

I. The Power of Prophecy and Patterns

If you have your Bibles today, we are going to move into John 7 here in just a little bit. You remember last week we saw one of the most powerful yet completely unknown verses in the Bible for the times that we live in, really any time, but certainly for where we are at today. Hopefully, you can now see and understand how that one verse can be the leading key to one great study after another in the Word of God. This goes beyond the crush depth of most of God's people, getting down deep into the Word of God and really getting everything out of it that you can.

We are living in a Christianity that is fast spiraling into apostasy. Holding on to the truth, learning the truth, and getting the truth is out of reach for most people today because of where they are at. You will remember from our Bible Institute and our other times on Thursday night, a while back I have given this to you several times. In fact, I even mentioned that Thursday night, a great verse in itself that is again a blockbuster verse, and that is in Isaiah 42:9. You do not have to turn back to it, but he says there:

Isaiah 42:9

Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.

God will show us from this verse what is going to happen before it happens. That is another lost treasure verse in the Bible today. The idea that whatever is coming our way should never catch us by surprise. He told us here that the new things that are coming, and you can make a list of those, but the new things that are coming our way that we are going to have to deal with, He tells us before it gets here. Last week was a great example of that as we just went to the Bible and let the Bible lay itself out.

God knows that we as His people are going to have to make some difficult choices in life, not just because of the times that we live in, but all through our Christian life no matter when. There will be issues that we have to face, decisions that we have to make that will be hard sometimes. So He will show you and I what you are up against. He will make it very clear what we are facing before it hits us so you do not make the wrong choice or the wrong decision.

You see this great principle in dealing with people. You can predict almost with 100% accuracy when a marriage is going to fall apart. You can predict with uncanny precision when somebody is heading down the wrong road and probably going to leave the church with something that they are upset about. This is because the patterns get established and people begin to form patterns, and the patterns never lie because patterns are what the Bible is built on.

The key to any of this is simply knowing what to look for. We can never afford to lose our perspective, never. There are some decisions that we make that will automatically carry a bottom line situation with it. It is going to have an end result. When you learn those patterns and you

know this is what somebody says they are going to do, you know how it is going to end because the pattern has already been established.

We cannot ever afford to lose our perspective. We cannot afford to lose our understanding because that will affect our ministry and what we are going to try to do for the Lord. All I tried to do last week was show you that everything that is going on today is not something that is new, even though to us it is new. But I ran it back to 2 Thessalonians 2:7 where it talked about the mystery of iniquity doth already work. That is the context by which you have to view everything in life today, and everybody down through history had to view what they went through in life today.

This is simply being able to not just see the devil as the antichrist or the man of sin or look at the tribulation period, but also see that it is not just what is unfolding around you today now. This is so crucial. All of this will be a pattern in history. So you can see it and learn from history, the history of it, but you must establish the patterns first.

I am telling you folks, when you get over there in Hebrews, you will find that God did everything by the pattern. When you can go through the Word of God and build your life into it and see and understand the patterns, it makes life a lot easier. It is like you take a woman or even a man who is a tailor, and they take cloth and they can make a beautiful dress or he can make a beautiful suit or really nice stuff. They just take a bolt of cloth and they take that and then voila, on the other end there is a beautiful gown, wedding dress, a beautiful dress, or a nice looking suit. But you see, it never would have come into being without that person having a pattern.

Patterns are the key to everything in life. For you and for me, it is just simply being able to see those patterns and understand that what we are up against now will certainly, most certainly, be the pattern that you have to follow, the chain of evidence. You have to know this: just as the Bible will be the book that shows us God's pattern down through history, because God wants you to know where He is at, that He is coming to establish His kingdom, He will give you every piece of His pattern so wherever you are at in history, you know where He is at in relationship to that. So the Bible will be our book to show you the pattern of the devil, to stop God's plan.

II. The Devil's Counter-Pattern and Desire to Be God

As we saw last week, to establish himself as God, the devil, and I showed you that in Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14. You want to remember now that that is the devil's main deal. He wants to be God. Most people miss this, but when you go over to Matthew 4, you have what the commentators call the temptation of Christ. This is where the devil comes to Him and he tries to get Him to be subservient to him. He comes to Him three times with three different offers. Of course, the Lord refuses every one of them.

It has always been interesting to me that within that story, there is another great principle: everything that he asked the Lord to do is something that Christ is going to do with the second coming of Christ. It has always been an incredible thing to me that that is a great picture of what the devil tries to do with all of us. There was nothing wrong with what the devil wanted Him to do. It was just out of the timing of what God wanted to do it. You are going to find one of the

biggest problems we all have is the devil trying to get us to do not just the bad things, but to get us to do the right things at the wrong time. That comes out of that great story.

Anyway, he comes down here and the last thing he tries to get Him to do, he takes Him up on a mountain and he shows Him all the kingdoms of this world. He said, "I will give you," the devil saying to Christ, "I will give you those kingdoms if you will bow down and worship me." Now most people just think that is a whimsical, foolish thing that the devil was saying to Him. No, no, no, not so. The devil wants to be God. In Revelation 19 and Revelation 11:15, when Christ comes back, that is exactly what God does. It says that the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of His Christ. That gives them to Christ at the second coming, and what the devil wanted to do is he wanted to give those to Christ, and if He would have accepted those, then Christ would have had to have accepted him as God. It is quite incredible.

