

## I. Introduction and The Holy Spirit's Flexibility in Preaching

We never really got into the sermon and the lesson that I had put together on John 16:23-27. Every time, I like to keep a consistency, a continuity between lessons. So I always start with a little recap from last week so we can kind of put the fibers together. In my recap, we've been talking about the joy of the Lord, and I told you how that happened. I've been thinking about that all week. The men and women that I mentioned last week, I actually had in there and was going to just briefly go through them to show you the difference, but it didn't work out that way.

Last week was a classic example of what God has done many times in my life over my 50 years in preaching. It happens when He just shuts down the message. You work, you put the message together, and normally on a normal day, when you preach or you teach, everything goes according to plan. You get an outline, God shows you what He wants you to say and all that. But there are times that when you step up to deliver that, the Lord just kind of says, "Well, we're going to do something different today. I don't want you yet to give the one that you're going to give today. I got something else I want you to talk about."

It's hard to explain. Someday I know that some of you guys will develop yourselves into really good preachers. Several of you are dynamic preachers, as I speak, you're really good. I'd put you up against anybody. But there's a little difference in just preaching sermons and pastoring. Because when you pastor, you have to be able to develop things more than just putting a sermon together. But even in preaching, you will find if you're preaching at a camp someplace or maybe a revival, or going out places to preach. I know, Zach, you go down south there to, I never can get which town that place is in that you go to, but you know what I'm talking about. Sometimes God will just change the sermon. He'll just say, "You can use this one later, but I'm going to change the format."

I'm going to be honest with you, there's nothing in the world like that, really. It's a picture in the reality of you having the flexibility and also the confidence in the Holy Spirit of God. I tell you guys that are preaching, and I'm not, you guys are preaching at the mission every month or you're preaching at the rest home. I'm not necessarily thinking God is going to come down and give you Mount Vesuvius out of your sermon for the old folks. He may. But the bottom line is simply this: as you learn to preach and you learn to lay out the Word of God, you always want a good outline. There's nothing wrong with that. That's a consistency of good preaching. But you don't want to get so into your outline that God can't change it up without it ruining your day.

I've known guys in my life over the years that can never allow God to come down and do that. If He began to, they just get all freakish over it because they're so tied into the outline. It's a balance. You get tied into your outline that you have it very well, but you have to have the flexibility with the Holy Spirit of God that if He wants to change direction, I like to call it sending in a play from the bench like in a football game. If He wants to change it in the middle

of the stream, you being flexible enough and having the confidence that you can allow Him to do that.

Actually, you'll see in the Bible, at least two places come to my mind where He does that. Acts 8 is one of them where Philip is down there in Samaria having a revival. God picks him up right in the middle of the revival and sends him to the Ethiopian eunuch in the backside of the desert, and there it is. Then you have Acts 10 when Peter is preaching, and he hasn't got it all together yet, and he's getting ready to lay out Acts 2:38, and the Holy Spirit of God comes down and changes the whole format of the sermon. There are times that He'll do that. There are times that He wants to take what you have, or maybe a portion of what you have, and develop it in a different direction because honestly, at the end of the day, He knows your needs better than I do.

When I come up here, the Bible says that a pastor, he looks well to his herds. He needs to understand where they're at and try to give them what they need. But ultimately, the Holy Spirit of God knows what you and I need better than anything else. Sometimes we just need a reality check. When I was a little kid growing up, we were going someplace, I forget where it was, and we stopped at a truck stop place. I was just a little guy, and I watched this big, burly truck driver get out of his truck, and it was an 18-wheeler. He had this big steel pipe, and he was beating the tires. He'd go around and smack the tires, and I thought to myself, "What's he doing that for?" So, a little guy, I go up to him and I said, "Sir, I was just watching you beat the tires of your truck. Is there something wrong?" He said, "Oh no, son. There's nothing wrong. We do that just to make sure that there's nothing really wrong." I thought to myself, "I still don't understand the reason why you hit the tire with a pipe, but if that's what you do, that's what you do." But his answer never left me.

Sometimes in preaching to churches, to people, God just wants to come down and beat the tires. He just wants to, I mean, no real major problems, no real, but we all from time to time need a good reality check. Do you know that? Last week we saw some reasons for that, and sometimes He'll just take over and change directions where He wants the message to go. When that happens and it works and it flows for you guys down the line someplace, that's showing you the Holy Spirit of God is in the middle of things. That doesn't happen in a machine or a monument. That happens in the movement, the movement of the water, as we've talked about over the weeks. He knows what we really need.

## II. The Danger of Losing Christ: A Reality Check

It's easy for us to, as I said last week, just head 11 miles south into Laodicea and get out of it. When you do that, everything really looks the same. When you drive from here to Kansas City, as I used the illustration last week, and all the way down through Raytown and Independence, even though you're going through different cities, the buildings all look the same. The people actually look the same. The restaurants are the same. When you look at leaving the proximity, like I showed you in Colossians last week, Laodicea was just 11 miles to the south, and it was so easy to just find yourself, go down through there to find yourself in Laodicea. Everything looks the same. The people are the same. The buildings are the same. The thing that's different is the spirit. That's why the Bible tells us to try the spirits.

