

John 12:37-50

Sunday 3/20/2022

I had lunch with Bob Greg this week, who used to be the bass player in the band here. He came over to see the church, and we had lunch together and had a great time. The Lord is really doing some great things with him over there, and I am really proud of him. He wanted me to tell you all hi and that he loves you all. We just had a really good time together. So, we are going to continue to work with them and help them as we can, and we are just excited about what God is doing.

Last week, if you remember, I gave you another great study out of the book of John, one to take and to get into your Bible, lay it out, and get it into your Bible so that you have it. We are now twelve chapters into John, and John has been so rich in just incredible studies. We have really gotten some good things out of there. Each one of the stories or the studies will not only lay out the immediate truth that you are getting in the story, but it leads, as you have seen now, to many other studies that will in time unlock the Word of God for you in so many different ways.

I laid out for you John 12:26-32, and we took a study of the voice of God. I ran you back to the Old Testament and showed you all the verses that really show you that God's voice in the Bible is like thunder. What we did was we ran that through the Bible in a kind of a systematic way of going through the Scriptures. It is just by following, and you can do this with any study, following the systematic taking of the Scriptures, the verses, starting with a definitive verse and then using it as a base to go through wherever you have to go, wherever it leads you, to come to the great truth of the Word of God, allowing the Scriptures to lead you to the truth of God's Word. That is really what it is all about.

Through last week's study, I showed you how important it is to get all the events in the Bible in the proper order. You will find so many people today that know so little about the Bible; they cannot even put the simplest events in a chronological order by which they are going to unfold themselves. In learning how to use the Bible, this is what you want to do. You want to be able to make it work for you. The way that you do that is you understand the process by which God has put His Bible together. That is really the definition in 2 Timothy 2:15, where he talks about a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.

I learned this many years ago as I was learning my Bible, and I was taught and trained to use the key tools that were given to me, much just like I give them to you. I was shown how that God put all of the books in the Bible, all sixty-six of them, in a specific order. It was not just somebody sometime got all the books and said, "Let us put a Bible together." No, no, no, it is much more than that. God took the order of the books in the Bible, just as He has an order of the events that are within the Bible to teach us and to lay out the greatest doctrine or the theme of the Bible. It will do many things, but all of the order of the books of the Bible will give you the pre-millennial return of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the theme of the Bible, God coming back to establish His kingdom, the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In each case, whether it be the order of books in the Old Testament or the order of the books in the New Testament, you are going to find an established order of Israel's history in the Old Testament, and then an established order of the New Testament church through history in the

New Testament. A couple of Thursday nights ago, someone asked a question about the landmark back in Proverbs 22 and again in Proverbs 23. In Proverbs 22, it talks about not removing the ancient landmark. In Proverbs 23, the old landmark. I took the time to show you that that is really the key to all history, certainly the key to the Bible, finding the landmarks and then systematically from that landmark, which in the Old Testament is the nation of Israel and in the New Testament is the church, putting all history in a chronological order around those two, whether it be the Old Testament or the New Testament. All of it is in there for me and for you so we can better understand what God is doing.

The reason why God wants you and me to understand what He is doing is simply so you and I can be better prepared to be part of what He is doing. He is not giving it to you just so He can give you the academics of the Bible. He is not giving it to you so you can storehouse a lot of knowledge about the Bible. He wants you to better understand what He is doing so you can be part of what He is doing in a more understandable way.

Last week, I took you through our study of the Tribulation, and I laid it out in its proper order with all of the events from the rapture to the Second Coming and then, of course, right into the Millennial Reign of Christ. I showed you another great principle in the Bible to help you unlock it, found in Romans 1:20, where He says:

Romans 1:20

For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

What He is saying is everything that God made, everything you see around us, means something. It is there for a purpose. God wants to teach us about it. Last week, I took thunder, lightning, and a rainstorm, and I laid it out how that in a physical rainstorm, it is a picture, Romans 1:20, of the great storm that we are about to enter into in life. It forms a timeframe for us of all that is happening during these events and key words like cloudy day, thunder, lightning, rain, the darkness, the cloud, the gloominess, the rainbow, the former and the latter rain. We went through all of that, and I showed you that it was a warning to all of us of the coming storm.

In light of last week's message, anybody with half a brain can see all across the world today the storm clouds are gathering. We are living in a world of unprecedented time that is unlike any time in history other than maybe the first coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. You can say what you want to say, you can stick your head in the sand, you can believe whatever you want to believe, but at the end of the day, we are at the end. Everything you are seeing unfolding is unfolding to be the final act of the final play of Matthew 24, when they asked the Lord Jesus, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" People do not like to talk about the end of the world. Why? Who would? I mean, nobody likes to talk about things like that, but it is coming. The end of this world is coming, which is only going to be the beginning of God's world to come.

