you are a bad person. It means that I would lose 20, 30 pounds because when you are naked at the judgment seat of Christ, you want to look at the best you can. But that is my advice to you. But you are not a bad person, I am not mad at you. It is one of those things where this is what Paul was talking about in Hebrews 5:12-14. He had the same problem. He dealt with people, human nature never changes. He told them in Hebrews 5:12-14:

*Hebrews 5:12*

*For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.*

*Hebrews 5:13*

*For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.*

*Hebrews 5:14*

*But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

He is saying, "You guys ought to be far enough along now, you have been saved what, five, six, seven, eight, nine, 10 years? Why do we have to go back and begin to teach you the same basic principles?" Thursday night, Caleb asked a question about the two gospels, John there, and I looked at that and gave it, and then Sam raised his hand and said, and brought my attention to the paragraph mark. I told Sam this morning, I went home and looked at it. Sam had it right on the money. I missed the paragraph mark. The paragraph mark put the whole thing in perspective, see? Now Sam, the day you got saved, you did not see that, did you? Probably the second day either. You saw it now. You see, that is what happens.

He is saying there, "Why do we have to begin to teach you the basic fundamental principles all over again?" He says, "And are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word." I want you to hear that. If you are stuck with a basic fundamental milk of the Bible, then you are unskillful in the word. That is not my word, that is His. You say, "Well, I am really offended." Again, get an X-Acto cutter and cut that out. "For he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

You know what developing grace and faith does in your life? It exercises you. It gives you discernment. You already got the full measure of the Holy Spirit of God, but it gave you grace and faith by measure, and you now have to develop it up to the other full measure. You do that by getting into a New Testament local church, getting what they have for you, starting with the basics, and let that church help develop those two areas of your life.

That is what churches are supposed to do. That is what this church does. It does two basic fundamental things. It will grow you in faith, it will grow you in grace. We will take the measure of grace that you got at salvation and develop it into all God wants you to be. In time, your fullness of grace and faith will mature you up to the fullness of the Holy Spirit of God, and then you are ready for God to do something with you. I mean, you are even ready before that, but I mean, that should be your goal.

Matthew 25, we see a good example of this, and I know this is dealing with Israel, it is not really the church, but the example, the principle is the same. You have the parable of the talents. He says, "I came down and I gave one guy five, and I gave another guy two, and then I won." Then when I come back, I see the guy that had five, and he invested it and developed it, and he

brought back 10, good deal. The other guy brought two, he doubled his, invested and brought back four, and then the guy gave one, he just buried his and did not do anything with it.

There are a lot of God's people who have buried the grace and the faith that God gave you by measure, and you have done nothing with it. I am just telling you, not a bad person. I do not know why you would do something like that, but again, we live in a Christianity today where we all like to pick and choose.

I do not know about you, but my side of human nature is just like yours, and we always try to take the easiest path, do not we? If we have got to climb a 40-foot wall to get up into a house or we can just kick down the back door, what are we going to do? We are going to kick down the back door. God's people forever, when it comes to getting involved in a church, getting involved in the Bible, and really disciplining yourself to learning, you see, in Christianity, there are so many cheap shots you can take that give the appearance. You can get in ministry, you can do things without really knowing anything about the Bible, and you can get away with it for a while till you get to the place where God sets you up with it. But that is just where we are at.

Now look at John 3:35. It says, "The Father loveth the Son." Now that is Christ. "And hath given all things into his hand." Now that is true of Christ, but I want you to know it is also true of you, because you have got the same measure of Holy Spirit of God, fullness that He got. So just as He put all things into Christ's hand to do the work, He has put all things into your hands. You just do not know it yet. When you get saved, God gave you all of the Holy Spirit of God and put all things into your hands, and now you have the exact same power inside you today that Jesus Christ had in Him. You just do not recognize it yet.

Colossians 2:9-10, as I said:

*Colossians 2:9*

*For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*

*Colossians 2:10*

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

That is what you got. You got inside you this morning if you are truly saved, you have the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Then it says in verse 10, "And ye are complete in him," now, "which is the head of all principalities and power." You got it all. You got it all. You just do not recognize it at the time of salvation, and some of you unfortunately do not even recognize it today and you have been saved for years. But as you get developed in faith and grace, in time, you will understand it.