You have to be flexible enough to just let Him completely reconfigure whatever you decided that you were going to do and be okay with that. That's one of the great things about Operation Arkansas. You're not preaching down there, but you find yourself in a large situation that replicates that because you're going to have to be flexible to adapt to everything that changes. It isn't like you're going to go to the jail where they let you in, they put you in the same room, or you do this, or you go up to the rest home and you meet the little people out under the canopy or wherever you do it, or you go here, or you go down to the mission, and there's a format. It isn't like that. You've got to be flexible enough. The Holy Spirit of God knows what He does. We think we know what we're going to do, but we've got to be flexible enough to let Him change it and be okay with it and not get flustered about it. Of course, that's great training for anybody that is going to be what God wants them to be.

For sure, as we talked about all last week, He wants our joy to be full. 1 John 1:4. He wants our joy to be full, and yet most of God's people will never have the fullness of God's joy. Of course, most of them won't get the full reward either in 2 John 1:8 that He talks about. As I was thinking about all of this, and Colossae, Laodicea five times, and all the books that match up to Paul's books that he writes. You've got seven churches in the book of Revelation. Paul writes to seven churches, and as I told you, each one of those churches that Paul writes to matches up to one of the ones in Revelation. Colossae matches up to Laodicea. As I was thinking about it and pulling it all together, God's people, it's so easy just to lose the edge that you have. When that happens, we also lose the ability to recognize when the Holy Spirit of God wants to do something in our lives.

I was thinking of the story, and I think about this a lot living in the 20th and 21st century. Back in Luke 2:40-47. What a great story that is. You don't even have to turn to it if you don't want to. I'll just read it and then explain it to you. It's about the Lord Jesus when He was a child. In fact, He's 12 years old. So immediately we know that that has something to do with the nation of Israel's 12 tribes.

*And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.*

*Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.*

*And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.*

*And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.*

*But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.*

*And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.*

*And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.*

*And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.*

I've looked at that over the years, and I thought to myself, if that isn't a classic example of what happens to us sometimes. To me, the story is just a little bit on the crazy side. They're walking on the road. They're not taking a bus. They're not taking a plane. They're all obviously together. There couldn't be more counting as brothers and sisters and a few acquaintances, maybe five or six, seven, eight people. They're walking for a whole day, and then suddenly at the end of the first day, they look around and they say, "Hey, where's he at?" They had misplaced Him, and yet they thought He was with them all the time. Then the Bible says they get concerned. So they go back to Jerusalem. That's another day's journey. If you're counting it, now we have one day out, one day back. What's one and one? Picture of the church age, 2,000 years. They find Him on the third day in the temple in Jerusalem. There's your millennium.

So what you have here is a picture, as far as I am concerned, what you have here is a picture of the church age and what happens to so many of us that we're walking along in life thinking He's walking with us, when in reality He's not. Now you're still saved, obviously, but there's a difference between the indwelling Holy Spirit of God and the infilling Holy Spirit of God. You're still saved, but you're walking through life in the 20th to 21st century, going to church, doing all the things that you, and suddenly you realize that it was just you, you just crossed over into Laodicea, and He isn't going there. Where they thought He was with them, He was not. Many of God's people today in churches with the right Bible, they think the Holy Spirit of God is walking with the Lord, but they're walking in something else, and it's simply not the way it needs to be.

That's a great story. It shows us how if His own family could lose Him for a day, and they're all right there, how easy would it be for you and me to misplace Him when we get all the busyness in our world that has nothing to do with the things of God. I'm telling you folks, that borderline between Philadelphia and Laodicea is so fine. It is so hard to determine sometimes. Two days represent the church age where God's people think that they're walking with Him. They come back and they find Him on the third day in the temple, a picture of the Millennium, the day of the Lord. Quite incredible.

### III. The Key to Understanding Scripture: John 16:25 and Proverbs

Today we're actually going to get where I was last week. John 16:23-27. So let's read it here.

*And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.*

*Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.*

*These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.*

*At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:*

*For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.*

Now Father, we do thank you and praise you for the Lord Jesus. We thank you for today. Thank you for the good folks that are here. We pray Father for the folks that have tuned in today, and we pray that this will be a blessing to everyone. We just want to give you, Holy Spirit of God, the freedom to do again whatever you feel like doing. Use me as what I have or use me outside of what I have. Just use me. We'll thank you and praise you in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.

The first thing I want you to see here, and remember going back through our previous passage, we now are still dealing with the Jew doctrinally in the tribulation period. This passage will be a great key to help us put the Bible together. Many times, in fact, most of the time, the real key to unlocking the scriptures, and you wouldn't think this the way it would be, but it is. The real key to unlocking the scriptures will be just one key verse, maybe one key word. We saw the little phrase "a little while" a couple of weeks ago, and wow, what that opened up into a great study. Sometimes it will be one word or one phrase. Sometimes it will be one verse. Through the Holy Spirit of God, it will turn the lights on. We already know the Bible, we saw that He will lead and guide us into all truth in the early part of John 16. Through it, God will establish some great truth and give us our perspective on it.

Today I just want to focus on one verse out of this passage here. Boy, it is a blockbuster. It's stuck right in the middle of this passage here. Things like this, if you can ever learn to see them, identify them, and then put them together, it's invaluable when putting your Bible together. Just a little key to the scriptures. Look at John 16:25. If I was just reading this, and I'm reading it at some point in my life, and I'm just coming through John 16, and I heard John 16:25. Let's pretend we're doing that. He says this:

*These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.*

I have in my Bible, I don't have my study Bible up here, but by this verse in my Bible, I have three words: "Wow, wow, double wow." Because this verse is an incredible verse. We have now just been told, trained eye, paying attention, we have just been told that the key to God dealing with the nation of Israel will be the book of Proverbs. That's a tremendous key. That right there should catch everybody's attention and draw it back to the book of Proverbs.

