

# John 17

Sunday 11/20/2022

If you have your Bibles this morning, let's turn to John 17. You are going to have to work with me a little bit this morning. I am not up to it. I kind of have a balance in my life right now. I have enough drugs to stay up, and any more and I will be over. You have never seen me when I am high, so it would be on YouTube. Just work with me this morning. I will do the best I can here, and we will just get through it by the grace of God, praise the Lord.

Last week, as you know, we started John 17. In this chapter, we see Christ. He knows what is happening now. He knows what is coming, and He is trying to prepare the apostles who have been with Him now for three and a half years. He knows all the events that are going to be coming down the line, and He knows how it is going to impact them. He is trying to prepare them for what is coming.

I have often looked at what He was doing, putting it into a very smaller context of what pastors should be doing today to get their people ready for what is coming our way. This chapter is the great chapter where He is praying for His apostles. He is praying that they will stay the course and finish the work that the Father had started with Him. All of this is some really good material, not only to see what He is going through there and what the apostles are going through, but for all of us. He is coming down to the end of His ministry here, and He is going to be obviously going to the cross.

I took our text and showed you what God gave me out of it many years ago. John 17, you would not think that it is an impact chapter, but it really is. It was to me, anyhow. Maybe not to somebody else. This chapter has helped me in many ways. The fact that I understand that I too must finish the work that God has given me.

We talked about God's timeframe last week. God's timeframe for my work and your work too. Just as His hour came, and He says that in the passage last week, our hour has come. It is now our time to stand up and do the work. Just as Christ's hour came to His work, so too for you and me. Right now, we are on prime time. We are on the clock, and we have to be about our Father's business.

I showed you how Christ always took care of those that God had given to Him. I think that is probably one of the most important things I got out of this: what the twelve apostles meant to Him. Hebrews 13:7 talks about how in a church today, the pastors and the spiritual leaders are there for the watch care of your soul. They watch for your soul.

I have often seen the parallel of what He did with His apostles and how He cared for them. How He met all of their needs within that confine of what He was doing. What my job needs to be is to take care of the people God has given me. This is a perfect model for any pastor, and for me first, to look after the people, as I said, that God has given me. For those of you who work with people, you need to be able to see what you need to be to them and how you need to be appreciative of where God gave them to you, and that you are there for them in their life.

I talked last week about the sin of ingratitude. Most kids, and I know this was true of me, and it is worse now than when I was a kid, but most kids really do not appreciate all that their parents do for them. I know I did not. My mom and dad sacrificed for me and my sister. I remember that they tried to give us everything that the other kids had. I will simply tell you now that I really did not appreciate everything that they did.

I think a lot of kids think that they are just entitled to things, especially today. I remember I got my first bicycle. I wanted a three-speed Schwinn racer. Now, you get a 20-speed today, but back in my day, they only had three speeds. It was white, and it had the little tires that they put on them back then. My mom and dad sacrificed to give me that. I know they did. My dad worked two jobs. I did not appreciate it. Two years later, it was wrecked, it was messed up, and I do not know what they paid for it, but I sold it for 50 cents. I look back on that now and I think to myself, that was my ingratitude.

I think a lot of kids are that way. I think that they do not really appreciate all that their parents do for them. In my own life, I have always been appreciative of the people that God has given me. I learned my lessons of ingratitude back in the day. I am telling you that you need to thank God for the people that God has put in your life to be there for you. Maybe you will see this when you get a little older spiritually, but you will be able to look back and you will be able to see how God brought people into your life. He brought circumstances into your life. He gave you what you needed at a time in your life to help you.

I never want to forget the people that God has given me here, that I could not do my work. I could not do what God has called me to do without you being part of that. I will never take that for granted. You always want to take care of those who take care of you, especially in the ministry. I gave you the verse last week, John 10:10, that He has given us life, but life more abundantly. I explained how you take the people God gives you, and you just do not stop with them getting salvation. You make sure that they get everything that they need.

The book of Acts, for me anyhow, is a model of all of this. The early church carrying on the work with the apostles. How it is Bible-based, and the Holy Spirit of God was moving through that church. How God brought the people to get the work done. God's Holy Spirit brought the people that were needed in that early church, just like He has done in this church. Just like Christ and His apostles. Just like, as I said, the church in Antioch.

## I. The Pastor's Role: Investment and Loyalty

At that point, it is the pastor's job. I am taking my time going through this because let me just say this: I know as well as I am standing here that someday some of you will pastor. There is no question in my mind about it. I see you have the qualities. You have what it is going to take. You have a good handle on the Bible. God is moving through your life. Some of you are married, and you have a good, solid marriage. Some of you are single, and I know God will bring somebody into your world that will be a good help to you.

I am always mindful and looking around and watching you young guys and what God is doing in your life. I would never come up to you and say it to you. Some of you have talked to me about

it, and we have talked about it, but to me, I would never go to somebody and say, "I think God has called you to pastor." No, I want God to reveal that to you through this church and through the ministries. When that happens, then my job really kicks in.