We talk a lot about Philippians 1:6 here, which says:

*Philippians 1:6*

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

Now it is so true. God wanted for you, we have talked about this many, many times, God wants for you and for me to finish that work that God started, and then God took Him back to heaven, His Son, and then He saved you and me to finish the work that He started. He gave you and I the full measure of the Spirit, but He knew that He just could not make us clones 100%, so He gave us grace and faith by measure, and then you have to develop it, because through that development is where you really learn to have a relationship with Christ. He has put all things into your hands, and I am going to tell you right now, folks, nothing will stop you, except yourself.

The devil will not cancel you out, the world will not cancel you out. A focused preacher will not cancel you out, a bad church will not cancel you out. You will cancel yourself out by lining yourself up to that kind of stuff which has one goal, that is to take you out of this fight.

Rob up in Lincoln said something in his devotion a couple of weeks ago that Carolyn told me about that I thought was an incredible thing, he says, "Most of God's people think that we are on a cruise ship, the Love Boat." God's people need to realize that we are on a battleship, sailing in uncharted waters, unfriendly waters. Most of God's people are looking for that little midget. "The plane, the plane!" Shoot that sucker down. Oh, he was not on the Love Boat, was he? He was on the island that they dropped the atom bomb on and killed him, but anyway, we are in war, and God is counting on us. That sounds so terrible, God counting on, I tell God all the time, "God, if You are counting on me, man, we are in bad shape," but He is, He is counting on every one of us. That is why He saved us.

You see, we look at ourselves as we should, how unworthy we are, and that is great, but God realized that no matter how rotten we are, and how goofy we are, and how stupid we are, if He gave us the full measure of the Holy Spirit of God, and then we developed grace and faith, we could get something done for Him, but we will not do it.

I tell people all the time, and these are the four things that come out of developing grace and faith to the point of the Holy Spirit of God in your life. I talk that God's people in the ministry have to be:

22. Adaptable to everything, because things change.
23. Flexible, you have to be able to be bent, but never break.
24. Compatible, you have to get along with people that you may not, in a world situation, may not like.
25. Durable, because you are going to get run over six and seven times a day.

All this comes through the commitment of God's structure of the New Testament local church, that you submit yourself to a structure that God institutionalized, that take the grace and the faith that He gave you by measure, and through the Holy Spirit of God and the Word of God in this New Testament local church, develop that to the point, where He can do all things with all things that He has put into your hands. I mean, that is just the way it works.

Adaptability, flexibility, compatibility, and durability is what got us through the coronavirus, if we are through it yet. Where everybody else was running to hide and hiding under the rocks in

churches, shutting their doors and afraid to get that, we realized that there are things that we had to do, and it was realized that there are cautions that we had to take, but we also realized that it was probably one of the greatest opportunities that we could have. You either see opposition as opposition, or you see opposition as opportunity, and they both start with O, but you get to decide. You know what determines how you see it? Grace and faith, grace and faith.

Hot people, when the coronavirus hit, had been with me for 30, 40 years, and boy, I will tell you what, they headed for the bushes like a rabbit shot at by a hunter that could not hit anything. That is just the way that it is. I told you publicly, I am not going anywhere, we are going to find a way through this, and we are going to find that God is going to, the same God that gave us the Holy Spirit of God, give us enough grace and faith to trust Him through this, and we will see what God does, and here we are. We are reaching more people now than we have reached before. But if we had folded up like everybody else and just ran for the bushes, then that is where we would still be. But that is not what God called us to do.

I must just tell you this, and I told you this either Thursday night or a couple of weeks ago, the coronavirus is just a warmup for what is coming. If you cannot see the handwriting on the wall, you are blind. This country, I told you way before it happened, this country is done. You have not seen nothing yet. You are quickly going to become the enemy if you believe that Bible is the Word of God.

Enter into, and welcome to, ladies and gentlemen, the New Dark Ages. In the Dark Ages, they were persecuted because they had that book, and they wanted to take a stand in a world that wanted to destroy them, and you are living in the same kind of world that they were, and you have a book that you are going to stand on, and you are going to pay a price for it. This thing is just going to go up level, or level, or level. God's people just do not see it. It is plain and simple.

## VIII. The Heresy of Spiritual Gifts

I say all this to just say this to you. Never let anybody pull you out of your local church for anything. You find all these people that get all these goofy ministries going, and they have nothing to do with the church and not run by the church and not accountable. You know what I have learned about myself, and it is also true of you, none of us can trust ourselves when it comes to doing something for God. None of us can. That old nature will always have us take the shortcut. We will do it every time.