## IV. The Five Wisdom Books and Building a Relationship with God

Proverbs will only be one of the five wisdom books that we find in the Bible. There are five of them. I'm just telling you now, you can do with this whatever you want. These five are absolutely key in anybody really developing a relationship with God. I know most people think that, and it's just the 20th, 21st century. Most people, they think they get saved, and they do. They get baptized, praise the Lord. Then they get disciplined, and they go through one, two, and they come to church, come to Bible study. You just amass a bunch of knowledge, and you think that out of that nebulous of material, you just become spiritual. I'm not saying that that's not part of the process, but I am telling you right now, if you're going to build the right relationship with the

Lord, you're going to have to find out who He really is, what He really accomplished for you, and where He's really going, and then how you fit into it.

If you don't do that, you're just going to be like so many of God's people today. You're just a Goodyear blimp of information, but it never really does anything for you because you never really do anything with it. In time, like the proverbial sponge that you can soak up water with, after a time you have to wring that sponge out or it won't hold any more water. That's the way God's people get. That's the danger of being in a church like this. You get so much Bible every time you turn around that after a while you get so much, and you don't allow God to wring it out, you just float like that sponge in the bucket, and you can't do anything well. That's a danger. That's the bad aspect of not having the right balance.

I'm telling you right now, when it comes to you building a relationship with the Word of God, if you don't get these five wisdom books, why do you think they're called the wisdom books? Because in each book there's a wisdom about something that you and I need. That's why. Each one of these books will be the, I think, the foundation, the fountain that spreads through the whole Bible to give you everything that you want to know or need to know about building a relationship. To you young Christians, my suggestion is this: build these books into your life. I'm not saying you go home now and shut everything down in your life that you're studying and just go after this, but what I am saying is this: once you hear what I've got to say today, build these books into your life as you build your relationship with Christ. Make them go concurrent. Make them go side by side. Don't just get focused on getting a bunch of information without allowing it to be translated back to you through these five wisdom books.

I hesitate to say this, but since I'll just say it, if you've been saved 20, 30, 40, 50 years and you haven't gotten it yet, you probably aren't going to get it. That's probably that old story of too little, too late. But that's why we're such a young church. That's why God keeps sending you young men and young ladies to us. You come in at all conditions, at all shapes and sizes, at all, you know, have different issues and different things, but it doesn't matter because the thing that will fix whatever is wrong with you, and maybe it's not even wrong, but it's just where you're at, will be building a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. My job is to make sure that I give you the information to build it right. I can't take responsibility for you doing it or not doing it. If you do it, you'll grow, and if you don't do it, then you'll grow an attitude, and every day soon it'll take care of itself. But my job is to show you the best way that you can, the easiest way, the biblical way, and then you have to do it from there.

These five wisdom books will be the real key to God and Christ and building any relationship that we want to have. I think that the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 3 that when you got saved, "no other foundation can a man lay, which is Jesus Christ." The foundation in your life, the day you got saved, is Christ. Then you have to build on that foundation. In the passage back there, it says gold, silver, precious stone. We've been through that a million times. But I want to add to that, gold, silver, and precious stone will only be found through the five wisdom books. In essence, what I'm telling you is that when you lay the foundation of Jesus Christ in your life and you lay on that foundation these five wisdom books, you want the wisdom of God, you want to understand God, then it's in these five books. So let me give you just a quick synopsis of this.

- Job: The Sufferings of Christ
- Psalms: The Heart of God
- Ecclesiastes: The Mind of the Spirit
- Song of Solomon: The Mind of Christ
- Proverbs: The Mind of God

## V. The Mind of God: Deeper Insights from Proverbs

Everything in the book of Proverbs, I said this already, will go back to what He's telling them in John 16:25, our verse today to Israel. First of all, the book of Proverbs will give Israel, and also you and I in an inspirational application because of the parallels, you know about that. It gives Israel three things that they desperately needed. They needed knowledge about God. They needed wisdom about God, but they needed understanding. You see the world, and I've told you this before, the world can give you facts. The world can give you wisdom. That's facts applied. Everybody on the same, and anybody who fixes TVs, the microwaves, the paint houses, they can give you that. But nobody, understanding is the key how God fits into it all. That will lead us to the right perspective of whatever we're looking at.

Then He says in Proverbs 2, I mean, you go from Proverbs 1, we'll get to that in a minute, then you get into Proverbs 2, and then He shows you, Proverbs will show us the issues of life. It's the fundamental book in the Bible for all truth that will lead us to the mind of God, which will lead us to His understanding. In Proverbs 2, as you're getting into the book, He shows us, shows Israel the six steps in our lives for spiritual growth that will give us and get us God's understanding. He says in Proverbs 2 there, He says:

- You have to receive the word.
- Then you have to hide the word.
- Then you have to incline thy ear, you have to hear what He's saying to you.
- Then once you receive it and you hide it and you listen to it, then you got to apply it. You got to do something with it. This is where we fail right here. You come Sunday, you hear, we fail in applying what we hear. That's why we still got the problems we got. That's why you got the rotten attitude you got this morning. That's why you got the problems you got. That's why you got your nose bent in the joint about something. You didn't apply what God gave you. That's how it works.
- Then He says you lift up your voice. There's your prayer life.
- Then He says you seek her as silver or hid treasure. There's your Bible study.