It is the pastor's job to see the people as God sees them. To see you the way the Lord sees you. To be able to see the issues that you struggle with. To be able to see you move up through those spiritual levels. I think most important is to be able to see the potential in all of you that you do not see in yourself. I am just talking about guys pastoring, but I am talking about the ladies too. There are incredible ladies here.

Thursday night in Bible study, a couple of young men asked a question, and I did not reveal who he was, but I spoke directly to him. I said, "I have had two or three this last week really want to fine-tune where they are at to get where God wants them to go." I see in some of you, many of you, the qualities that I look for that need to be in your life as a man or a woman to take your stand today and really be everything that God wants you to be.

When you see that, then you take that person, people, whatever, and then you invest everything you have in them. You do not hold anything back. You want them to have the best because it is the job in our hour, my hour, to develop you. Help you get the most out of everything that you are, to be everything you can be. Absorbing those people into not just your ministry, but your life. Allow them to ask any questions they want or learn anything they want to learn.

You always protect them. You never allow anybody to hurt them. I have had over the years young men and young ladies that have really started to come up and grow, and some of the older guys that had quit growing, they did not appreciate the young guys coming up. I would catch them sandbagging these guys. I would see them setting them up because they resented the fact that they were eclipsing them because they had quit growing years ago, and these guys were really doing the job and moving along. I never tolerated that. I would never tolerate that. The fastest way for that guy to get put on a shelf is to hurt one of my young men or one of my young ladies, and you will be on restroom duty for the rest of your life with the door locked.

Another thing you have to do is find ways to help you guys grow faster. It took me 30 years to learn the Bible, and I still do not know it, but to get a handle on it. I do not want you to have to be 30 years doing it. The plan that I have, the way I do things, if you let me have you and you can stand me, I will get you there in about 10. Get you really good in about 15. Of course, God can use you way before you get to that point. He did me.

That is the job. You have to be there for them. You have to go through their struggles with them, their trials with them. Each one of you is different, and each one of you is unique, but each one of you is invaluable. You have to be able to bring all that together through the bond of ministry as God builds you and our work and what we do for God, what we can do to finish our work. You build in them by your own, my own, personal relationship with the Word of God, giving you what God has given me.

The key word in ministry today, bar none, for me anyhow, is simply one word, and that is the word loyalty. My being loyal to the people God has given me and giving them what they need.

Allowing nobody, as I said, to hurt them, to sandbag them, to keep them from growing spiritually. That is the model, a spiritual father to them. In time, they will pick up the work of the ministry, and they will begin to labor their hour to do what God called them to do.

I have told you many times, and it is a true statement: most pastors today will never look at the people that they have the way they should. They will look at them as a number on a giving record. They will look at them as something that they want in their church, but they do not really want a one-on-one relationship with them. They want to have them around so when they build a 30 to 60 million dollar monument to themselves, they can put it on the backs of the people to pay for. But when you have a tough time in your life, you never get to see the guy.

I have told you this many, many times: I do not build buildings. I build people. I teach you how to build your own life first with the Word of God. When you get married, I want to teach you how to have the right kind of marriage because God wants to use you both. I want to teach you then how to build your family. We have some tremendous young couples in our church that have some incredible kids. I watch how your kids are respectful. I watch how good they are, how they behave. You have done a good job with your family, and I want to teach you how to build your ministry in your hour.

My investment in your life is only because somebody invested in my life many years ago. Somebody showed me the importance of showing me how special I was when I did not feel special. Somebody took me under their wing and pointed out my good qualities when everybody else was just pointing out my bad qualities. And I had some. They showed me the importance of how special I could be and how to make an investment in somebody's life.

For years and years and years, I did this, and I have never really told anybody, but it is just a little thing I do. I used to see somebody coming into the church that was a new person, and they would be around for a little bit. I would pull them aside and I would give them a wide margin Bible. I would go get one out of the bookstore, and Rose knows it is true. She used to complain all the time that there were no Bibles because I was giving too many away. So we fired Rose, and now she is cleaning the restroom down at the end of the hall.

I looked at it this way: there is nothing better than a Bible. Nothing better than a wide margin Bible. You cannot get them anymore, but back in the day. So I would pull somebody aside and I would give them a wide margin Bible, and I would say, "Look, I do not want you to buy this out of the bookstore. I want to make an investment in your life. I cannot think of a better investment to make than to give you this Bible." Then I would say this, "There is only one catch to it. At some point in your life, when you do not want to do the ministry anymore, or you do not want to read your Bible anymore, or you do not want to do anything with the Bible, then just give it back to me, and I will give it to somebody else." In all my years, I never had anybody give me one back. Most of them have done what they needed to do with it. I saw that as a 40-dollar investment in somebody's life that would change for all eternity.

I am not smart enough, good enough, or godly enough. Somebody did that for me. I have never taken for granted all the things that God has put in my life and the people that put in my life to help me get me where I am at. Some of them, there were many things that I did not agree with

them on, but I learned from them. I never shut anybody out because of the fact that maybe they did not look at something, even the versions of the Bible, the way I did. Why? Because I could learn something from everybody.