So God gave us a structure that keeps it between the white lines, and we cannot fudge in it. We have to do what it says we have to do, and if we do not, then it becomes very obvious we do not, and that is the way it is supposed to be. God's structure is that everything you do needs to be run through a New Testament local church. You will find people out there that get out there on their own deal because they do not want to get committed. They use the church to get things, and then they go do their own thing. You do not want any part of that. You want to attend to the place where you realize that there is no value in that. It is a terrible, terrible situation that goes on all the time. It is plain and simple. It is never right to do wrong to get the chance to do right. If it is not in the local church, I am not interested in it. It has to run through God's structure. Otherwise,

it winds up being corrupted. You know why? Because you cannot trust yourself with it. Any more than I can trust myself with something.

So you know what I do? Put it right here. You know what you need to do? You put it right here. If it is not right here, then it is not anywhere. I am just telling you, growing in grace and faith has to go through God's structure. It is just that simple.

Now the next thing. Now that we understand all of this, we can see the heresy taught today that exists on spiritual gifts. I will tell you. It is like I said, the church has got so many issues today. The teaching on spiritual gifts is not even remotely connected to the Bible. The standard teaching is, I am sure you have heard this. I have heard this all my life. Standard teaching is by the big guys that everybody looks to. The standard teaching is that you have one major spiritual gift and you have secondary spiritual gifts. You need to find out what that main spiritual gift is for you to really be used to God.

So they developed a number of years ago the spiritual gift test. There were actually churches that had their people take this spiritual gift test. They bring in this clown from somebody who had spiritual gifts upside down and he would come in there and he would put it and he would say, "Now, I am going to help you define your spiritual gift. So we are going to take the spiritual gift test." When you answered all these questions, what your favorite color was, when you answered all these questions, then you could be seduced then into thinking that my spiritual gift. I had one guy tell me one time, he said, "I took the spiritual gift test this weekend. Our church did it." I said, "Wow, that is really good." He says, "Yes, I found out what my spiritual gift, my major spiritual gift is." I says, "What is that?" He says, "I have the gift of humility." I said, "You had the gift of humility. You have not got it anymore." You know how stupid that is? I mean, I cannot even tell you how ridiculously stupid that is.

If you want to study spiritual gifts, and we are not going to get into it today, but my advice to you would be to take 1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14. Those are the three definitive chapters on spiritual gifts in your Bible. You will find that spiritual gifts fall into three categories. I have never met hardly anybody in my life that could ever separate those three categories. They run them all together, and then they look like idiots, because they are idiots.

26. In Ephesians 4:8, you have spiritual gifts of the office of the ministry.

27. In 2 Corinthians 12:16, you have sign gifts given to the apostles.

28. In 1 Corinthians 12:7, you are going to find that you have gifts of power that are given to people to do the work of God.

Most of God's people, they can never separate those three out, so they do not even know where to go to look for it.

Here is the heresy. I love this. If you only have one main spiritual gift, and then everything else is secondary, or tertiary, or quaternary, or whatever the case may be, let me ask you a question. What was Jesus Christ's main spiritual gift? The Bible says that He got the Spirit of God without measure, and then the Bible had the audacity to say to us that God put all things in His hands. You know what He had? He had everything that you got, you got everything that He had.

You know why they try to limit you? That is a playbook, that is a playwright of the devil's playbook. You know why they try to tell you you only got one spiritual gift? That is to limit you into whatever you are going to do for God. The Bible tells us in John 3:34-35 that He had all of the Spirit to do the work of God, whatever it needed to be, and so do you. As you develop the grace, now when you got saved, you did not know what God was going to do with you, and you certainly do not know what your spiritual gifts are. I would guarantee you that if you are really spiritual and you are really dialed into the Bible, you do not know what your spiritual gifts are. If you have discovered what your real true spiritual gifts are, that puts you at a disadvantage, because everything you are going to think, you are going to cancel out everything else and just work around that.

I do not know one person in that Bible, from Paul to Timothy to Titus to Philemon, that ever talked about their main spiritual gift other than the gift of them being in as a pastor, which is one of the offices. It is a thing where you do not see Paul coming around and saying, "Well, this is what I do, this is what I do." He understood that the more he grew in faith and grace, God is going to take him places and put him places, and whatever God puts him and wherever place God gives him, God will give him the power to do that job.

I remember in my own life, back when I first got right with God, I got right around April, May, and it was that June or July that I went to camp, church camp, and I went out just to help. I watched all these guys preach, and I had a desire and a burning to know the Bible like they did in his desire. I will tell you, I was really confused because here I was only right with God now about, what, three or four months? Already I was facing the decision, so I thought, "What does really God want me to do?" I remember going to Malzabaka, and I asked him about that, and he said, "Don't do nothing." He said, "Just keep doing what you are doing. When God is ready to reveal it to you," that was the best advice anybody ever gave me.