Everything will be the end result of getting God's mind through getting these six things. Then He says in Proverbs 2:5, after He lists these six things, He says, "Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God." Not the knowledge about God, the very knowledge that God has. Not knowledge in a systematic way, not knowledge generally about God. No, no, no. He says if you do these same things and you get understanding, you will have

the exact same knowledge that God has. You know why? Because you're getting the mind of God.

When I used to preach this in places, I'd stop here and I'd ask the audience, so I'm not going to really ask you to just disregard this. But I'd ask them, "Have you found that mind yet?" No, I'm not asking you. I'm going to answer back. I'm asking you, "Have you found that mind?" See, that's how you do it. You mask it with something else. You say, "I'm not really asking you this. When I preach, I would ask this." And then you ask it like you're asking like you did, and the Holy Spirit of God brings it right down into your world. Say 15, 20, 30 years, you still don't have it? See, if you're five or six years, I'll give you a pass. Though around here, some of you that have been saved three and four, man, you're moving along, you're getting your way.

The second thing, the book of Proverbs will be a study of two men, a wise man and a foolish man. Where do you find that? You go back to Matthew 25:1-10, you got the story of the 10 virgins, five were wise and five foolish. Bang, there it is out of Proverbs. You go back to 3 John, and bang, what's 3 John written about? The wise man and the foolish man. You see all that to Israel being wise and foolish, and you find it all the way through the New Testament when dealing with Israel. All of that stuff goes back to Proverbs. So He told them, "I speak to you in Proverbs." You want to find God's mind about Israel, God's mind about what He's doing. Proverbs is where you start. You want the suffering, it's Job. You want a relationship with Him, Song of Solomon. You want to know why the world is in the mess that it is and whether you're a man or a movement or a machine or a monument, Ecclesiastes. Oh, I'll make it very clear. You won't have to guess on it.

The third thing He says here, He says the little phrase, and you should catch this, "my son." He says that eight times at the beginning of the first seven chapters. We know that the son, according to Exodus 4 historically and doctrinally, will be the nation of Israel who corporately as a nation is called God's son. In Proverbs 1-7, it's "my son." This is a little outline of the book for you. In Proverbs 1-7, "my son." In Proverbs 8:30, you have the actual Proverbs of God. Then Proverbs 31, you have the end result of somebody doing what was said in Proverbs 2 and getting the understanding and the wisdom of God.

This is the things that I like about stuff like this. In 1 Kings 4:32, it tells me there that Solomon wrote 3,000 Proverbs. You know what that tells me? You didn't get them all. But you know what that also tells me? God handpicked what He wanted me and Israel to have. Israel doctrinally, me inspirationally through the parallels. Then He says this, if you need to go to the restroom, now's the time to go because it's going to get dark and dirty from this point on for just a few minutes. I'll have the ushers come and get you when you can come back. You know what He said? 3,000 Proverbs and then 1,005 songs. But He only gave us one of those, didn't He? Every time Bible talks about our songs in the night, Psalms 40, "put a new song in my heart, my mouth, even praise unto our God." We've talked a lot about the songs that come from the joy that God gives you. I'm not talking about the Psalms in our hymnals. We use those, and there are over 538 Psalms in that book, and we sing them all the time. I'm talking about through your personal relationship, through your personal intimate walk with God, you're the bride, He's the bridegroom. Does He sing love songs to you?

The world does. Elvis Presley did. Engelbert Humperdinck did. Frank Sinatra did. "I know I stand in line until you think you have the time to spend an evening with me." It's a love song, please. Women hear that, and it just makes your heart melt. Elvis used to get up there and say, "Wise men say, only fools rush in, but I can't help falling in love with you." Next part I can't sing, but it goes, "Whoa," I can't get that high. Women hear that, and they just go, remember when the Beatles showed up? Why, they get up there, there were women that were crying, they were taking their clothes off and throwing it up on the stage. You remember when Jerry Lee Lewis used to bring "Great Balls of Fire," and he'd get up there and dance around and sing to those ladies, they'd be going screaming and pulling their hair out, the cops had to keep them from getting up there. You know why? Because women love love songs. Well, you and I are the bride of Christ. How many of those love songs do you got? It'd be a long bathroom break, I'll let you know when I'm done.

I did a little pencil work to this, 1,005 songs. If God gave you and me as the bride a love song once a month, starting from your birth, you'd have enough love songs to last you for 84 years. How many of them we got? What should we do with those things? I mean, over there in Colossians 2:16, it talks about singing, it talks about singing Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Those are the ones that God gives you. When Israel goes through the tribulation, they're called the songs of the night. The songs of the night are the love songs to Israel that will get them through the tribulation, and in the church age, as He sings to you, 1,005. That's our song of the night to get us through the tough times. You know why we don't get through the tough times? You don't hear the love songs that He's singing. What are we hearing?