If there ever was a time where we as God's people need to take heart to the two examples that I gave you last week, I showed you in Matthew 20 how that he is sending the workers into the labor, into the vineyard. I showed you how that the vineyard is a picture of the world, and through the time from Christ to now up to the rapture and Christ coming, how that he has sent workers into that vineyard. I showed you very clearly and plainly that that whole story is built around six o'clock in the morning to six o'clock at night, which is the exact same time Christ was crucified on Calvary's cross. Clearly showing anybody who is paying attention that the work that we do as individuals, the work that this church does, always needs to keep close to our heart the death of Him on the cross for you and for me.

Then I showed you John 12 that the palm trees, when he goes into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, they laid down the palm trees on the road going into Jerusalem. I showed you the second great principle: that not only should we, as we do the work, remember the work that He did for us, but you never want to forget on your road of life that you are headed to the Millennial Reign of Christ. Your road of life should be strewn with palm leaves that never let us forget not just what and why we are doing it, but where we are headed.

I told you about that at the end of the Bible in Genesis after the flood and again at the second coming of Christ after all is over, the rainstorm, the rainbow. Only two times is the rainbow found in the Bible. I said that traditionally we have been told down through the years that at the end of that rainbow is the pot of gold. That pot of gold will be your millennial inheritance for the Lord Jesus Christ.

I saw this week an old movie that my kids grew up with and we watched together and still watch it when it comes on, The Wizard of Oz. The Wizard of Oz was a movie made back in the 30s. You know how the story goes. The story goes that a girl named Dorothy, who lived in Kansas, got taken up in a whirlwind tornado and got deposited in a land where she did not know where she was. She wanted to get back to Kansas. So the story unfolds that the only way for her to get back where she really wanted to go was to get to the Emerald City where there was a man who was called a wizard who understood everything and could get back and make things happen that nobody else could. So she starts on a journey. That journey is to get to that Emerald City, and it is on a golden path.

As I looked at that, I thought, that is so indicative of what and where we are at. I am not sure what "indicative" means, but I think it means that it is so much like where you and I are at because we want to get to a city. The only way you are going to get to that city is to walk on a golden path out of the Word of God. I also saw as I watched that, I did not watch it all, that there was some opposition to try to get her to that city, like there is going to be opposition to you and me. There was a wicked witch of the West. She was bent on stopping her from getting there. She had a horde of flying demons that would do everything they could do. She had some big guys, the sons of God. Remember those guys? All that was to stop Dorothy from getting to where she needed to go.

Yet I looked at that and I thought to myself, "Wow, if that is not a picture of Christianity, because I have a city I want to get to, and I am going to stay on the golden path to get there." But even at

that, there are going to be some things that are going to try to stop you from getting there. Then I thought to myself, she had three friends with her. I could not stop and think about how those three friends really lined up to the three types of Christians you find.

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- Principle 1: Understanding Why Some Believe and Others Don't
- Principle 2: Seeing the Glorified Christ
- Principle 3: The Danger of Loving the Praise of Men
- Principle 4: The Word of God as Judge
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As I looked at that, I thought to myself, all this stuff, the Emerald City, a picture of the millennium, the golden walkway that you go there, the opposition, and the three types of Christians, and her getting there was just somewhere over the rainbow. You do not beat the Bible. I do not care what you do in life. I do not care what you write. I do not care what movie you produce. You cannot get away from the character studies and the Word of God and the way things are going to unfold. I have not figured out Toto yet, but when I get to that point, you will be the first to know.

I. The End of Christ's Public Ministry and Five Principles

Today, we are going to finish out chapter 12. As we do, we will look at some things that for years I have held special in my own life as far as the ministry. Because as he closes this chapter out, and we have seen a tremendous amount of material, he leaves us with five great practical applications for us in the ministry as he closes out his ministry.

First off, I want you to know this: at the end of chapter 12, we have now come to the end of Christ's public ministry. He is done now. From here on, we are only one week away, just so you get the order of events, we are only one week away from his crucifixion. Things now will move toward this hour that he had been talking about all through his earthly ministry. As we close this chapter out, we see five great practical principles for us and our understanding of the people that we will be dealing with. Five great principles for the work that God has given us to do now that he is going back to heaven. It is almost like he knew he was coming to the end of his public

ministry. He had talked about the work of the Father. We know now that we are to carry on that work. So before he shuts down and goes to the cross, he gave me five of the greatest principles about dealing with people to help me carry on the work for him.