As I grew in grace and faith, I came a day in my life when God told me exactly what I needed to do, and whether you like it or not, or you think it is a blessing or not, Ephesians 4 says as a pastor, I am a gift to the church, I am God's gift to you in this church. The only reason I got here to do what God wants me to do that you know anything about the Bible at all is because of the fact that I just did not do nothing, and I recognized three things. The local New Testament church was my structure, and I never deviated from it. I did not do one thing that was outside that church, and I let that church develop me in grace and faith, and here I am, and you will get to it, and I know exactly what my job is now. After almost 50 years, it has been clear for the last 40, but you will get to that same place in your life where you know what it is. There will be no doubt in your mind. But it will not happen because you are out there flapping in the wind on your own.

The Bible talks about the fruit of the Spirit, and it talks about the gifts of the Spirit. God's people today, they like to flip those terms around, but most of them do not understand it, could not explain it, they put a gun to their head. In the book of Galatians, you will find there are nine fruit of the Spirit. It is not nine fruits, plural, it is nine fruit singular, because all that fruit comes by one Spirit that God gave you. That fruit of the Spirit is what God puts in your life. When you read that, He does not just give some one or two, you get all nine. Then we hear about the gifts of the Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14.

In other words, it all goes back to this. The fruit of the Spirit will be the development of grace and faith in your life through truth. As you grow, God develops you in those two areas, and you bear fruit. As you grow, because God has put all things into your hand, He is going to take you up to different levels. You are not going to stay where you are at right now. I did not. I have come so far from Camp Choff on that July week, that I tell you what, I look over the balcony of the building that I am standing on, and I cannot even see the ground that has been so many layers below me. And so will you. God will elevate you, He will lift you, He will edify you, He will bring you to a point where you finish that good work that He saved you for. You will grow to the place where you, through faith and through grace, that you can do whatever God wants you to do. You do that through the fruit of the Spirit.

When you get to that point in your life, and God continues to take them up those levels, you know the next thing He gives you? He gives you the gifts of the Spirit. He will give you everything you need to do the job. This idea, as I said, this idea of God just giving you a couple, a main or this, it is just ridiculous. Because you got everything that Christ has, and everything that God put in Christ's hands, He put in your hands, and you got the ability, you got a development, you have got to get into God's structure, and you have got to develop, and let God develop those areas of your life.

The fruit of the Spirit would be the will of God. That is being more like Christ every day. The gifts of the Spirit, that is the plan of God. That is what God got for you to do. Whatever He, whenever you build the fruit in your life of the Spirit, and you grow in grace and all those things in your life, then He will take you someplace to do something with you, and that is when He will give you the gifts. Whatever He sends you to do, you will be able to do. Whatever He sends you, it will not be you deciding where you go. I want to make that clear.

This is the problem of not getting into the structure of the church, because you deceive yourself, and you decide what you are going to do for God. Then you play the little game, "Well God told me," I says, "Whatever, you are out of your mind." You are deceiving yourself. There was not one man in the Bible from Paul to Timothy that they ever decided what they were going to do. It was the structure of the New Testament local church that told them because God spoke to the church because of their involvement in it and what they invested in it. The church said, "Separate unto me Paul and Barnabas." It said, "Timothy had a good report among the brethren." That is where it starts.

I am telling you, telling all of us, you cannot trust yourself. I cannot trust myself. Because I will do whatever I want to do and I will make it sound like God wants me to do it. I will even convince it because it is winning people to Christ, it is doing this, it is doing that. That all sounds like good stuff. Yeah, it does. But it has to run through the structure. You do not get to decide what you are going to do. God will put it on your heart and God will put it on the heart of a man that, when I came to Kansas City, it was not my decision. It was a thing where God put it in the heart of the guy that trained me. He told me it was time to go. That is how it works. You do not get to decide that. You say, "Why not?" Because you are crooked. I do not get to decide that, why not? Because I am crooked. I know me and I know you. When you get this bug in your ear that this is what you are going to do, you will convince yourself that God is in it. It does not matter if

you are hooked up with somebody that teaches heresy or you are hooked up with somebody. It does not matter because God is not in it anyhow.