Oh, I did a little work on this today. I'm just kind of out of my league because I'm old now, and my generation is not your generation, nor do I want it to be. But I did a little work on this today, get a little help off the internet. You know where your songs are at today? M&M. See, when I was a kid growing up, that was something you ate. Guns N' Roses. Carrie Underwood. You're laughing. There's the song. I wonder how many of God's people today. You're laughing, but you listen to it all the time. No, I don't care, but it should never be in direct proportion to the love songs that your beloved gives you. My favorite of all of these is a lady by the name of Taylor Swift. She has actually a group of people who follow her called "Swifters" or "Swiffys." I think "Swifters" is what you clean your floor with on your little broom. A lot of similarities between the two of them. She has a whole following. You know what her followers in her songs, that there are hidden messages? They can't wait to hear her new songs because within those songs they believe that she gives them messages for life. She came out with an album recently that she strategically released at 12 o'clock midnight. All of her followers could not wait and stayed up till 12 o'clock to hear her new album so they could get what she said. Then a couple of hours later she left, I think it was 2 o'clock, 3 o'clock, she released another one, and people were just standing in line to hear her music to get the hidden messages that she had for them.

I listened to that kind of stuff, and I wonder how many of them were God's people? I bet you a great majority of them were. This is exactly what I'm talking about. You listen to some bimbo who talks about singing and releasing her songs and has hidden messages, and your Lover sends you a book that's got more messages in it and love songs that you could ever want. Why do you

want that over this? I know. I'm out of touch, I'm out of style, I'm a heretic, I know, I've lost my edge, I get it. But I don't ever want to have your edge. I'll keep God's edge. Because you have a bridegroom who loves you. Song of Solomon 2, oh my goodness, He's looking through the lattice watching you right now. He's got 1,005, 1,004, He gave you one. 1,004 love songs He wants to sing to you. They're all in here. It gives a whole new meaning to "I got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart." Why? Because I got a new house. Why? Because I got a new car. Why? Because I got a new boyfriend. Why? Because I got a new girlfriend. My life is great. I got all the things that, that's not what we're talking about. We're talking about the joy, joy down in your heart when your world is falling apart and your life is crumbling before you because of this world. The only thing that's going to get you through is His song to you in the night. "I have a song that Jesus gave me. It was sent from heaven above. There never was a sweeter melody than the melody of love." I'm a Swifter off the work I go. I'm going.

In Proverbs, we talk about a wise man and a foolish man, but in Proverbs you have the nine characteristics laid out for you that define a wise man.

- A wise man:
- wins souls (Proverbs 11).
- inherits glory (Proverbs 3).
- receives commandments (Proverbs 10).
- hearkens to counsel (Proverbs 12).
- seeks knowledge (Proverbs 18).
- guards his tongue (Proverbs 29).
- puts out knowledge (Proverbs 15).
- fears and departs from evil (Proverbs 14).
- hears what God has to say (Proverbs 1:5).

But then in Proverbs you also have the eight characteristics that define a foolish man because Israel is wise. Five were wise. Five were foolish. You find that all the way through there. The base for that is in Proverbs. You say, "Well, I just read about the ten virgins, five were wise and five were foolish. I wonder what made them wise and made five foolish?" Right there. So in Proverbs you have the eight characteristics that will define a foolish man.

- A foolish man:
- despises wisdom (Proverbs 1).
- mocks (Proverbs 14).
- meddles in other people's business (Proverbs 20).
- is a slanderer (Proverbs 10).
- goes back to his sin repeatedly (Proverbs 26).
- has the eyes to the end of the earth (Proverbs 17).
- resists punishment, chastisement (Proverbs 17).
- trusts in his own heart (Proverbs 28).

There it is. Then you have in Proverbs 1:26-27, you have the laughter of God. The most horrible study anywhere in the Bible for an unsaved man, the day God laughs at a man that's dying and

going to hell. That thought and concept is so out of touch with 20th, 21st century Christianity. You've got to even be careful where you speak things like that. Well, at least I don't, but you do. Because of the fact that it's so forward that a loving God who loves everybody, that we're all God's children, that a loving God would stand at the great white throne judgment with a poor sinner drenched in the filthy rags of his sin, who now is going to be cast into the lake of fire. As he tumbles down from the great white throne into the lake of fire, the last thing he hears is the laughter of Almighty God laughing at his calamity. So forward today, isn't it? But yet the world says, "Somebody got the last laugh." The world says, "He that laughs, laughs best."

*He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.*

*Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all things.*

Romans 3 gives us a glimpse that at the great white throne judgment, an unsaved man or woman is going to be able to defend themselves. You keep in mind, God's just not going to rip you out of hell and then throw you there and laugh at you and then throw you in the lake of fire. It didn't go that way. No, no, no, you're going to have an opportunity as an unsaved man or woman. Every unsaved man and unsaved woman that ever lived down through history, boy, that great white throne judgment could take a million years. You're going to stand there and you're going to be having the opportunity to defend yourself. Here's how you're going to have to defend yourself. You're going to have to tell God that your righteousness was better than God's Son's righteousness. That's why you didn't get saved. When you try to bring that up and bring all your good works, and you know, everybody gets the idea that when you go to the great white throne, there's this big scale here, and God puts all your good works in this side and all your bad works on this side. If your good works outweigh your bad works, you go to heaven. If your bad works outweigh your good works, they go to hell. That's what the world thinks today. It isn't going to work that way. There might be a scale there. But what He's going to do is put you on this side, Jesus Christ on this side, and He's going to weigh it out. When you see an unsaved man try to justify himself before God and tell God that this, my God, my righteousness, my good works, I went to church, I gave money, I did this, I helped the poor, my righteousness, I didn't need Christ, I didn't need His righteousness. My own righteousness was good enough. You know what all heaven's going to do? Break into a laughter. The greatest joke in this world that makes God laugh is you and I thinking that our puny righteousness can outmatch His. Now, boy, the laughter of God is the most terrible study in the Bible. As that man stands there and he knows he's condemned after he's tried to justify himself before God and he's tumbling down through eternity, looking at that lake of fire, getting closer and closer, the last thing he hears is "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh." Unknown today. Unknown today.