I want to begin reading today in John 12, and we will pick up in verse 37 down to the end of the chapter in verse 50. Here is what he said:

John 12:37-50

But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:

That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,

He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.

And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.

I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

Father, we thank you and praise you for the Lord Jesus. Lord, we do love you and thank you for the Word of God that you provided for us, for the good people that have come out today, for the good singing and the good music and everybody in a good spirit today, just to sit here and to bathe in the light of the Word of God. Truly, Father, the word that you have given us, because you are come as a light into the world, because we believed on you, we do not abide in darkness. We have the light of the Word of God. Thank you, Father. Illuminate us now. Open up our eyes. Forgive us where we failed thee. Put us under the blood. Allow us to see and to understand

everything that you have for us. We will thank you and praise you in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.

II. Principle 1: Understanding Why Some Believe and Others Don't

I have a note in my Bible right about John 12 as we start that chapter. It says, "Lessons for my ministry. Five principles for the work before me that God has called me to do to finish the work that he started."

Let me ask you a question. Do you ever wonder why some people will get it and some people just will never get it? Do you ever wonder why, and I know that many of you work with people, I have worked with people, do you ever wonder why some people will come or you will get involved in their life? They will begin and then they are gone. They come for a short time. They give the pretense that they want to learn or they want to grow, but then you never see them. They never tell they are leaving. They are just gone with the wind. You have all experienced that. I know I certainly have. Many times we ask the question, "Why?" Well, let me just say this to you, you are going to get the answer to that today.

I so much appreciate the young guys that we have in our church and the young gals, too. I have many of them that come over to my house, and we sit down one on one. I appreciate all you older guys that disciple them and teach them and work with them. I enjoy when they come over because I have the ability, we have the ability to kind of work as a team. I can take what you have said, reinforce it, package it, and help them better understand it. I just enjoy that. I look at this church and I think to myself, there are so many young men and young ladies who really get it. But then there are some who never will get it. We have to ask ourselves the question, "Why is that?" There has to be a logical answer to that. It is not because they are stupid. It is not because they cannot read. It is not because they cannot hear. There has to be a reason why in Christianity, some of God's people will get it and some of them just will never get it.

I move up the ladder a little bit at you young couples, and you have dialed in here. In time you will dial in. I have so many of you that work with me with helping me with this or helping me with that. Or you work in a ministry for Zach or with Jim or with Danny and Jamie upstairs or in the nursery. You are really moving right along and you are doing really good. But I ask myself, "Why is that?" That there are some couples that will absolutely get it, and then there are some that absolutely will never get it. I want to answer that for you today.

We traditionally think that younger people, God will use, and I understand from our past lessons, the older you get, the harder it is for somebody to find Christ to really dial into it. I get that. But I am going to tell you right now, that is not always necessarily true. I have a lady in West Virginia. She calls me on the phone, and this lady is incredible. She has gone through and digested all of the material we put out in the bookstore. She is in a church that is an apostate church because that is all she has got. She teaches classes. She is teaching classes in her home to women on how to study the Bible. She understands manuscript evidence as good as probably anybody here.

She was in a Sunday school class, she told me the other week, and the pastor, or the guy that was teaching, did not know what he was talking about. She had gotten off on some erroneous idea about the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven being done. She pulled him aside very nicely. No, no, this is not a woman who is the brawling woman of Proverbs. No, no, no, she is a class act. She pulled him aside, did not say anything in public. And this assembly said, "You know, that is not what the Bible teaches. I would be glad to help you put that into a biblical context so that it would be taught right." Well, the guy said, "Well, let me talk to the pastor." So the guy came back and got one word for her: "Women are not supposed to preach." That was his answer. The pastor that she has does not believe in eternal security. She was going to talk with him about that. She said in her phone conversation, "I do not think they like me." To which I said, "I guarantee you they do not like you." Now, this lady is eighty-seven years old and tearing him up.

But you ask yourself, what is so different with her? Well, you have young people, young couples, moms and dads that care nothing about it. There has to be an answer to that. I am telling you right now, the answer is in what he says in John 12. It is an incredible thing. It is a thing where he tells them here in chapter 12, he lays that all out. Then he quotes, goes back to the Old Testament, to the Book of Isaiah, and he quotes him in relationship to Israel and their issue of their unbelief. He says in John 12:38:

John 12:38

That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

This is from Isaiah 53:1-3. Just so you can get this into your Bible, when he says, "Who hath believed our report?" this will be not only the Old Testament principles and the passages that deal and told about Christ coming, this will be the very things that he is doing in front of the nation of Israel. When it says in verse two of Isaiah 53, "For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him," that he is Christ before him as God, and it is Christ as the tender plant growing up. The root out of a dry ground will be Israel in their spiritual dryness and their condition. Just so you understand how this verse... In verse three, it shows that they rejected him. They rejected him. It is like they saw a little tender plant coming up in the garden and they stamped it and killed it.