Along with that, we have another blockbuster verse that is found in Job 41:12. God says concerning the devil:

Job 41:12

I will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor his comely proportion.

Clearly defined for us in the scriptures:

- The parts where he says, "I will not conceal his parts," that is the men that down through history the devil has used to accomplish what he is trying to do.
- When he says, "I will not conceal his power," that will be the nations by which he has tried to accomplish everything he wanted to accomplish.
- When he says, "I will not conceal his comely proportion," that will always be the religions that he has used to try to get about what he wanted to do.

As he says in verse 14, God will open to us the doors of his face. God will establish a pattern of everything down through history. He does not want, Isaiah 42, He does not want us to wake up in the morning and be surprised. He does not want something to overtake us that we are not ready for. He wants us to know through the Bible, but through the patterns in the Bible, and knowing that the mystery of iniquity does already work, where we are pretty much at.

III. The Current State of the Nation and the Need for Stability

We talked about this last week, we talked about it Thursday night. Thursday night, you remember that I got so many questions this week of what is going on in current events in Afghanistan and how it impacts everything that we are as Christians in a nation and how you have a better handle on that because we talked about that and the war unfolding in Afghanistan and the complete collapse of America as being able to do anything about it and being a world leader. We know now, and I have told you this, that we are going to go through some rough times. There is no question about that.

We have been here in this church now right around 18 years. I look across this crowd and you are all at different places and different levels. Some of you have been with me for 30 years or longer. You would be what I would call the old guard. You have been with me for 30 years, some even more than that. We go back together. We have got a lot of ground under our boots. Some of you have been with me 10 years, 15, 18, 20 years, some of you less than that. But by now, if you have been around here four or five years, maybe less than that, I do not know. You know me by now.

Especially you old guard people, you know what I preached all those years and even before here, that I have never changed one position on where I am at with the Bible and what it teaches. I may better, most certainly I understand things better now on a deeper level, but I have not come to the place where I here stand before you and come up with some goofy heresy that now deviates from everything that is the pattern of the Bible down through history. I preached today what I preached 35 years ago, 40 years ago, 50 years ago. I have not changed one thing.

I am saying all that to say this: I saw this day coming a long time ago and a long way off, Isaiah 42:9. I preached about it. I tried to warn God's people, tried to prepare God's people. It did not mean a lot to most people back then, but it is starting to mean something to them now because we are starting to see it all fall apart around us. All those years I have tried to build people by giving them the truth, trying to build into their life some kind of stability in a world that is completely unstable.

I knew that there was going to come a time when the world was going to turn to silly putty. I needed men and women with concrete legs. I needed God's people with steel in their backbone and the ability to be stable in a world that is unstable. Unfortunately, in an unstable world, most of God's people are as unstable as the world is, and they are fearful. They are afraid. Of course, the Bible says that perfect love casteth out fear. The Bible says that you and I as God's people have nothing to fear if we rely on the patterns and the principles found in the Word of God.

Through all those years I tried to just take the people that God gave me and build steel in their backbone, give them something worth living for. Not just to do the work of God, though that was important and you do a tremendous job with that and we have got so many ministries and people that we are reaching not only in Kansas City but around the country and literally around the world, but to keep us in the work for what is coming because we are going to have to make some hard decisions. You are going to have to make some hard decisions. I am sorry. The time where we can just have a cush Christianity has come to an end, I am afraid.

My philosophy in ministry has always been a very simple one: just take one person at a time, one couple at a time, one family at a time and try to develop them through the Word of God. Not only in the way I have done that is to build, as you can look within the inner structure of our church, I have built different levels of ministry that wherever you are at, whatever you need, there is a structure for you because that is what it needs to be. I am not interested in this coming on Sunday morning and just getting up and preaching a candy stick message and then you go out your way and I go my way. No, no, no. We have to make life commitments together.

The first commitment we make to life is to the Lord Jesus Christ when you got saved. The second commitment has to be to the Word of God, and then the third commitment has to be to this church. Obviously, your family is in the mix of that and you know how that fits in there. But you have to take people one at a time and you develop them through the Word of God. Going in, you know that not everybody is going to make it. It is the nature of warfare. There has never been a warfare that has been without casualties, and Christianity is a warfare in Ephesians 6, and you are going to have casualties. Sometimes they are casualties of a collateral damage. Sometimes they are casualties of a self-inflicted wound. But you have casualties and not everybody is going to make it. It is a thing where you just have to get past that.

God has been so good to this church. He has brought to us, as far as in my opinion, He has brought to me and this church the best of the best of the people that we have. Both here and of course on the YouTube are some incredible people. Young men and young women fill this church. Young couples fill this church. Older moms and dads are the stabilizing force in this church, and then I have an elite core of seniors, elders who will take their stand and have the steel that they need to hold the line. It is just the way that we have built this here.