I look back in my own life, and it has been a time of reflection this week for me, last week too, John 17, because it put such a powerful chapter in my life. We are going to get the charts here in a couple of weeks. There is another thing I wanted to help you get those and give you that you did not have to pay all that money. I want to show you then how to use those with your kids. It is one of the greatest valuable tools that you will ever have in your hand. I will show you how you do it. Why? Because I just do not want that chart to be an investment to you. I want that chart to be an investment with your children, your kids.

New Year's Eve, I have decided a couple of Bible studies ago, based on somebody asking a question, we are going to tear this whole place down here. We are going to set up tables in here. I can get it done in four hours, I think. I am going to bring you through the whole book of Psalms, chapter by chapter, and lay out with the keywords every chapter, whether it is the second coming, the tribulation, or the millennium. We are going to knock the whole book of Psalms out that night, Lord willing. When you leave here that night, that is one book, a big book, that you will have under your belt. What I am going to do is not only just tell you what they are, but then I am going to show you the keywords that are in that chapter, and you can link them back up to what it is.

I do not know how much time I have left on this earth. The way I feel this morning, it will be about 20 minutes. But I have to give you everything I can. I can never take you for granted because God brought you here. There is a reason for you being here. You guys are going to have to carry things on. You are going to have to do the work.

## II. The Reality of Ministry: Dealing with Betrayal

Today, we are going to move into the next section of John 17. Here lies, I think, the greatest lesson that God ever really taught me about ministry. I am telling you now, some of you young guys, you are going to get married, and you and your wife are going to be in a church someplace, and you are going to pastor, you are going to be working in the ministry at some place, and you are going to find yourself on Sunday morning behind a pulpit someday, just like I am today. So you need to learn. I need to give you all I can, but you need to learn all you can. Learn from the things that I do, but learn from the mistakes that I make. Nobody is perfect. Nobody bats a thousand.

I look back at my life at the people that God put in my life. They did not always hit it on the mark, but every one of them taught me something. Life is about doing the choices that we make and learning from the ones that do not pan out the way we thought they should. You are going to find when you get into the ministry, every decision you make is not going to be 100% good, but you learn from them. When God puts people in your life, you learn from them. You find out why this guy does what he does the way that he does it, because someday you are going to have to make those same decisions.

I have learned that you can only prepare a young man, or a young lady, but talking about a young man for the ministry, you can only prepare him so far. It is like driver's ed. When I got my driver's license, there was no such thing as driver's ed. It was your dad sitting next to you, and he hits you on the head when you did not do what is right. I always love these signs when you pull up behind somebody and it says, "Student driver, please be patient." I just honk my horn and tailgate them all the way. Somebody said, "Why would you do that?" Because that is life in the real world. Just kidding. But that is life in the real world. You can go through all the classes and driver's ed that you want, but you know when you really learn to drive is when you get behind the wheel.

I always envy guys that can fly planes, but I am smart enough to know that, and I would like to do a lot of exciting things in my life, but I never knew I would never ever want to fly a plane. I would be dead in an hour. I would take too many chances. A guy says, "You cannot land on that runway because the winds are too strong." I said, "Yeah, I can." I know my limitations, and I would never be a very good pilot because I always take the chances that I think you are just not going to do that.

The thing that I would think would be the scariest thing in the world is when you are going through your ground training classes and you get all the book learning, and the pilot takes you up, and you are with him, and then you land the plane, and he comes back up, and you walk out, and you walk over here, and he says, "Okay, you are just take it up all by yourself." To me, that is scary. You get in that plane, you are fired up, you run down that runway, and you get up there at five, six, seven, eight, nine thousand feet, and you make a mistake. There is no "whoops." I saw a plane one time, and it was ingenious, that the guy had a parachute hooked on the tail of it, and if the plane faltered and he would crash, he pulled the thing, and the whole plane just came down. That is, I need a couple of those. To me, that is the scariest thing in the world.

I am going to tell you, I can teach you everything about the Bible. I can give you what I am giving you last week and this week, and you can get everything, but I want you to know you will never really understand pastoring until you step behind the pulpit and you take a church and you start working with people. That is where you get the training. It is true wherever you go with God's people, people will criticize you. They criticize all pastors. That is just part of the game. You need to be able to deal with that.

The Chiefs are going to play tonight at 7:15. They are playing someplace out in LA. Governor Newsom is going to take them all out to dinner afterwards. He is gay. That is a joke, by the way. If I feel up to it tomorrow, I am going to go to the gym. I probably will not, but I am saying if I am up to it. If they lose today, here is what will happen in the gym. You will be in the locker room, in the dressing room. There will be all these guys that are in their fifties and their sixties, and everybody is going to be criticizing every play that Mahomes made. "He should have done this. He should have done that. I do not know why he did not pass the ball more. I do not know why they did not run the ball more. The defense did not do this. The defense did not do that."

I will be sitting there, getting there and listening to all that stuff. I am looking at this guy. This guy has not seen his toes for 30 years. He has never played football. I would love to see him get

on the field and take Mahomes' spot. They would get behind the center. He would snap the ball. He would come back, and nine thousand pounds of linemen would be all over you. He would be getting up on the ground and go back into the huddle and get back up to the line. This time, he would put his hands down beneath the left tackle because he is all whacked out in his brain.