Then he says in John 12:39-41, he again quotes Isaiah, and he goes back to Isaiah 6 again, and this time verses 8, 9, and 10. He says this:

John 12:39-41

Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,

He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

Now, we see here that again, this is dealing with the nation of Israel. He says in Isaiah 6:8, "Here am I; send me." Now, that is Christ in the context, but inspirationally, it is you and me. God wanted to send him to the world. Now that he has gone back to heaven, God wants to send us to the world. They do not accept the report. They reject the Lord Jesus Christ. The problem now that they have because of their rejection is that they hear, but they understand not. They see, but they perceive not.

I am going to tell you right now, before we get into these five things, this is the problem with God's people today. This is why some of God's people will get it and some of God's people will not. You know what it all comes down to? Wrong attitude of heart toward the things of God. That is what it comes down to. You hear me, but you do not understand what I am saying. You see what is going on around you, but you cannot perceive it. That is God's people today. That was the nation of Israel at the first coming of Christ.

Now, if I am dealing with someone, maybe he is an unsaved man and I am dealing with his soul, or maybe he is a saved man and he just has a bad attitude of heart toward God. The first thing that I am going to do once I see what I am dealing with, in either case, is I am going to first off remind him of the issues and the problems that Israel got into with God and try to make a comparison for him. I am going to try to get him to see that his condition, lost or saved, is no different than Israel's condition. It comes down to the same reason: you do not understand what God is saying and you cannot perceive what you see because your heart is wrong.

I would go on with this. I would tell him that there are two days in the Bible that any man, any woman needs to see and understand, for Israel and also for us. The first day that the Bible talks about is found all the way back in Genesis 32. That is a story about Jacob. You and I know all about Jacob. The reason why Jacob should be so familiar to us is because we all have a little Jacob in us. The word Jacob means "supplanter." Jacob is someone who used everybody that came into his life. Jacob is somebody who did not care about what God said. He did not care about what God was doing. All Jacob wanted was the schemer's way through life to get everything that he wanted. Boy, he did a pretty good job with it. But at the end of the day, his life became a mess.

So God puts up with it for so long, and then there comes a day. I talk about this day in Genesis 32. I have a message on it just for that subject. But I will just tell you what I would tell this guy: that there comes a day in everybody's life when God will do what he did with Jacob. You know what he did with Jacob? He got Jacob alone. Here is the day that God will get you alone. There is a day that no matter what you think or what you say you are doing or how you want to pretend to everybody else, God will pull you aside, put you in a situation where it is just you and Him. God will do with you what he did with Jacob. You know what he did with Jacob when he got Jacob and he got him alone and he began to talk with him? You know what he did? He said, "Jacob, what is your name?"

You see, that is the first question God will ask you. It is the first question God will ask me. "What is your name?" He wants to see if you really understand who you are, not who you pretend to be, not who you show the world of Christianity that is what you want them to see. He

got Jacob alone, looked right into those beat little Jewish eyes and says, "What is your name?" You know what he said back? "Jacob." A supplanter. "Ah, yes, Lord, I am the guy that schemed through everything." "What is your name?" That is the first question. I would say to that guy, "You know, the day God gets you alone, that is the first question he is going to ask you."

Now, there is a second question with that day that God will ask you. I guess you could put one, two, two, one, change them around whatever order you want. But the other question is found, saved or lost, it is found back there in Genesis 3:9. Adam now had violated God's word. He lost the image of God. He took a forbidden fruit, him and his wife. Now he has got broken fellowship with God. Where they used to have Bible studies together in the afternoon, now he is running from God. He is hiding from God. This is a question that God will ask every man and every woman along with "What is your name?" He says to Adam, "Adam, where art thou?"

Now, indulge me for a moment. Do you think that God did not know where he was? Do you think he did not know what bush he was hiding under? Do you think God could not have walked across that field with angels like a bird dog with a 12-gauge Remington and flush him out and bang him away as he runs into the woods? You see, God will ask him where he was, knowing where he was, to see if Adam would be honest to tell him where he was. So the first question is God's God. I would tell a guy, "The first two questions you have got to answer is you have got to answer who you really are and then you have got to deal with where you are at the day God gets you alone." That day is going to come into everybody's life, saved or lost. I would tell that guy that you are going to have to face those two questions because God is going to get you alone. The two things he is going to ask you is who you really are and then where you are really at. Now you can lie to me. You can lie to your mom and your dad. You can lie to your friends. You will not lie to him in that day when he gets you alone.