Now I am a collector. I have been that way all my life. I was born in 1950 and I grew up in the shadow of World War II and of course Korea. All my uncles and all my family were either in World War II or in Korea. So when I was growing up, that was the permanent thing in everybody's mind. It was a thing where at a very early age, I always wanted to be in the military, which I have fulfilled that in my life. From a kid, I was obsessed with that generation, which I believe was the greatest generation in the 20th century. I began to collect. Guys would come back and they would give me this or they would give me that and I would start to have a, I would start to collect those things, World War II memorabilia.

I had some incredible stuff and I enjoyed it. But most importantly, I enjoyed the history of it. I would get into somebody's grouping that had a history to it. I had, at one time I probably had over 100 of them. I would study the history and some of these guys, actually before they died, somebody in the family had them sit down and detail out everything that they went through in World War II. It was incredible. I would find as much information about them as I can. I would talk to their family members. I would try to get, and I would tell them, and I would do displays at schools and at military places. I wanted to keep their history alive because to me, the moment you lose the history of something, you have lost everything.

If you do not know what the price that was paid for what you got right now, this is the problem with you young generation kids, maybe not you in particular here, but your generation, you do not understand the price that was paid. Some of these kids think that Manual Labor was the president of Mexico. They do not have a clue. You think Taco Bell is a Mexican phone company. It is a thing where we have lost that. When you lose that, you are in trouble.

We have kids in this church. Guadalcanal happened in 1942 in the Solomon Islands. Nobody knows who Guadalcanal is, or what it was. It is a chain of islands in the Solomon Islands. In 1942, it is the first place that the Americans were going to stop the Japanese in their advance in World War II. The Japanese took over just about everything in the Pacific. They bombed Pearl

Harbor. They took Wake Island. They invaded the Philippines. We decided to take our stand in Guadalcanal because we wanted to stop them from getting into Australia. If they had got Australia, we would have been in trouble.

I get reading those stories about the 1st Marine Division and those guys back there. You realize how many young men here, you are 14 or 15 years old. How old are you? 15. Anybody else? We only got one 15-year-old. Where is the other one at? How old are you? 13? 14. Okay, I will make you feel good. I thought you were 20. Did I help you?

You realize those two guys that age, there were young men. Guadalcanal was a hellhole. It was the first time we were up against the Japanese. You have to read what happened at Alligator Creek. You have to read about the Banzai charges. You have to read how the American Navy had to pull back. They were left by themselves. They hung on to Guadalcanal by their fingertips. Yet, I have read the stories of young men, 14 and 15 years old, their age. Big boys, lied about their age, got into the Marine Corps and found out they went through the whole battle of Guadalcanal, as they did all those, at 13 and 14 and 15 years old. Hard to believe. But that was the generation back then, see? That was the generation.

I cannot imagine a kid 14 years old facing what those guys had to face and staying in and staying with it and fighting. When the commanding officer found out how old they were, those kids said, "I ain't going home," and the commanding officer fudged on the record so we could keep them. They are a great generation. I think to myself, what did they have back then that we do not have today? And I got lost in the history of those things.

Years ago, not that many years ago, I was at a flea market. There was a big footlocker there that was filled with paperwork. It had some insignia in it and I think it had an officer's visor cap in it or whatever, but it intrigued me. I asked the lady where it came from. She said it came out of a house here in Independence. I asked her what she wanted for it. She wanted like \$30 for it. So, I offered her \$20 and she took it. Shalom.

When I got that home, it was the saddest thing that I have ever seen in my life. It was a complete record of a pilot of a B-17 that was killed bombing Germany in 1944. He was from Independence. He had a wife who lived in Independence then and up to the point that she died. This all came out of her attic. Nobody knew how he died. After the war, when the POWs were released, three of his crew came back and said that their B-17 got hit over Germany and it was on fire and they were going down. Three of them got out. The pilot and the rest of them were trying to get out when the plane exploded and he was killed.

Of course, during the war, nobody knew that. He was officially missing in action. Nobody knew who were prisoners. Nobody knew anything. They just did not come back and they were presumed missing in action. It was not until 1945 that they began to be repatriated and you found out who was still alive. From 1944 to almost 1946, there had to be 300 letters that this wife wrote to her husband, she not knowing he was dead. I read those letters and I could actually feel one letter would be up. The next letter would be filled with worry that maybe, and every one of those letters, every one of them, all of them, came back to her with a red stamp on it, "undeliverable missing in action."

She kept sending those letters, sending those letters, sending those letters. One of them, she would start to talk about how she missed him and that she hoped he was okay and she was praying that he was okay, that he was a prisoner. The next one, she would be the opposite and she would be distraught because of the fact for all those months, all of those letters. I read those letters and thought to myself what she went through. Yet, what sustained her at the end of the war, when they found out what happened, she was told that he was killed, December 1944. His picture and the story was in the Independence newspaper. There were two copies of it in there. They told the story of what happened and laid the whole thing out.

I looked at all of that and I thought to myself, every time she sent a letter, what she must have felt when it came back stamped in red, "missing in action, undeliverable." That was the greatest generation who paid a price for you and I to be right where we are at today and have the freedoms that we have.

Now there is a suitable end to that story. I found out through some friends of mine over in England, where the base was that he was flying out of, he was in the 390th or something like that, that the base was there but it was dilapidated. They were going to redo the base and bring it back up to wartime status to make a museum out of it. When I found out, I contacted the guy, told him what I had and I donated that to that museum there at the air base. If we go over there today, it is all on display, he sent me a picture of it. I thought to myself, I am not just a collector of memorabilia, I am a collector of history. Yet I understood that every piece I held in my hand, I was just a custodian of a piece of history.