In Proverbs 5 and Proverbs 7, you have the details of the great horror of Revelation 17 and 18, Babylon, Mystery Religion, the mother of Harlots back in the New Testament, how she operates, how she seduces the foolish man. It's all right there. You've got to go back to Proverbs because He's just told us in John 16:25, that's the base text for Him dealing with Israel.

Then in Proverbs 6:16, we've talked about this before, you have the six things that God hates, which makes 666 or the number of the antichrist. Then He separates and says that there's a

seventh that makes it a total abomination. You always want to watch in the Bible when God gives you a series of numbers and He puts one separate from it. Here you'll find the seven unholy characteristics of the devil and the antichrist. You tie it into Job 40 and 41, and you get a really good understanding of how the devil operates and how the antichrist operates. Then He told them in John that in the New Testament, He was speaking to them in Proverbs. So then you take these seven unclean things here that are the devil's, and you match them up to Matthew 12:43, that when it comes to the nation of Israel, they get seven unclean spirits. There they are right there in Proverbs 6.

Proverbs 8, without a doubt the deepest chapter in the Bible on the person of Christ, His eternal existence in God. If you caught that little thing back there when I was reading today, and I have it marked in my Bible, it's one of those little, little things that you find. He says there in John 16:27, He says, "For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God." You know what that is? Proverbs 8. Proverbs 8 shows you the process of Christ coming out of God. Every question you'd ever want to know about God, His plan, His eternal existence, is to be found in this incredible chapter of Proverbs 8, the mind of God. You can actually read God's mind and see how He came out from God. Then it lines up to Isaiah 9:6-7, how it all fits together. God's plan around Israel, God's plan around the church.

Proverbs 14, "A wise woman will build her house wisely, but a foolish woman will pluck it down with her hands." There it is. The wise and the foolish. Matthew 7:24, you find it again.

*Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:*

*And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.*

*And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:*

*And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.*

Notice the three little key words, rain, flood, and wind, all connected with the second coming of Christ, back in the book of Ezekiel 1. Here again, a wise man and a foolish man. Now you can take this translated and come across the board in the inspirational, and I'm not going to spend a lot of time with this today, but it's talking about Israel building their house, the house of Israel, on a rock, the Word of God and biblical principles versus the sand. Because there's a time coming in Israel's time that the only thing that's going to get them through and save that house is the family, or is the built on the rock.

Now let's just put it for just 30 seconds, maybe 20 seconds, how that fits into you as a mom and dad with your own house with your kids. There are some tough times coming when you're going to raise your kids. If you think you're going to escape it, if parents do all kinds of stuff, they think they can escape it, they put them in Christian school, or they home school them, and that's great. If that's what you want to do, some of them live in public school. It doesn't matter where you put

them. If you think isolating your kids from everything out there is going to protect them through life, and the devil's going to look at your child and says, "Ooh, I can't be around that person, their mom and dad." Uh-uh, he's going to come after them. Whatever way you think you're going to fix them, he's going to find a way to unfix them. There's only one thing you got. Build your house, your family, your kids on the rock. Because when the winds come, and the rains come, and the wind blows, that's the only thing that's going to keep your house.

I'll show you another little thing that if you pay attention around here, this is not true of everybody. I'd say 95%. 95% of the people that leave this church over the last 19 years, you know what the issue was that they left over? Their kids. You see, you can get away with it when they're little. They do something dastardly stupid, and it's just, it was an accident. It's a laughable thing. When they turn 16 or 17, 14 or 15, 12 or 13 today, when they turn into that age now where they're on that pre-adult thing, you can't hide it anymore. God's parents are the most deceptive people on this planet for the most part. They'll never recognize where the real problem is. Most times, they're always blaming their kids' problems on somebody else, and they'll never deal with it themselves. So they want to pretend that it's somebody else's fault. But you can only pretend that for so long, and your kid grows up, and now he's fornicating with every girl in his life. He's drinking. He's smoking this. He's doing that. You can't justify that anymore. And you're certainly not going to take responsibility that you built your house on the sand instead of the rock. So you know what it is? You do what you've done all your life. It's somebody else's fault. So you leave the church. You go to another church where you can buy a little more time. By the time your kids get 17 and 18, they're gone to the world. They're nowhere around anymore when it comes to spiritual things. And yet you're still going to church, pretending everything is just fine. And yes, I have my kids. And oh, yes, my kids. Where are your kids? Well, one of them's living with a guy. The other one's pregnant and not married. The other one says, "Oh, they're out there doing drugs and running over the place." But you know what? I had a lady one time. Her boy was the most fornicating kid on the planet. He had, I don't know how many illegitimate kids. When you try to confront the mother about it, which a pastor friend of mine did, you know what the mom said? "But you don't understand. He's a really good father." He got how many girls pregnant? You know what the mother said? The mother said it was the girl's fault for not using birth control. See where it goes? You know where they're going to church now? Nowhere. But there was a time when you were all wrong and they were all right. When nothing else tells. Time will tell. I apologize. That was more than 30 seconds.