Now there is a second day that I would tell this guy about. The first one is the day God gets you alone. The second one is the day God leaves you alone. You would not answer the first two questions. You thought you were smarter than God. You thought you were quicker on the upbeat than God. You thought for sure you could get around everything the Bible said simply because you wanted to do it your way. So you failed, would not answer these two questions, saved or lost. You refused to say to God, "You know where I am really at, God? I am in a mess." "Who I really am, God? What is my name? I am a jerk." So when you refuse to answer those two questions on that day, the second day comes. That is the day God leaves you alone.

Now let me be clear here. I am talking about a saved person. I am not saying God takes your salvation away. We know that is not true. I am not saying that you are not going to heaven. I am not saying that at all. You are if you are truly saved. When I say the day God leaves you alone, I mean the worst day of your life will be the day that God takes his hand off of you and does what he does with you what he did with the guy in 1 Corinthians 5, who again would not do what was right when he left you alone. That turned him over to the Satan for the destruction of the flesh that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. Now that is the day you do not want in your life. That is the day when God leaves you alone. Now you are on your own. This is the day where the world, you will find out how really the friend the world was to you. This is now the day that your life will fall apart.

God gave you chance after chance after chance. God reached out to you over and over again with those two questions: "Who are you?" and "Where are you at?" You would not get honest with him. You played the game. You told everybody what they wanted to hear. You had no intentions of ever answering those questions, saved or lost. So there comes a day in your life, if you are saved or you are lost, but I am talking about saved people, there comes a day in your life where God takes his hand off of you. You are on your own. You can ask God's people to pray for you up one side and down the other, and it will be of no avail. God now has turned you over to the flesh, to the world, to the devil to let you come to the place through the tragedies of life of who you really are and what your name really is. I have seen people run from state to state, from country to country, from city to city to get out from under that question. You will never get out from under it. When God takes his hand off of you, it is the worst, listen to me, it is the worst day of your life. You are headed down.

III. Principle 2: Seeing the Glorified Christ

Now, the second thing, let us look at John 12:41. You will find people like this all through the Christian world, and we all have to deal with them. I would suggest that if you get the chance, many times they come and you never get the chance. But they will hear the rest of the message. Let me tell you something. You get pinned under a car at three or four o'clock in the morning and you cannot move. You will hear the rest of the sermon. You come to the place where you get a report back from the doctor that you have got some terminal disease and you are not going to live and you are laying on an operating table. You will hear it! It will come across loud and clear. You will not get out from under the Word of God as much as you try.

Now look at John 12:41:

John 12:41

These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

Now that is an incredible thing. That is an incredible thing. Of course, it is a thing here where he saw the glory of God. This will be a tremendous personal principle for all of us. This is all the reason why God's people do not do what they are supposed to do, or unsaved people do not ever get saved. This is a tremendous thing. You know, most of God's people when they see Christ or they think about the Lord Jesus Christ or whatever, they think of Jesus, or the Son of David, that is big today, the Son of Man. They think about him only at Christmas when he is a little baby in the manger or at Easter when he is in a tomb. Seeing Christ that way is good, I guess. But I want to tell you, seeing Christ that way will never change anybody's life. I am sorry. It will never change a man's life, looking at him as the lowly Jesus from Galilee, looking at him as the Son of David, the Son of Man, going to a Christmas cantata or going to an Easter pageant. That will never change your life. At some point, you have to see him as the glorified Son of God sitting on the throne of God of your life. If that never happens, it is the only real thing that can change a man's life.

I look at Isaiah 6:1-5, if you would for a second. He says:

Isaiah 6:1-5

In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips: and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

Now that is the kind of smoke that Christians ought to be filled with. I am not going to get into that. Doctrinally, I understand this is the millennium. I get that. But inspirationally, it is a picture of our life and our ministry based on seeing God in all his glory. This is the only real thing that can change a man's life. Yet I look at Isaiah 6:1, and this is so true. It says, "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the house." So many times it takes a tragedy in our life for us to see it.

I can speak for myself. My first twenty years of my life was all about me. I did not care about anything. If I had tripped the President of the United States, I would not have picked him up. I had one goal: to be the best that I could be with what I was doing when I was in the military. I did not care. I was a saved guy supposedly. I did not care. You know what it took for me? It took to see my dad in a casket. It took a death in my life that was close to me. Because that man always wanted me to serve God. He was always proud of anything I would do for God. But my heart was not right, and I just did it because I wanted to make everybody happy and keep him off my back. But there is a way when you look into that cold stone face that you are never going to see again. It is a thing when you reached out and touched that hand that was so warm and tender and now is cold and hard, that God will get your attention. So many times it is tragedy that has to come into our life before we are willing to look at him and see him in his glory.