I said all that to say this, I am a collector but my greatest collection is you folks. Because as far as Christianity is concerned, in the day and age of it, you are the greatest generation, you folks right here. You are my collection that God has given me here. In my mind, nowhere in the world could I find the quality of men and women that are going to saddle up and get into the fight. When we go to Jason's Deli after the games or the 4th of July or softball Memorial Day, even tonight at kickball, when we go to Branson, any activity together, I just like to walk around and look at everybody that God has given me and just thank God for the great collection of men and women.

I say this, I know we are not perfect. There is always room for improvement for all of us. We all make mistakes, I know I do. But no church bats a thousand. People will come and people will go. I get that. But the thing here for those of you who are part of this, we cover for each other. We help each other. We will be each other's strength when that person is weak. We are the embodiment of Romans 14:1 that are strong, not the barely and firmly of the weak, and not the pleased ourselves.

That is why this September or October, like I said a couple of weeks ago, I want to put together another leadership training class. It will not be on YouTube. It will not be something that everybody can get taped. It will not even be on the tape thing. It will be just for those who are qualified to want to go through that. I told you that we are ready to do this because of all the new people and where you are at in a timely manner, because people are growing and there is time

now to take many of you to the next level. I get that. But I would be lying if I did not tell you that another reason I am doing it is to get as many of you up to speed for what is coming in life.

IV. The Qualities of God's People: Lessons from David's Mighty Men

One of my favorite stories in the Bible is the story of David's mighty men of valor. You will find that story back in 2 Samuel 23 and also in 1 Chronicles 11. I look at those men and they were special to David. David was special to them. David had the army of Israel, but within that army he had his mighty men of valor who, when you read their accounts, were pretty spectacular. They stepped over the line and were greater in what they did and they had a greater bond with David and David with them than the average soldier in the Israeli army.

As I read that I thought to myself, and I compared it one time with Saul's mighty men of valor. Boy, that is a great comparison. David's mighty men of valor chose to be with him because they wanted to be with him and they loved him. When Saul had his, he had to force them. Nobody was volunteering. He conscripted them. He made them. I thought to myself, wow, and I got looking at that and I thought to myself, that is exactly what I got here.

I looked at the four key elements that David's mighty men of valor had and I thought, those are the four same elements that I look for in building people.

1. Courage. They were courageous men.
2. Determination. They were determined to do whatever they had to do to get the job done.
3. Loyalty. They were fiercely loyal to David.
4. Honor. This was the one thing that pulled it all together.

Yet those are the four qualities that are missing in God's people in Christianity today. They, like us, had to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. It is quite incredible.

V. America's Multi-Front War and the Strategy of Division

America today reminds me of the sinking of the Titanic in 1912. We are sinking fast and the crew are rearranging deck chairs for the next social event. Nobody sees the ship is sinking. We are experiencing a total collapse and are in freefall to anarchy in this country.

I told you Thursday night that I made a reference to the fact that during World War II, Germany lost the war because she opened up a second front. If she had just fought the British and the Americans, she swept through Europe. But the two big forces she had to take was Britain and then America. If she had just stayed with that, we would have had a tough time defeating her. But she opened up a second front. That is when she attacked Russia. When she attacked Russia, even though in '41 and '42, even though the war was going to go on for three more long years, she was finished. Because you cannot win a two-front war.

I showed you Thursday night how America is facing a six or seven-front war. This is why we will not win.

- We have the war in the Middle East all exasperated now with the collapse of Afghanistan, the total debauchery of trying to get out of there. Now the Taliban are actually posing pictures, wearing American uniforms, using American weaponry that we left behind, and thanking America for all of the billions and billions of dollars of hardware that we left behind to arm them. There was one report that they were dressing up in American uniforms and wearing American weapons and taking somebody that spoke English very well and going door to door saying, "We are Americans, we are here to get you out." When the people let them in, they found out they were not Americans. And they arrested them. We are a joke to the world today. Now that we are out, guess who is going to come to dinner tomorrow afternoon? Russia and China. It is a terrible thing. So we got that war coming to us.
- Then we have the pandemic that is raging across this country. The COVID-19 has just started and now the Delta version of it, and the country is in complete disharmony over it. There has been so much misinformation, so much confusion, because nobody really knows what they are doing. So that is the second war we are up against that has divided us.
- Then we have the southern border, which is a sieve. Thousands and thousands and thousands of people are just coming into this country, wide open.
- Then we have the complete war on crime. Trying to defund our police. Letting gangs roam the streets. Every weekend when you get up on Monday, you will find that in New York and in Chicago or some major city where it is out of control, 9, 10, 12 people shot to death. Another 80 wounded. It is out of control. It is a thing where this idea that we wanted to fund the police, and it was always by the politicians that wanted to defund the police, but they had their own private security protecting them. Now we see what happens when you take our brave police officers off the streets. It is a tragedy. It is a war.
- Then we have the race war. Everybody dividing everybody against everything.