So until you put that structure in your life, just like Christ, all the teaching on spiritual gifts today only serve one purpose, that is to limit you to what God really wants to do with you. Just as there was no limit to Christ's power, with God there will be no limit to our power with God as long as we follow the protocol. Because we cannot trust ourselves. I do not trust myself. That is why you have got to have a book. That is why you have got to have a pastor. That is why you have got to have accountability to somebody. I am accountable to you, you are accountable to me and you are accountable to each other. You can tell, I mean, that is what it is supposed to be.

## IX. God's Structure and The Devil's Plan

The devil's plan for the downfall of mankind was simply a twofold plan.

29. Obviously he wanted to keep everybody from getting saved. Keep him in his family, John 8:44. We saw that last week in "A Letter from Hell" and enough said. His number one goal was to damn every man, woman on this planet to the lake of fire, ultimately.
30. He also knows that that is not going to happen because some people are going to get saved. So his plan then, the second part of his plan, he allows you to get saved, but he does not want you to get too far from his family.

You ever notice back in Exodus when the children of Israel wanted to leave, Pharaoh did not want them to go? Pharaoh, a type of the world, them, a type of you and me, the child of God. Pharaoh compromised. He says, "Okay, I am going to let you leave Egypt. Just don't go too far. Stay close." Boy, that is right out of the devil's playbook too. "Oh, you got saved. Well, you know what? Well, devil, I am telling you what, I just got saved today and I am not going to the bars anymore and I am not going to do anything." The devil said, "You got saved. Yes, I did, well, I am happy for you. I would like to do that myself, but I just cannot live up to it. But I am glad you got saved. Well, praise the Lord, brother. Now you are going to heaven, now I will not go in hell. But you know what? We need to stay close. Don't believe that thing that crazy guy says up there. Be your own man. Why, you do not have to get into that church and run everything. You do not have to do that. Be your own man. You know what? You are not going to hell, but why don't you go to my church and use my Bible and listen to my music in that church? Just stay close. Just stay close."

There is another old throwback message that I had to preach to you sometime. I preached years and years ago, three point outline. Very simple.

31. Be not deceived.
32. Be not disarmed.
33. Be not discouraged.

Boy, that is a good message for today. The vital aspect of your Christian growth. In the book of Acts, which is the model for us, when a man got saved, he did immediately two things. Immediately.

34. He got baptized. You do not find anybody in the New Testament church in the book of Acts praying about should I get baptized or not. They got baptized. Now I know right now we are kind of shut down because of the virus, but we will have a whole crew when the time comes around.

35. Joined and identified with a New Testament local church.

That became the guidelines for everything they did. They allowed it to grow them to the full measure. Take the grace and the faith and exercise them. You saw it with Paul, you saw it with Timothy. Everyone I hear you today, I watch you guys. You saw me, you have been here five, 10, 15 years now. And look at you, you are up to a full measure. We have a whole host of young men and young ladies, moms and dads that are on that same course that you are going to get there.

It is like I have said many, many times, you only get out of something what you put into it. You got to where you are at today that you could take over my ministry. If I am not here, you can preach, you could take Bible study, you could disciple people, you know why? I will tell you why, because you did something with what God gave you. You allowed this church to develop your grace and your faith to the place where now you are here. You invested in the Word of God, the Holy Spirit of God of the New Testament local church. It all depends on your investment of these two things that you have to put into your life.

This chapter of John 3 answers the questions. Why so many of God's people are so messed up today in the name of Jesus Christ. They pretend like everything is fine. Their lives, their families are an absolute disaster. They pretend that they are doing everything the way it should be, except it is all in their mind. Because they like, we all like to pick and choose what we want to do. You like churches where you can pick and choose what you want to do. You like churches where nobody holds you accountable. Just like somebody, that is how your son or your daughter got the person pregnant. They like being in a family where there was no accountability. That is why your kids get out in the world. They like a family where mom and dad has no accountability. God's people are no different to that. You are children of God. So many of God's people like churches where there is no accountability. Of course, that is the way it works. It is the way the wind blows today.

That is the thing that the church has to be. It has to be there for you. But it has to have some structure to it. Most churches that I look at remind me of the images down on the border. Utter chaos. Everybody just mingled together and nobody knowing what in the world anybody else is doing. A lot of people are going to get hurt. In the judgment seat of Christ, a lot of God's people are going to get hurt. Simply because of the fact that nobody ever stood up and told them. "This is the way it works. You got all of the Holy Spirit of God when you got saved, but you got grace and faith by measure. Now, the church is here to help you develop that, invest that, bring that along where you can be everything that God wants you to be."

End of the day. It is your choice. It is your decision. We will hold up there. Do not forget, hey guys, all you who are going to work with me in the missionary program.