In Proverbs 22 and 23, He tells us about the two landmarks. Oh, there's no understanding in the Bible of God down through history without these landmarks. Proverbs 22:28 says, "Remove not the ancient landmark." Proverbs 23:10 says, "Remove not the old landmark." And yet in Christianity today, in most of the lives of God's people, they're removed. God's people couldn't find those two landmarks with a laser beam and a flashlight. Yet those two landmarks are the key to understanding what God is really doing down through history and in time understanding how you and I fit into it. It's the true biblical Old Testament survey and the New Testament survey. There will be God's mind on where He's been and where He's going and what He's doing it with. It will also show you, like we talked about when we looked at the attributes of the Holy Spirit of God, it will also show you down through history what is of God and what is not of God. You

can't get around it. When Israel shows up at the first coming of Christ, they are the ancient landmark. When they reject and go off into apostasy and the church starts, you are the old landmark.

Then in Proverbs 30, these are just a few of them. In Proverbs 30, I want to get you out for the Chiefs play. Somebody said they don't play until 3:30. Well, we got some time then, so let's look at this. Proverbs 30, an incredible chapter of the tribulation and so much insight through the pattern of threes. Like the "little while," all based on the word here in Proverbs 30:11, found in Proverbs 30:11, 12, 13, and 14, the word "generation." You wouldn't think that anything. But when I see God mention it four times, and I know like the "little while" was seven times, He's showing you that you don't want to miss the context. When He says "generation" here, what He's getting ready to say, going back to Christ in the New Testament because He just told us that Proverbs is the key that He's speaking to them through, you will find that "this generation" is the one that Christ referred to in Matthew 12:43-45. That's the same generation. See how easy that was?

Then you have coming down through this, through a system of threes, and sometimes He adds a fourth. You've got to watch those things, like I said, a great study. It's kind of like Samson's riddle. It takes the Holy Spirit of God to understand it. First of all, in Proverbs 30:15, He says there are three things that are never satisfied. How many of God's people know what those three things are? What are they? Well, I've been saved 20, 30, 40, 50, then why don't you know these things? What have you been doing? Are you a Swifter? Proverbs 30:18 says there are three things that are too wonderful. What are they? Give me a hint. You and I aren't one of them. Then He adds a fourth one, a reason for that. Then He says in Proverbs 30:21, three things that disquiet the earth. Now what could that be? Then He says in Proverbs 30:24, four things that are little upon the earth: the ant, the coney, the locust, and the spider. All pictures, this whole thing down through here at Proverbs 30, all pictures of something that's in that generation that Jesus is speaking to, that He told them, "Go back to Proverbs to figure it out." Proverbs is the key to God dealing with Israel at the first coming of Christ and in the tribulation period. God's mind on the subject is Proverbs.

Then you have Proverbs 31, the great story about the virtuous woman. I know. Everybody on Mother's Day looks for a card that's got Proverbs 31 in it. I get it. Praise the Lord. Very nice. But doctrinally, this woman of virtue will be the nation of Israel as God's wife that's being restored at the second coming of Christ. It's the end result of a wise and a foolish man. A wise man does everything that Proverbs tells him to do when he winds up in Proverbs 31 virtuous, as the wife of God. Now, inspirationally, across the parallel, sure, it's a picture of you and me. But we've got to get the context doctrinally first. She has went through the sorrow and the travail of the tribulation, and now as a nation she has brought forth the man child. She did that at the first coming of Christ for Him to be king. They rejected Him. So He pops back up again coming out of Israel at the second coming of Christ, and now He's accepted. That's why He told us in John 16:16, "A little while, and you won't see me," 2,000 years of the church age, "and a little while, and you will," second coming of Christ. This will be there, "joy cometh in the morning." See? When you and I, in an inspirational application, go through the very tough times of life and the

things that we do, the only thing that will get you through will be the joy. That joy doesn't come from something that you have. Real biblical joy comes from the love song that your Bridegroom is singing to you.

## VI. The Plainness of the New Testament and God's Love Songs

Now, back to John 16. The last part of John 16:25. Boy, do I love things like this.

*These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.*

There's the New Testament church. There it is. In the Old Testament, it gave them the wisdom of God, the mind of God through Proverbs. All the Bible will go back to that book. But in the New Testament, now it's all in a book, the Word of God, a King James 1611 Authorized Version that contained the mind of God laid out plainly. This is why 2 Corinthians 11:3, Paul says, "I'm afraid that the devil is going to beguile you and to destroy you from what? The simplicity that's in Christ." The fact that everything God gave you is plain.

*For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.*

*But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.*

A reference here obviously is obviously to the second coming. No question about that in Israel's sense. But in the New Testament, it's for you and me. The Bible wasn't complete till 90 A.D. The revelation of God was finished up with John on the Isle of Patmos. When God gave us the complete, inspired, perfect Word of God, we now have the wisdom of God, the understanding of God, the knowledge of God, and the mind of God. Perfect and plainly.