So we see this country at at least six or seven wars, six or seven different fronts that we are trying to fight, and we cannot do it. What the devil has done, Mystery of Iniquity, nothing already worked, as I told you Thursday night, he just simply practiced the great strategy back in Joshua, divide and conquer. When any church gets divided, you get conquered. When two Christians get divided, you get conquered. When a country gets divided, you get conquered. This country is divided in so many areas, it makes Hitler's two-front war look like kids playing marbles. It is a different trouble.

VI. The Alamo and Drawing the Line in the Sand

It has been said, and I love history, but at the Alamo, and the Alamo was down in San Antonio, which is San Antonio, Texas today in 1836, that the guy in charge, a guy by the name of Colonel Travis, on the night before the final battle. There were about 200 some odd men in the Alamo. Santa Anna, who was the guy heading Mexico, he had an army of 10,000 guys or more. He wanted to come up and take Texas. He could not just bypass the Alamo. While he was going to do that, up in some part in Texas, Sam Houston was trying to build an army to fight Santa Anna. So the Alamo was key, because every day that they held Santa Anna up, and he could not just bypass it, every day they held him up, bought a little more time for them to build an army to fight Santa Anna.

On the last night, before the final battle, it is said that Colonel Travis came out and called all the men up and pulled out his sword and drew a line in the sand. He told the men what was coming the next day, that they would not be able to hold him off. A lot of people, food was gone. They had evacuated the women and the children. They knew this was the final stand. The Mexicans blew the trumpet and threw up the flags. I forget what the Mexican term for it is, but it was going to be no quarter. They were not going to take any prisoners. They were going to kill everybody.

He took his sword and drew a line in the sand. He said any man that wanted to stay and fight was to cross that line. Anybody that did not cross that line was free to leave that night and no dishonor or stain would be on their character because of what they were going to face and nobody was going to survive. Nobody left. Everybody stayed. They all stayed and paid the price for the state of Texas. Probably we would not have the great state of Texas today if it was not for what they did in the Alamo.

Today the hand of God has drawn a line in the sand with His sword, the Word of God. God's people will have to take their stand. I get it. Unlike the Alamo, many of God's people are sneaking over the back wall. You want to remember that Ephesians 6:12 says that we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, power, spiritual wickedness in high places. Their warfare was bullets, blood, guts, and bombs. Ours is a spiritual warfare.

I would never dare to speak for you or anybody else, and I would never do that, but I can actually say speaking this for me and my family, we will hold the line and we will make our stand with the Word of God. Joshua said over there in Joshua 24:15, he says about the fact that your house is going to stand for the truth. Jamie and Barb and Jamie and Danny and Kelly and Woody, Kenzie, Mattie, Macy, and Jordan, we have already crossed that line. We are staying. It is a thing to us is the fact that if this thing, if this church was established by God and doing what God wants it to do, then we need to see it through to the end.

So I want to try to blend last Thursday and last week into this one. Today when we enter into John 7, I want to lay out another great truth based on last week, the intro that I just gave you and what we talked about on Thursday night. I want to begin reading in John 7:1-5, and I want you to listen very carefully.

John 7:1-5

After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.

Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand.

His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judæa, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest.

For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world.

For neither did his brethren believe in him.

Father, we thank you and praise you for the Lord Jesus. We ask you now to take what we have already talked about last week, today, Thursday night, and then tie it all into where we are going today. We love you. I love this church. I love the men and women that have crossed the line that are going to stay and hold the line. I pray, Father, you will continue to bless in all that we do. Thank you for your good hand in this church, for the many, many, many people that you are bringing to us as we continue to build them one at a time. We will thank you and praise you in Jesus' name, for a sake we ask you, amen.

VII. God's Principle of Division Before Unity

What a great truth this is. There is a common mistake today that God's people will make in understanding how God will do things and how He will work. They think that God actually came into the world to put everything together, to get everybody together. Of course, that will be the mindset of the Ecumenical Movement and the Neo-Evangelical Movement. They look at everybody, no matter what you believe, put the doctrine aside and let us just all kind of a kumbaya relationship. But yet nothing could be farther from the truth. The Bible makes it clear before God can put anything together, He first has to divide it.

You first find out in Genesis 1:4, law of first mention, where you first find the word divide in your Bible. There God divided the light from the darkness. That is God and the devil by the way, there is no sun yet and so the light there is the glory of God and the darkness there is the light of the devil, which the Bible tells you in Matthew is a dark light. So you will find from here God is in a dividing business before He can ever put anything together. He fundamentally divides light from darkness the rest of history. You are just told there in Genesis 1:4 that is where it starts.

That is a great key. You want to learn what I am about to say. Here it is. Here is how it works. God will divide and then He will put together. You see that in Genesis 1:4. The devil on the other hand, listen carefully, God will divide and then He puts together. The devil will subtract first then he divides. That will be Genesis 3:1-4. That is the pattern right there.

Now you want to look at Luke 12:51-53 and pick it up in verse 51 here through 53 and it says this. This is Jesus speaking:

Luke 12:51-53

Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:

For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.

The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

So we see that based on this principle that God did not come to put everything together till He divides something. You see here is how it works. Follow the pattern. Genesis 1:4, God divided

light from darkness and then He divides it from there. In Exodus 12, He divided Israel from Egypt. For that He wanted to divide Abraham from Lot. See how it works?