Now I am going to say this. Look at Isaiah 6:5. Here it comes again:

Isaiah 6:5

Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips: and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

I will tell you this. When you see him how he really is, when you see him the way he is, when you see him as a glorified Christ, without a doubt, it will always show you where you are really at. "Who are you?" Nothing. "What is your name?" I do not know. It takes seeing the glorified Christ to change us. Otherwise, it is business as usual.

Now what follows in Isaiah 6:6-7:

Isaiah 6:6-7

Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:

And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

Once he sees that and he sees who he really is and understands where he really is at, then a seraphim, they take care of the altar, flew over with a live coal off the altar and touches his lips. From verse 9 on, Israel now has a prophet that will take his stand for God. He has the burning burden of God in his heart and the burning message of God on his lips. It never would have happened unless he saw who God really was and it reflected who he really was. We must, we must answer those two questions: "Adam, where art thou?" "What is your name?" The only way you can see it is by seeing him who he really is, and through that you will see who we really are.

IV. Principle 3: The Danger of Loving the Praise of Men

Then the next thing, John 12:42-43:

John 12:42-43

Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

Lessons for my ministry. The reason why some get it and why some do not. The reason why some will answer those two questions and the reason why some of them will not and just keep on running from God. They will try to get away from the day God gets them alone, but you will never get away from the day that God leaves you alone.

Now this is the third thing here that he tells us in closing out this chapter. There were people here who were leaders who did believe on him, but they were afraid to take their stand and confess him. They believed, but they did not want to pay the price for their belief. Now if you permit me, I have been pretty civil up to this point. If you allow me to get my soapbox out, I am going to get on it because this is a tough one for me. For me today, there are too many cowards in Christianity. There are too many men and too many women who claim to be saved who will never stand up for anything that is wrong. They will never stand up for what is right. They are afraid of what people will think. They are afraid of what some people will say. In some cases, they are afraid they will lose their job. They will lose their friends. People will get mad at them. They will be afraid that they will rock the boat, that they will cause a controversy. So they just sit by when they know something is not right or somebody is not doing right and they are silent. They just go along with it.

As John 12:42-43 has already told us, by their not taking a stand because of their fear, silence is consent. Edmund Burke, the great English philosopher, was not even a saved man, quoted back in the 1800s, "Evil triumphs when good men do nothing." In every case I have ever seen down

through the years, there is always somebody that gets hurt in situations where God's people will not stand up for the truth. It always happens. It happens because nobody will stand up and it happens because nobody will speak up.

I often wondered as I read this passage, what would have happened if the leaders, religious leaders, would have taken a stand? How do you think that would have changed things? It would have caused an uproar that was unbelievable, but it would have been an uproar in the right direction. You see, they had, I mean they are part of it. They are like a lot of God's people. They are secret agent Christians. Your number is not 777, you are 007. I mean, you do not think they were in the meetings when they slandered the Lord Jesus? You do not think these same believers who believed on him were not in the crowds when they decided how they were going to try to tangle him in his talk and entrap him? You think these same guys were not there when they put up the woman taken in adultery and fabricated the whole thing? You think they did not know about that plan, were not standing there when that plan was tapped? Oh, they may have never been part of it, but they knew it was going to happen. They were in the same crowds when they lied about him. They believed in the miracles that he did, but they heard their compadres discredit the miracles and never said a word. They heard him plot against him. They heard them talk about how they wanted to kill him. They never said a word. By being part of that, and as believers, they wound up being part of the very thing that God hated that the devil was trying to do. You know what? It always happens that way. Sooner or later, boys and girls, you have to take your stand. It may cost you some friends. It may cause problems. It may cause issues. There may be things that you suffer because of it. But if it is a righteous cause for the Lord Jesus Christ, praise the Lord. These guys were afraid they would be kicked out of the synagogue. Actually, I cannot think of anything better that could have happened to them. You have to take your stand at some point. You cannot put your tail between your legs and be silent forever. At some point, you have to play the man. When I read things like this and I see God's people that are just like this, I wonder. I wonder where some of God's people's loyalties really lie. Listen. Never be more loyal to anything or anybody than you are to the Word of God. But that takes courage. Lessons for my ministry. I learned these things thirty-five years ago, forty years ago.