Until you have played the game, until you have had them blitzing you, until you have had them coming after you, and you have got to make snap decisions right now to win a stupid ball game. There will be days that you guys are in the ministry that you will have to make decisions. Forget the ball game. It is going to affect somebody's eternity. I cannot teach that in the book. That is something that you better learn everything you can now. Get as much experience. Learn. Pick my brain as much as you can now. That would be my advice to you young men. Just learn as much as you can because you are going to have to do it someday. When you step into the pulpit, like stepping behind the center, it is a whole new ball game.

Let us read John 17 today. We will pick it up in verse 6.

*John 17:6-12*

*6 I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.*

*7 Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.*

*8 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.*

*9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.*

*10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.*

*11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.*

*12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.*

You see how this fits right into what we do here? "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me." That is the job of a pastor. That is what you do when you work with people. Verse 8: "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me." That is what we do here. "And they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me."

"I pray for them. I pray not for the world, but for them which thou gavest me, for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and all thine are mine." Say that 10 times real fast. "And I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world. And I come to thee, Holy Father. Keep through thine own name those that thou hast given me, that they may be one as we

are." That is a great verse. This church needs to be one with each other, just like we are with Christ. How many times does that happen today?

"While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name, those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the Son of Perdition that the Scriptures might be fulfilled."

These will be the last minutes of the upper room. We have seen here in the next chapter also, Judas comes into the upper room here with the act of his betrayal. You want to remember in John 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17, where we are at now, all take place in the upper room. Doctrinally, I have laid this out many, many, many times, and we are not going to get into it all today. We know John 6:70, that Judas is the devil. We know that he is the Antichrist incarnate. That is a great study, the son of perdition in verse 12, yet 2 Thessalonians 2:3, the Antichrist, and also Revelation 17:11. We know all that. This is the devil infiltrating the ministry of the Lord to stop the work of God. We know that.

I want you young men to see this from a perfect model, from a practical standpoint. What you have here, this will be one of the single greatest, if not the single greatest lesson a young man will need to learn to completely understand and be in a place of leadership or a position of leadership or a pastor of a church. This is what you need to learn. This story about Christ taking care of the people God gave Him and His praying for them to continue on in the ministry, and yet one of them is about to betray Him. It is in here for a reason. It is in here for an example. It is a pattern. It is a model for every pastor and for every young man, for a young lady contemplating you are going to go into the ministry someday. There are some of you here that you will be well suited for that, and I have no doubt in my mind that God is preparing you, even though you may not have figured it all out yet. These are the things you have to learn now.

Last week, I told you about what the people God gives you in your ministry will do for you and God through His work. Today, based on our model of where we are at today, I want to take you and talk about what God's people will do to you, just like they did to Christ. You need to learn and understand and be able to deal with both of them because nothing will take the wind out of your sails more than something like this.

I would start with this: God's people are the weirdest, strangest people on the planet. The reason I know that Christianity, true Bible Christianity, is true and real, and the Bible is real, and God is real, is how whacked out God's people get. I am telling you right now, it is to me, it is proof positive that we have the real deal.

You go all the way through the Bible. You look at the children of Israel. God had a plan. He takes them down to Egypt. They are down there 400 years. I know it was a rough time, I get it, but He sends them a Moses, the deliverer, who is going to bring them out. He does bring them out, and when He brings them out, they are all happy and on their way and just going and doing everything that they are supposed to do. Praise the Lord, praise Jesus, thank you, Moses.

They get to the Red Sea, and now they look back, and Pharaoh is coming after them, and they are trapped. What do they do? Do they look toward God? No, they turn on Moses, and they murmur and they complain. So what does Moses do? Moses takes his stick, and he splits the Red Sea.

Then they all go across, and now they are on the other side, and they are high-fiving and saying, "Praise the Lord, Moses, you are a great guy, buddy, thank you so much." Then they look down through there, and there comes Pharaoh's army right after them. The Red Sea is still split. Now what do they do? They blame Moses again. They had just forgotten the miracle that God had just done, and now they are focusing on the situation they are in.

What does Moses do? Moses comes over there, smacks whatever he smacked, the waters come down, and Pharaoh's guys get drowned out. High five time again. Praise the Lord. So they go on their journey. They are not on that thing two weeks, and he goes up to get the Word of God. You would think they would have been excited about that. He goes up to get the Word of God. What do they do? They get a golden calf. There are all times where they are all for God and Moses, and then they want to stone God and Moses. That is God's people. That is not a criticism. That is a character study. That is the way God's people are. I am sorry. If you cannot deal with that, if you cannot embrace that, if you cannot understand that, then sell cars. That is my advice to you.

The job of being a pastor is the greatest job in the universe. The greatest job in the universe is not being president of the United States. It is not being in Congress. The greatest job on the planet that any man could ever hold is to stand in a pulpit representing a living God, manifesting God to people, and holding up the true Word of God and telling people how to get their eternity fixed. That is the greatest job there is. But I am telling you, the ministry would be wonderful without people. Every time somebody says, "Bob, are there dogs in heaven?" I want to say, I do not say this, but I like to say, "I wish there were, and He would leave all the people here."