When you and I got saved, Colossians 2, He divided your soul from your flesh. After you got saved then He sets you apart, we call it sanctification in the Bible, and He divides you from the world. You have an old nature and a new nature. After salvation you will see very quickly how God's truth will separate you from your friends, the world, and unfortunately sometimes even your family. In our text today we see how that when Christ came into the world, the Son of Man, the Son of God, you see that the truth, He Himself, divided Him from His own family. Verse 5.

VIII. Truth Divides Families, God Provides a New One

Pay attention. This will be a real blessing to many of you today that have experienced something along these lines. We saw a couple of weeks ago Christ as the Bread of Life, John 6. After God's great discourse, Christ's great discourse on truth, the Word of God, Christ, the Man of Heaven, look what happened in John 6:66. This will happen every time there is a great expose of truth.

John 6:66

From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

It divided Him. Now in John 7:1-5 His own family, His brothers and sisters, they want nothing to do with Him. They do not believe in anything that He is saying. The Roman Catholic Church would teach us and have us to believe that Mary was a perpetual virgin. What does that mean? It means that she stayed a virgin all of her life and never had any more kids. Of course nothing could be farther from the truth. We know that that is not true. We know the Catholic Church needs that because of the goofy things that they want to try to get you to believe down the line someplace.

But coming back to the Bible, the pattern, we know from here John 7:1-5 and then also from 1 Corinthians 9:5 and over there in Mark 6:2-3 that His physical brothers and sisters are laid out for you and the brothers, the men, are listed out by name. All of them, all of His literal physical brothers and sisters except one reject Him and do not believe in Him, and of course that is James. You will find in 1 Corinthians 15:6-8 where James becomes an apostle. He is a key player in Jerusalem during the book of Acts.

I have often thought about that. Could you imagine for a moment being in the same family with the Lord Jesus Christ watching Him? I mean all the things. Then could you imagine being in the same family with the Son of God rejecting who He was and then wind up at the Great White Throne Judgment? That is scary beyond belief. It is not like us who have to read a Bible or hear some goofy preacher lay it out. They went with, they walked every day with Him. They saw Him with an understanding of the scriptures that even the scribes and the Pharisees scratched their heads and said, "How could this man know letters never having learned?" They saw the miracles that He did. They were right there first hand. Wow, you talk about a day at the Great White Throne Judgment. That is scary, man. That is scary.

Along with that we also know that in the tribulation period the truth of the Word of God will separate families again. For this we want to look at Matthew 10:16-22 and this will be a tribulation context. He says in verse 16:

Matthew 10:16-22

Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.

And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

Actually that is a tribulation passage and you want to add to that Matthew 24:9-13 and then Luke 12:53. So with all that so far establishing as a pattern, it is no surprise that today in families many of God's people will face moms and dads, brothers and sisters that the truth of the Word of God will separate you from them.

I have been in the ministry over 50 years now and I have seen it all through my ministry. I mean 50 years worth. This is not something that is just locally and isolated, this goes on all the time. Of course we have had over the years where some of you had moms and dads that did not care about the Bible, they did not care about this church, they did not care about truth or salvation or maybe they did but they just were out there someplace and so you had to break with them. We have got kids in this church that moved all the way across the country because they needed what you give them here.

Many times we get blasted by it, people give us all kinds of grief for it and everything but the greatest witness, you can say whatever you want to say, you can spout off and say whatever you want to say but the greatest witness against you is your own kids. They are here, they are growing, they are ministering, they are preaching, they are doing the work of the ministry and where are you at? You are a 300 pound couch potato, eating there watching television, eating snacks and you are going nowhere but your kids are doing something with you. What happened? Truth divided you.

I will tell you right now the greatest witness against any mom and dad down through history that God divides their kids or husbands and wives or however it breaks down. The greatest witness

against those people are the ones who stay and do what is right. I have seen it all by ministry. There is never a time when it did not happen. I have seen it where the parents were Roman Catholic and the kids get saved. They start growing in the Word of God and mom and dad has a fit because they think that we are stealing them from the Catholic church. They are right. I have seen it with other religions like the Charismatics where mom and dad are so into it. I have seen it with the Church of Christ, the Jehovah Witnesses. I have seen it with every aspect, all of my ministry that truth will separate you. Real truth will separate you.

You would think for a mom and a dad if they had any spiritual sense at all that that would keep them awake at night. Why did I lose my kids to a church? Why did I lose my kids to a Bible? What is wrong with us that they do not want to be part of what we are doing? We did not like it. They laugh but they are staying. That has got to be tough. The truth of God's word in doing right with it divides people and many times from your own family just like the Lord Jesus Christ. So I say this, if that has happened to you, you are in good company. You really are.