V. Principle 4: The Word of God as Judge

Then the next thing, the fourth principle will be found in John 12:47-48:

John 12:47-48

And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

Now here you have two of the greatest verses in all the Bible telling us that in the last day, it will be the Word of God that judges us. At an unsaved man, it will be at the great white throne judgment, Revelation 20. For a saved man, it will be at the judgment seat of Christ, 1 Corinthians 3, 2 Corinthians 5.

Now this will open up another great study in the Bible on the questions in the Bible. Questions in the Bible are incredible. The first question you have to ask is you have to answer to God where you are at. The second question you have got to answer is you have got to answer who you are. Did you ever see the first question laid out in the Bible for you? The first question in the Bible was not asked by God. The first question in the Bible was asked by the devil. It was found in Genesis 3:1-2 where the devil said, "Yea, hath God said?" That is a question. The first thing he did when he came to Eve was to ask her if she really believed that God meant everything that he said and he knew what he was talking about.

I will tell you what, in this life that is the only real question man has to answer first before you can even get to the other ones. When you look down at the Bible, when you hear the word Bible, when you hear somebody preach out of the Bible, do you believe it is the absolute perfect word of God that can change your life? Or is it just another book like the Koran, living letters, dead epistles, all the other trash that man puts out to try to get rid of the one book that is the absolute perfect word of God? You see, that is the first question you have got to ask. Once you get past that one and you accept the book for what it is, then you can get into the others. But this has to start right here. I mean, it starts right here. Did God really mean what he said? In this life, that is the only real question man has to answer. Every other question you have in life, every other decision you make in life, every action you take in life will mean absolutely nothing if you cannot answer this one. Because if the book is not real to you, nothing is going to be real to you. Did God mean what he said and does he really know what he is talking about? Is the Bible the absolute final authority for everything in life?

If he did, and if a man says, "Oh, I believe the Bible is the word of God," I will answer that question. "Yeah, I believe the Bible is the word of God. Yeah, I believe that is what he said." Well, then let me ask you this question: If you believe that, then why do you not do what he says? I mean, he asked the question in Luke 6:46, which is another great question:

Luke 6:46

And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

Now, if man does not answer those questions, this question in this life, saved or lost, when you face the judgment for an unsaved man, the great white throne, for a saved man, the judgment seat, you will answer that question there. It is not a matter of whether you will or whether you will not. It is just a matter of when you will. I want you to know now from our verses that it is the very Word of God, the book that God gave each of us that we rejected. The book that had the answers of everything that you need to fix your life. And you walked away from it.

I have people come to me all the time, and they will say, I mean, it happens all the time. They will call me on the phone and they will say, "You know, pray for me, or pray for so and so, or pray for this." I will be honest with you, I do not know how to pray. I really do not. Because I have seen people who have had every chance in the world. I have seen people that grew up with the Bible. They claim to love the Bible. They claim to believe the Bible. But in every case, they actually walked away from the Word of God. They do their own thing. Now, how do you pray for that? It is a question that God has taken their hand off. How do I pray and tell God to put his

hand back on when he has taken a hand off because of their indifference to the things of God? Everybody has to face that day on their own.

It is the very, at the great white throne judgment, an unsaved man will have to face this question that the devil asked. He will stand there before the throne of God in the assembled universe, and he will be asked the question, "Yea, hath God said?" All his life will flash before him of all the things he said and all the things he did that demonstrated that he did not believe it. Out of the Word of God, he will be asked by the book some questions, some questions that an unsaved man will have to answer. They are found in Job 38. There are about eight or nine of them depending on how you count them. But the Bible says the books will be opened. It also says in Job 38:3 that when God asks these questions of an unsaved man, he is going to demand an answer.

Job 38:3

Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.

All your life you thought you were smarter than God. All your life you thought you could, God did not know what he was talking about. All your life you decided to do it your way, thumb your nose at God and just throw God out the window as far as anything meaningful in your life.

"Okay, son, now the floor is yours. Show us now when these questions pop up, let us know now how that your righteousness is equal with God's righteousness. Lay it out for us." Zechariah 3:1-3 shows you that day when every unsaved man is going to stand before God's throne and ask these questions. You want to see a terrible day? It is the day that you try to justify yourself as an unsaved man up against the holy, righteous, glorified Son of God. That is laid out for you in Romans 3:4, by the way. In this life, an unsaved man points his wrath toward God. At the great white throne judgment, listen to me, God returns the favor and now he points his wrath toward man.