Let me start by saying this within our text, and you young guys need to get this: betrayal is a terrible thing in any situation in life. All of us at some point in life have been betrayed. You are betrayed today by your government. I look at the military betraying our young men in Afghanistan. Politics will betray you. People will betray you. Relationships will betray you. I do not ever title my messages, but since we are dealing with Judas and Christ here, and these are the events that are leading up, I would title this message "The Act of Betrayal."

Betrayal is different than any other thing that happens to any of us because it hits us harder. You do not usually see it coming. It is underground. It is a conspiracy that you do not see coming until it is too late. In our text here, you see Judas was conspiring with the scribes, the Pharisees, and the Sadducees, all to get rid of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ had a work going for God, did He not? And young man, I am telling you right now, when you get a work going for God out there, you better learn the patterns of what you have got right here in John 17.

1. How to take care of your people no matter what.
2. Realize that God's people can be the most ungrateful people on this planet.

Christ knew the devil, and the devil knew too, that he could never stop Christ's work with the Roman Empire. He never could. The devil knew that if he was going to stop the work of Christ, he was going to have to do it from the inside. Let me tell you something, kids. Someday if you desire to be a pastor and you stand in a pulpit, and you and your wife take on a ministry of people, you better learn and never forget messages like this one and the one last week.

### III. Personal Encounters with Betrayal

Making it a personal application here, in my 50 years of ministry, I probably have had, I do not know, eight or nine things, maybe more like this, that befell me. In 3 John, it talks about Diotrephes in verses 9 and 10, and how John says he portrayed the work. If you would ever get the chance to sneak a look at my Bible and go to 3 John, you would see a list of names there. Because I never wanted to forget. I put the last one in probably 10, 12 years ago. Do not worry, someday you will have your own list. I promise you will. Because this is God's people.

Some of you were with me, you oldies but goodies, you were with me back through many of these. I am going to tell you about my favorite one. It is my favorite one because this is where God really taught me and gave me what I needed to get through the ministry because up to this point, it can really devastate you. It was this one that I got from what God gave me when I needed an understanding of the ministry. I am telling you right now, betrayal is a terrible thing.

I had a guy and his wife, that family had been with me for 20 some years probably. He was in with me in ministry. He grew up. I married him, baptized their kids, and all those things. They had been with me for some 20 some years. Like so many people, at some point, this guy quit growing. He had tremendous problems with his kids, and in time, he lost all of his kids to the world. His kids were giving him all kinds of fits. Again, the younger guys in my ministry back then were really coming along, and they were getting ahead of him in things, and he resented that.

Instead of coming to me and fixing what was wrong, which could have been fixed at that point, he decided to come up with the idea, "I am going to start my own church." The reasoning for starting his own church, and he told me this, is the fact that his kids would not come to my church. So he is going to start a church so his kids will go to his church because he wants his kids in church.

Let me just stop here for a moment. I will not preach long on this because I cannot today. That is the wrong reason to start a church. If you are going to a Bible-believing church and your kids will not come to it, there is something wrong in your family. I would have told him that if I would have had the opportunity. But I never got the opportunity because he went underground. Birds of a feather flock together. We found some other people out there that did not like the way things were going, and they got the idea that, "Hey, let us start our own church." This guy's betrayal and deception, he could have taught Judas some things.

I had one of the people come to me afterwards and say, "I cannot do this anymore. This is totally wrong." He says, "Bob, he would have these little meetings, and he would actually tell the people, 'Look, quit coming to church on a regular basis. Start coming every other week, and then in a month or two, every two weeks, and then every once a month. By the time we are ready to start this church, if Bob asks you, you just simply say, 'Well, I have not really been coming anyhow.' Then we can all go start our church.'" That was his plan. They actually had their little meetings together and put all of it together. It was one of the most incredible things that I have ever had happen to me in my ministry. It gave a whole new meaning to when he used to say,

"Hey, Bob, I got your back." Later, I told him one time, "Yeah, I can feel the knife blade between my shoulder blades. I got it."

I have to tell you, back then, I was devastated by it. Betrayal is a terrible thing. Here is a family and a guy that I have invested my life with. Some of you know exactly who I am talking about. I invested my life with these people. I held nothing back from them. Their kids were supposedly saved under my ministry. They were baptized. That family went through, and I am not going to get into the details, but it was the most horrific, terrible, deep time that any family could go through. It hit the news media up one side and down the other. I am not going to get into the details, but it was a tragedy. I walked those people through that. I took the flak from the press. I did everything that they could not do themselves. Why? Because that is my job. That is the job of a pastor. That is what you do.

I have to tell you, I was, when I finally found out about it, it devastated me. Because I am thinking to myself, "Why would somebody do that to me?" I mean, if I killed your dog, blew your car up, burnt your house down, shot your wife, which would have been a good thing in this scenario, I get it. I remember going through my Bible, struggling, and God gave me Zechariah 13:6. I marked that in my Bible. It is Christ talking about what He went through in His betrayal.

*Zechariah 13:6*

*6 And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.*

These kinds of wounds of betrayal will always be the worst ones. They cut the deepest. Because in most cases, you have invested something into something or somebody so deeply, and then you find out, and it hurts.