In the church age when it happens, I cannot speak for the tribulation because I am not in it and will not be in it. I did not live back in the Old Testament but I am relevant to the church age here and in the church age, God does when that happens, and that has happened to so many of you. What God will do? When you lose your family to truth or your friends to truth because it will separate you from your friends, not just your family. You will have friends that you hang out with and you see this all the time before you got saved you hang out with them. The moment you get saved everything about your world changes and theirs stays the same. It is like the elephant in the room suddenly something is not right. They want to go out and party. You do not want to go there anymore. You want to go to Thursday night Bible study. They want to go shoot pool. Nothing wrong with pool but I am just saying. You want to go do your thing, they want to go do theirs. You go out on Saturday night a couple of times with them and by 11 o'clock you say, "Oh I got to go." "11 o'clock man we are always out there two or three." "I got church in the morning." "What?" See? It divides you. So not only will it just be your family, it will also be your friends.

In the church age what God does, what He will do? He will give you a new family. I do not know how many young men and young ladies over my years I have been a spiritual dad to. Some of them even call me dad. Call me grandpa, I will kill you. Many of you have been a spiritual father to some of these kids. Been a spiritual mother to them. Why? Because their own physical father and mother are nowhere to be found. He will give you new spiritual brothers and sisters. He will give you new friends. You see when God, here is the pattern, when God divides then He adds. If truth will divide you from your mom and your dad or your family or your friends or your brothers and your sister, then God will add a new family to it. He will give you on a spiritual side everything that you need. He will do that after the devil has subtracted your family out of your life because of the truth. He will now give you friends that are built on truth.

Again, there are so many of you like this. No family is going to be perfect. No family is going to be perfect. No spiritual family is going to be perfect. No church is going to be perfect. I always tell people that say, "Well, I am going to, I am not going to like that church. I am looking for a perfect church." I always tell them, "Well, when you find it, don't join it because it won't be

perfect anymore." Nothing in life is perfect other than your salvation and the Bible that you hold in your lap today. So no family is going to be perfect, even a spiritual one. There will be issues that arise. There always is.

The difference will be in most physical families, they will never sit down and open up a Bible to fix the problem. I have been kin to a lot of those over the years and the reason why they will not is because they do not want to find out that they are the problem. It is just that simple. It is a thing where when a physical family has issues, whether it is with the kids or whether it is the moms or the dads or the brothers or the sisters or whoever, and the principles are applied and you get to the bottom line of what the real problem is without dealing with all the smoke and all the phony stuff that you do not really want to get down to the real problem. When a church has issues or a family has issues, if you apply the principles of the Word of God, it will fix it. It will just fix it.

One of the things I like about my leaders, and this happens all the time, two leaders will be out there or two people will be out there doing something, and they will have a conflict over it. I will audibly find out about it, but by the time I found about it, I do not ever have to ever get in and fix it. Why? Their credibility is so strong and they are such good leaders that they use the principles and they fix it themselves and I do not have to get involved in it. That is leadership. That is what it takes. That is the key.

If you have an issue or family issues over the Word of God and you are standing for the truth, and you lose your family over it, you are in good company because so did the Lord Jesus Christ. It is going to happen. But in our case in the church age, then God gives you a new family. I want you to notice something. Right after this great passage on the Bread of Life in John 6, people started to walk no more with Him. Great revelations of truth will bring revolution in your life. These people heard the great discourse. They saw Him running back to the Old Testament because they had personal issues. They decided, "I am not going to that church anymore. I do not really want to deal with my problems. I really do not want to deal with the issue." It is easier to go and as they did, always blame somebody else for the problems.

But at the same time, what about all the rest of the nation of Israel that followed Him? You take Jesus' own family. They all departed all but James. How do you justify that James stayed with the truth and the rest did not? Hey, if everybody left, you would be okay. But when you have a family that part of them leave because of the fact that they do not like the truth and yet part of their family stays because they have it, what do you do with that? How do you get around that? You see it, it is a pattern all through the Bible. People started to walk no more with Him. All this is in the days we live in, should be a very warning, a warning light to all of us. This country gets more divided each day.

IX. The Importance of Vision and Following God's Patterns

The bottom line is, as the mystery of iniquity continues to work, the Word of God, the farther the world gets from it, the farther families get from it, the farther mom and dads get from it. You will see the effect on every aspect of society. This is why America has the six or seven-front war that

she is trying to win, but she will never win. She is overwhelmed. If she had one or two of them, she might have a chance, but it is overwhelming her. It is like your house on fire and it is burning in the walls and the ceiling and all you have got is a blanket to try to beat the fire out. This country is on fire and we have got nothing but a blanket. We are trying to snuff out the flames. Every time we get one down, another fire breaks out over here and pretty soon we get burned up with it. You are going to see the effect on every aspect of society. We will get even more separated from it all if we stay with the Word of God.

It is one of those things where you have to understand this. I think this is incredible that you find this in John 7 in the first five verses right after He is the great discourse of the Bread of Life and some people decide not to go there. Now we see His own family decides He is not going to follow Him anymore except James. We see it in the tribulation. We see it in the church age. We see that truth divides. But before God can put anything together, folks, meaningful in your life, He is going to have to divide some things.

It is Proverbs 29:18:

Proverbs 29:18

Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.

The Word of God provides vision. Vision of truth is what God is doing, but not just what God is doing, but what He wants you to do with that truth. When that vision is gone, you are on your own. It is not complicated. When that vision is gone, now the truth of, and that is true of every nation. You can see the pattern in history. There was a time, look at Europe today, and Europe is completely amoral. It is an absolute cesspool. But yet there was a time when most of Europe followed the Bible and was saved. What happened? Pattern. How about Germany? Martin Luther? How about Czechoslovakia, John Huss? There was a time under John Huss's ministry that almost everybody in Czechoslovakia was a born-again believer. There is no Czechoslovakia today. What happened? Patterns. Patterns. Patterns.