That's why 2 Peter 1:19-20 says,

*We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:*

*Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.*

"More sure than what?" If you read the verse before, more sure than the very voice of God that He spoke to Israel in the Old Testament through Proverbs. "We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed that is as unto a light which shineth in a dark place." There it is. The dark place is the world that we live in. The light is the Word of God that shines in it. "How long should I stay with this thing, Lord? Take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn and the day star rise in your heart," rapture of the church. That's not the second coming. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation." You want to note the context. The voice of God, 2 Peter 1:18, is out. Now you have something that is perfect. You have something that is plain and sure until the day star arises in our hearts.

This is a great example of how a couple of weeks ago we saw that little phrase "a little while." I wanted to take the time to lay that out for you because I knew it was moving in these other areas here. Today we see one verse. John 16:25 can open up the whole Bible to us. How there are so many keys to our getting the full joy that He talks about in 1 John 1:4. The danger for all of us is crossing over into Laodicea because it looks just like where we're at. The only thing that's different is the spirit of the people and the places you go. The negative crowd. The ones that after 10, 15, 20, 30 years at a church, they think they're smarter now than the pastor and they know all the answers. They don't like this and they don't like that. They've already crossed over the border. The unity of where God is doing is the key. Of course, the danger for us is crossing over into Laodicea and then allowing the spirit of apathy, complacency, negative. All the things that creep in and we fool ourselves that we are really doing what God wants us to do. Maybe some of it is.

Mark Twain said, he was an unsaved man, but he had some great things about life. He said in one of his books that I read, he says, "Life is a limitless multiplication of unnecessary necessities." Boy, that is true. Losing the balance of God's power in our lives by deceiving ourselves that what we are doing, God's walking along with us when we've already crossed over. It's the fact that we have to keep that balance. Allowing New Testament, I mean, imagine this. This is why I hate it, man. Imagine this. Allowing New Testament Christianity in the 20th and 21st century. Not the world. Ah, forget the world. Allowing New Testament Christianity and New Testament Christians. Not the world, but churches, pastors, Bibles, Bible studies, church services, deacons, Christians, to steal your joy.

You think when you go to these mega churches and they have their song services and they're up there with a dance band and the drums, and that's what used to be in here. It used to be cased in glass, and they played drums in there, and the guy asked me when we bought it, he says, "You're going to obviously use the drum cage, aren't you?" And I said, "Yeah, I think we," kidding. I said, "I think we, that would be a neat aquarium." He took the glass for his new drum case. You think all that stuff that goes on, all that worldly music, you think that's really God's song of the night for us? You think when things really get tough and bad, He wrote a thousand and five. You got one. You got a thousand and four to go. One a month will take you up to 80. That's if you, from birth, most of us didn't get saved till 20, so that would take us up past, we have enough for life.

Back in the old days, you can probably still find it. You had the little records that had the holes in the middle that you put down on the big spindle, you know, you probably don't remember them. RCA made a lot of the records. There was a label on the RCA records, which I always never forgot when I saw it once I got saved. It was one of the old gramophones that had the, you know, you had the box and then you had the big speaker that came out on it, and that's where the music came out, you had to crank it. There was a dog sitting in the logo. There was a dog sitting, listening to what was coming out of there with a phrase underneath of it, "Listening for the Master's Voice." I thought to myself, "That's me, pal." That ought to be all of us. Our head glued to that old gramophone, listening for the voice of the Master. All the songs that He wants to sing us.

When you go through the tough times of life and you lose a child or you lose this or that, or you lose your health and you lose something and something, and you're going through a tough time, some girl dancing around in a cat uniform on a platform and people breakdancing and singing isn't going to cut it for you. You need the songs in the night, church age. They don't come from Christian singers, they don't come from Bill Gaither, they don't come from your personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, your Bridegroom, Song of Solomon, and you're the bride, and He wants to sing to you how much He loves you. Allowing people to steal your joy, which ultimately brings you to the point of a spirit of apathy, discontentment, and ultimately it will take, Revelation 3:11, it will take your crown from you. Most importantly, the Holy Spirit of God in you, not being able to do with you what He wants because you think you're walking with Him down the road, like His family was, and suddenly you look around and somebody says, "Where's Jesus?" For a whole day, His whole family couldn't find Him, had to go back and look for Him, two days, 2,000 years of the church age, found Him on the third day in the temple in Jerusalem, the millennium. But that we're walking without Him for two whole days. I wonder how many of God's people find themselves in that same state today. They couldn't go through Proverbs and lay out half of what I gave you this morning. I'm no genius, it's just the fact that, you know what, years and years and years ago I've been through it so many times, if I can't remember it now, I mean, I'm in trouble. But the bottom line is simply this, the song that He has for you, "The song that Jesus gave me, sent from heaven above. There was a sweeter melody, than the melody of love." Oh, He whispers it to you. You had to see it in the Song of Solomon. You had to see there where He sings those songs to the love of His life. Then she looks back at Him and He describes her as He sees her. Then she describes Him as the Holy Spirit of God shows Him to her. Walking with Christ like you think He's walking with you, but He's not getting off the city sign. He walked with you till you crossed over into Laodicea, when they saw that sign there that says, "Now leaving Philadelphia, entering into Laodicea," you went on. He didn't. He'll only stay with you through His mind. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." We're holed up today. As soon as we're dismissed here, if you're going...