Here is what God gave me. I was going through my tough time, and now I am going to give it to you guys, you young guys. Because at some point, if you get into the ministry, I am going to tell you right now, and some of you are going to get there. I am proud of you. I love you. You are the best of the best. Some of you guys and some of you gals, I think you are the best on Planet Earth. God is going to use you. So you better learn this. You better learn what I am saying.

Let me be clear about this. You start talking like this, and I am not talking about just having a disagreement with something somebody says. That is totally okay. That is how you learn. I am not talking about somebody that just got a disagreement with something or somebody. I am not talking about that. Those things are part of the ministry, and that is how you learn. You grow. You go, you talk, you figure it out, and you work from there. I am talking about the Judas syndrome.

You know what a great model of this is in the Bible? I got this marked in my Bible, too. This has happened a few times. It is 2 Samuel 15:2. I call this one the Absalom syndrome. You know who Absalom was? He was David's son. Absalom took his father for granted, and he wanted David's kingdom. He was not man enough to earn it. He was not man enough to be the right kind of guy to get the kingdom when his dad died. No, he wanted to go underground and subvert it.

You know what he did? Back then, everybody came in at the gate in Jerusalem. That is where the crowd was. That is where they had everything going on. So he would go down to the gate, and he would just stand down there at the gate. He would watch some guy come in, and he would watch him go, and he would know he was going in to see David the king. So he would just wait there. He would wait for a little bit. That guy would come back out. If the guy did not look happy, he would walk over, and he would say, "Hi, sir. Excuse me. Welcome to Jerusalem. Did you see the king today?" The guy said, "Yeah." He said, "What happened?" He said, "Well, he did not go my way." He says, "Really? Brother, I am so sorry. I am so sorry that the king could not understand what your struggle was. But I want you to know, if I were king, if I were king..." You know what he did? Stole the hearts of David's people. That is how it works. "If I were king..." Yeah, well, you are not. But that is the way it works.

#### IV. Christ's Example: Overcoming Internal Attack

Here is what I saw and I learned with Christ dealing with His betrayal. Betrayal is a terrible thing. He says in verse 9 and 10, "I pray for them. I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are."

Do you know that when Matthew 10, when He sent the twelve apostles out to heal the sick, raise the dead, give eyesight back to the blind, and all that stuff, Judas was out there among them doing that? He was every part of Christ's ministry. He did everything the other ones did. Now he has got a plan to stop the work of God from going forward. Christ knows He is going back to the Father. He knows He has got a betrayer in the midst of His twelve. He knows that this guy is up to stop the work. He is not stupid. He knows that he is going to do it from the inside because it can never happen from the outside.

You young guys that are going to pastor someday or whoever wants to be in ministry, write down what I am about to tell you because this is worth a million dollars today. When the devil attacks a church, Christ's work, from the outside, like Rome did or the world does, listen to me, when the world attacks the church or Christ's twelve from the outside, it only makes it stronger. It never weakens it. Persecutions from the outside make Christianity on the inside stronger. So he will not attack that way. When he attacks from the inside, it destroys in verse 11 exactly what He says, "those who now have given me that they may be one as we are." From the inside attack will destroy the unity.

There is a process that Judas should have went through to fix what his problem was. He would not do it. We know why. This is what you find Judas undermining the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. You are going to find when you pastor someday, there will be people just like the example that I gave you who will try to undermine your ministry. This is another great principle. These guys supposedly know the Bible. These guys, the people that went with them, they thought, "Well, he knows the Bible, he knows this." Did you ever read in 1 and 2 Timothy that if you try

to undercut a pastor, there are some severe consequences for that? Did you ever read what Paul said over there when he said that he never built on another man's foundation?

Now, we get into how we really love the Bible, we really believe the Bible, we are going to take a stand for the Bible, but when I want to do what I want to do, I am going to pick and choose out of it what I want to believe and not use the rest. Watch for that. That is your first sign you are headed for trouble.

Look at verse 12. "When I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name. Those that thou gavest me I have kept." No matter how much you love the people God gives you, no matter how much you invest in them, no matter how much you give of yourself, your time, your personal life, whatever, no matter how much Bible you give them through what God has given you, you are going to find that there are people just like Judas in every church on this planet and every place you are ever going to go at one point or the other. Maybe not all the time, but it is going to happen to you. Not everybody will be with you. Some will be against you. Again, betrayal is a terrible thing. You need to understand in ministry, and I say it all the time, this church is not for everybody. You are not going to keep everybody, but you have to learn the lessons.

I have had people, and many of you worked with me on them, and you helped me with them. I have had middle-aged couples throughout the years that we did everything for. They were about to lose their home, and we helped pay their rent. We gave them money for food. We gave them gas for their cars. We gave them this. We gave them that. That is what the job of the church is.

I have told you before, a preacher that I worked with years and years ago, he told me one of the greatest pieces of advice for the ministry. He did for me back then what I am trying to do for you now. He said, "Bob," I can still see him. We were driving. He says, "Bob, let me tell you something," because he had just went through a situation with people in the church. He says, "Bob, let me tell you something. People will never remember what you did for them yesterday. They are only going to want to know what you are going to do for them today." That was the greatest piece of advice he ever gave me, and I have never forgot it. I have added to it. You want my version of it? You are going to get it whether you want it or not.