It is true of nations. It is true of churches. It is true of Christianity in general. It is true of families. It is true of marriages and it is true of individual people. I am telling you, in a family, a father has to provide the vision for his wife. That is where it starts. That is your job. The job of a husband is to provide, first off, the vision of what God is going to do to his wife. Not chasing around in all the beer parties, not running out and doing all the things. It is his job to provide vision for his wife and then together they provide vision to the rest of the family. The church, our job is to provide the vision for the whole family in a support mode.

With a vision of God, the family with that vision, the children with that vision, I guarantee you, when you have to face the things that are going to have to face, it will never be a problem because you will live above the circumstances and families stay together. You see, once God has to divide some things in your life, then He puts together and if you stay with the book, your family never gets separated. You cannot blame anybody for that but you, the father. Because in any family, I do not care who you want to pass the buck to, I do not care what you want to say, in any family it is the father who has to provide the vision. When you do not, somebody else will.

As I told you before, God quits injecting His truth into your life and now you are done. America is done today. You have heard me say it many, many times but I do not want to say that without saying this. She has had seven injections. In the history of America, starting with the inception in the 1700s up to 1950, God has injected through seven great awakenings the Holy Spirit of God into this country to keep them on track with the Word of God. Every one of those injections has met with rejection.

Fundamentally, that vision will be what God is doing with us. It is not a vision all by itself that I see what God is doing, it is the vision that you see what God is doing but along with that, you see what God wants to do with you. When you see that, then you and I understanding that we will live above the circumstances of whatever comes our way. It comes down to this, seeing through adversity what others through fear cannot see. Boy, that is true of everything. Perfect love casteth out fear. Greater is He that is in you than that is in the world. Knowing that God will always separate based on His truth and then will put it back together.

Right now, God has divided this country by the hand of God because of her rejection of the Word of God. He has also divided the world through the mystery of iniquity. But remember, after the great tribulation period and the millennial reign comes in at the second coming, then He puts back what He divided. The patterns are set. Your job and my job is simply to learn the patterns, follow the patterns for everything. Because the patterns are infallible.

The reason why we make bad choices, the reason why you have lost your family if you have, the reason why you do some dumb things that we all do is because you forsake the patterns. You do not get into the Bible on a level or you are in some church someplace where the guy could not know the Bible was like a blind bat trying to back in backwards. You are just wasting your time spinning your wheels learning nothing. But that is where you are at. Why should the end of your life be any different than the rest of your life? At some point, you as God's people have got to start seeing the patterns and realize that before God will put anything together, He is going to divide. The devil on the other hand will subtract first, then he divides. That is the way he works.

So the patterns are set, learn and follow the patterns, know what to look for. So that when it happens to you for any reason under any circumstances, you are not alone. You realize that because of what Christ went through, the rejection of the nation of Israel, you are going to be rejected by your own family too. When He went to His own kids, His brothers and sisters, they did not believe in Him at all. I am sure they made fun of Him. I am sure they thought that He thought He was better than they were. And they were right that He was better than they were. But they could not see past the physical and understand what was before them in the spiritual.

They had every Old Testament principle and promise and story that told them exactly who He really was. They should have been absolutely honored, privileged to have Him in their family, that their family was giving birth to the Messiah. See it all depends on what you do with it. They had a pattern in the Old Testament. They knew Isaiah 7:14. They knew the prophecies in Genesis. They knew every place that was back there in the Old Testament that should have told them who He was. They knew the story of how He was born in Matthew 2. Why? Did the three wise guys, did they just kind of get messed up and show up? They knew the gifts that He gave

them. They knew the three gifts that they gave them, what they represented to a king. What happened? The same thing happened to His family that happens to many families. They just never, never figured it out.

So when it happens to you for any reason under any circumstances, you are not alone. You are in good company for Jesus Himself went through what you are going through and God gave Him a new family. Did you ever see that? Bible says He came unto His own. You finish the verse, and His own received Him not. He came to Israel, that was His family, and they rejected Him. His own personal family rejected Him, so He dies on the cross. God divided Him from His family. God divided Him from God the Father on the cross. Then after, when we get into the church age, God did, God gave Him a new family, us. Now He is my Father, and I am His child. You see, God may have to separate you here, but He will never separate you without putting something together and give you a new family.

It is the pattern. God separated Him from Israel because of their rejection, but then God put it together with us. Now we are the family of God. We are, He is my heavenly Father. I am His child. You are His child. That is the way it works, my friend. It is one of the greatest studies in the Bible of the patterns that you and I should follow. When you find yourself in this situation, you are in good company because He went through. It gives great new meaning to Hebrews 4:15 where it says He was tempted on all points like we are. He was. There is not one thing that you and I will go through that He has not went through, including losing your family over truth. He made it, and so will you. Praise the Lord. We will hold up there. Great lesson for all of us for what is coming. Put a lot of things in perspective for you, I do hope. Let us pray. Do not forget.