That is a true statement. People will forget what you did for them yesterday because they are too busy figuring out how they are going to betray you today. Ingratitude, ingratitude. Christ did everything for His apostles. I am picking on Judas today, I know I am. But the truth of the matter is, every one of them except John left Him. When push comes to shove, they all went. We beat up on Judas because we do not like him, and he is a devil, so we are going to nail him. But they all left Him. That is a scary thought because if that holds true, out of every 12 people in this church, only one is going to stick with it. Wow. We have got nine people in our church.

## V. The Consequences of Betrayal

Let me give you the good news. This is not bad news. This is not bad. It has happened. It is life. I am not somebody sitting up here whining about it and saying, "Oh, poor me." No, this is the ministry. You are not going to make everybody happy. People are going to come after you. It is

like somebody said, "The farther up the ladder of success in the ministry you go, the more your rear end becomes a target." He did not use the word rear end, but I did.

When I was going through this back when, 10, 12, whatever it was, I was really devastated. I am thinking to myself, "How can these people do this?" I mean, I get it. But I never hurt them. I never did anything. I was there for them in everything that they had to get through. I went through the toughest time, and why? Then God said, "You know what? I love you, Bob, but you are really stupid. Why do not you just go back and see how I handled it when I was betrayed? You have been betrayed by some people in your church, and you are whining about it like some little sissy. Why do not you go get a dress on and walk around the neighborhood dressed like a girl, you sissy?" He says, "Why do not you just go back to the book you claim to love? I was betrayed. See how I handled it." That is where I learned it.

Let me give you the good news. I have told you four or five times that betrayal is a terrible thing. But let me be clear. Let me explain myself. Betrayal is a terrible thing, but betrayal is never a terrible thing for the person who gets betrayed. But it is always a terrible thing for the one who does the betraying. You need to write that down too.

I learned that no matter how they tried to hurt the work of God or you, if you are doing what is right with the Bible, God will never allow it to succeed. Even though it may look like it succeeds, Judas and his betrayal, he never stopped one thing Christ was doing, did he? Christ went on to the cross, finished the work. Judas hung himself and committed suicide on a tree. Why? Because betrayal is a terrible thing. But never to the betrayed, but always to the betrayer. That was a great lesson I learned.

I looked back at that time and all the other times through my life. Like I said, the last one was 10 or 12 years ago. It was a while back. But it was my favorite. I look back at all the times that this happened to me, and I just gave you one story. But I could preach a sermon today, and I would title this one, going back through all of those things, and I would simply say the name of it would be, "Where Are They Now?" Every one of them, without exception, lost their kids to the world. Every one of them. They got so far out of line with the Bible, and yet they are telling everybody how spiritual they are and how wrong we are, I am, or you are, or whatever. Every one of them lost their kids to the world. Every one of them. Without exception.

These boys and the girls from all the families put together over the years, they had more illegitimate kids. They could have started an adoption agency. You know how the parents handled it? The daughter would get pregnant, unmarried, unwed, illegitimate, bastard child, book of Revelation. The boy would get more girls pregnant than you could count. They would have the babies, and then they would get into a court battle over and over and over and over again. In every case, you would see mom, the daughter would get pregnant, or the boy would get a girl pregnant, and there she is on Facebook, "I am going to be a grandmother."

You know what is wrong with God's people today? No shame. You think an illegitimate child born out of wedlock is the same as you getting married and having a kid in your marriage? Really? You think it is the same? What planet do you live on? I am really feeling good now. You guys better watch out. I am getting my second wind here. What planet do you live on? From the

Bible. I know the Bible. This book here, you know the Bible, the Bible. It is an illegitimate bastard child born out of wedlock, and in the Word of God, when that happens, there are five things you need to do, and one of them is not painting the nursery to color whether it was a boy or a girl.

The kids never learn. They go on populating the world with unwed babies. Everybody thinks of how exciting it is that we are going to have. What future does that child have in that kind of scenario? You do not think of that. You do not think of the baby being born into an illegitimate situation with an unsaved guy and an unsaved girl. Everybody all happy about it, and then the kid grows up. You think what happens to him in eternity. A lady told me one time, "Well, we are going to just raise it ourselves. We do not care about the son and the girl. We are going to keep that baby. We are going to raise it ourselves." I said, "Look lady, your style of leadership produced a boy that produced that child. What chance does that child have with you as parents?" She did not like that. I thought it was quite enlightening myself.

They all lost their kids. They are all out of church today. They do not go to church anywhere. Some of them have been into so many churches. They bounce from church to church to church to church to church. Some of them do not go to church anywhere. Some of them lost their marriages and divorce. Some of them lost their health. Some of them lost their lives. They all lost their kids. After 50 years or plus and eight or nine attacks trying to stop what God is doing, I have got news for you folks, I am still standing here, kind of. Where are they now? Betrayal is a terrible thing, but never to the betrayed, but always to the betrayer. There are consequences to it. It is against every violation of the Word of God. But you see, when you get to that point that you are so spiritual now, you can actually pick and choose out of the Bible what you want to follow and what you do not want to follow. That is what you get into. This is the great betrayal chapter for you guys out there.

I remember what He said back in John 13:26-27, Jesus did. When He knew that Judas was going to betray Him, and they are all asking around the table, "Who is it going to be?" He says, "It is the one I give the sop to." They all missed that one.

*John 13:26-27*

*26 Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.*

*27 And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.*

Look at this. Then said Jesus unto him, "That thou doest, do quickly." Let me give you my, when I write my translation of the Bible, here is how I am going to translate that: "Rocky Balboa, go for it. You want to take me on, pal? Go for it. Do it quickly. Let us get it on." He did not say, "Guys, guys, we have to stop him. He is going to betray me. He is going to mess." He says, "If that is what you are going to do, go for it," because betrayal is a terrible thing, but not to the betrayed one, but to the one that betrays. He never stopped Christ's work one time, for one

second, for one minute. But he wound up hanging himself, committing suicide. He is in a lake of fire this morning.

Dr. Phil used to say, and I like Dr. Phil, I am not a Christian, but he had some good stuff. He said, "I like how we help people accountable." Then he would always say, when somebody would give him the most stupidest, idiotic plan of how they were going to do what they were going to do, or the mess that they did not take good advice and did, he would always look at him and say, "And how is that working for you?" It did not work for Cain. It did not work for Pharaoh. It did not work for Jannes and Jambres when they withstood Moses. It did not work with Ahab. It did not work with Jezebel. It did not work for Saul. It did not work for Absalom. It did not work for Judas. It will not work for anybody in your ministry down the line someplace. You just have to follow the model. When God starts something, He protects it. The people who are the betrayers, who violate the principles, they will pay dearly for it. Maybe not today, maybe not tomorrow, but down the line, God is keeping a record.

This is what they never understood because they are too busy picking and choosing. In John 17, Judas betrayed the Lord Jesus Christ, did he not? Who was Jesus? He was God's Word. He was God's body. Christ was the invisible appearance of an invisible God, yes? So when Judas went against Christ, he was not going against the Lord Jesus the man, he was going against God's body, the Lord Jesus Christ.

In your life as a pastor, when they try to undermine your ministry and betray you, it is not about you, it is not about the church. You do not have to take it personal. A betrayer today, undermining a pastor in his church, is doing the same thing Judas did. He is attacking not the church, he is attacking not Christians. Who is he attacking? God's body. God's body. We are the body of Christ. It is the same. Judas attacked God's body back then. When somebody tries to attack the church today, it is God's body today. You are the body of Christ. They do not get that. I do not think it would make much difference if they did get it, but they do not get that.

## VI. God's Protection and the Call to Ministry

Look guys, I covet all of you. I love all of you. Every one of you means something special to me in a different way. You are all unique, but as I said, you are all invaluable, and you all have potential. I am not saying that everybody here is going to pastor, that would be stupid for me to even try to say that. You know that is not true, but God has a plan for every one of you. But I am telling you right now, within our little group in this church, there are some young men that God is going to take you, and you are going to do something, and you are going to pastor someday. I do not want you to have to spend time worrying, struggling. I want you to be able to figure out as many things now before you have to do it, that you can.

I get it. It is all book learning. I get it. But when you get in that position, you remember places like John 17, because that is the only thing that is going to keep you sane, because betrayal hurts. When you invest your life in people and they turn on you underground, it hurts. I am not going to stand here for a moment and say that it did not hurt the Lord. Obviously, from what He is praying, He would have liked Judas to do the right thing. Obviously, we know why he did not

and why he could not, but He would have wanted him to. But you have to realize, you are in the big leagues when you are in the ministry. You are not an armchair quarterback anymore. You have the luxury to criticize whatever you do not like, but you do not have to be accountable for what the actions are.

Last week, I gave you Jeremiah 1. I read to you about God's call to Jeremiah. What a tremendous passage that is, and a tremendous responsibility for us to do the work.

*Jeremiah 1:4-5*

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

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

Then said I, "Lord GOD, behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child." But the Lord said unto me, "Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak." This is what I gave you last week.

*Jeremiah 1:8*

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

If you are doing in the Word of God what God wants you to do, and you are building people's lives, and you are changing people's lives, you do not ever have to be afraid of anybody because God has got your back. The betrayer will have your back with a knife in it to stab you with it. The Lord Jesus Christ will have your back with a sword in His hand to protect you from the betrayer. Take that home with you today.

The attack in your church will always be from the inside to destroy the unity. That is what Christ's fear was. But do not worry, God has got your back. This church, truly any church, this church will only be as strong as the members that are in it. The members in it will only be as strong as the church they are in. Loyalty is a two-way street. The unity of Christianity.

Now we have moved through John 17. We have come up from last week where we saw how much He loved the people that God had given Him. Now we see we have moved into the final moments up into the upper room. The betrayal now beginning to unfold itself. Great lessons for both of us to see and understand. Now we are going to move over the next couple of weeks through the rest of this chapter, John 18 and 19, the actual crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ. In that, everything that the work was that God wanted it to be done. When we get to that point, I am going to slice out the crucifixion, and I am going to show you every aspect of how it worked from that whole week. We will put it together.