Now, for the child of God, your questions are found in Job 26:1-4, and there are six of them there. At the judgment seat of Christ, these six questions out of the book, and you will have to answer. In truth, I need to probably say this, you are really not much different than the guy at the great white throne judgment. You are saved yet so as by the fire, 1 Corinthians 3:15, he gets dumped into the fire, Revelation 20. But there is a lot of difference. See, your famous line in life as a child of God, this is your famous line: "I will do it my way." "Nobody is going to tell me what I have to do, and I am going to do it my way." Amen, brother. You took God's salvation and did nothing with it. You threw away every chance God gave you. Your whole life is not built around Christ, but it is built around you and what you want. All your life you did everything in the flesh, not one time any accountability, responsibility to any church, any pastor, to anything. Yet you are always trying. I know the crowd, man. I have dealt with it for fifty years. Yet you always drag God into what you are doing and pretend that God is in it. Well, buddy, God has got some questions for you. Six of them. He hung naked on a cross for you. Now on that day you will stand naked before the assembled universe in front of him. He has got some questions, and he is going to demand some answers. When we stand there because you would not or will not answer them now and be accountable to them now, the Bible says in that day that every man's work will be made manifest for the day shall declare it, 1 Corinthians 3:13, and you will be held

accountable then by the very book that God put in your world and put in your lap. God will judge you by the same book he gave you to judge all things by, 1 Corinthians 2:15. If you were spiritual, starting with yourself and the one who will judge man saved or lost.

John 12:48

He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

And the books were opened.

VI. Principle 5: The Everlasting Life of God's Commandment

Well, the last thing. Now this is why some get it and why some do not. The last thing he says, five great principles to carry on the work of God. The last thing he says in John 12:49-50:

John 12:49-50

For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

Now he closes out this great chapter and also his earthly ministry right here. From here on, he has one week left. His crucifixion is a week away, and he clearly tells us that his Father sent him to earth with a message. That message, by the way, is found in the other book that John wrote, in 1 John 1. This is the message. He lays it out for you. A message to all men that God's word is true and that God has redemption for all men. John 12:50 said the commandment, the Word of God, is life everlasting. That is the message he got out through his work for the Father. Now that is our work with the same message, changing the lives of men to see the truth of God's word.

Now he gives us in this final chapter before the cross five practical principles to learn and understand and to apply to get the work done that he started and then he passed off to us. Based on that, answering those fundamental questions that God will ask us now and based on you and me seeing the glorified Christ, understanding through that who he is, who we are, and then seeing what God would have us to do. Understanding his plan and then becoming part of it. By seeing who we really are and when we see who we really are, then you know what our name really is. We know now where we are really at. Knowing that the Word of God is absolute and true. Then God will do for you what he did with Isaiah. He will take a coal off the altar of God before God's throne. He will touch your lips with a message of God. Once you see the glorified Christ and you answer those questions and God touches your lips after you have seen him and you know who you are, your life will never be the same again.

You may get excited about other things in life, and there is nothing wrong with that. You may enjoy other things in life, and there is certainly nothing wrong with that. But you will never

quench the fire of the burden in your heart. He will kindle a fire inside your heart that will never go out. He will light a fire inside of you that will never be quenched. He will take that coal and he will touch your lips, and because of the burning burden in your heart, you will have a burning message that you cannot wait to tell people about the message that God can give you. God is the King of the world to tell us. All comes back to the right attitude of heart. Why do some people get it? Others do not. Wrong attitude of heart. God's commitment to every man is to be saved. All because we see the glory of God and God changes us. Do we now have the ability to take it to God?

I got a letter this week and a text message from a guy who is a Christian, knowing very well. He is running for Congress, and he gave a little deal out, said what he believed and all this stuff. All the right things to trick God's people, not trick them, but give them what they want. Yeah, trick them. Then he is looking for churches that he can go to to plan a platform. I never answered him. But on his thing there he said, "My goal is to go to Congress and my goal is to save America." Now I understand the motive behind that. But I am telling you right now, the way you save America is not by putting Christian politicians in office. The way you save them. See these guys talk about saving America. These guys talk about Trump always talked about making America great again. The problem with all of that, and I like that, but the problem with that is how are you going to make America great again when you do not remotely understand what made it great in the first place? It was not because gas was low. It was not because you could get food you want, had three cars in your garage and two chickens in your pot. The reason why this nation was great is because you had a book that no other nation had, and God honors the book. Do you not get that?

So when somebody is a politician and a good guy, I am not fighting him. A good guy, he gets up and he says, "I want to save America." I appreciate that. But if you really want to save America, I would get out of politics, get into a Bible-believing church because the only way you save America is the only way that ever you save America. That is to win people to Christ one at a time. Train them in the Word of God and take this country back through a book of men and women with changed lives. Not going to Washington and trying to get into the swamp and play with the alligators. Man will never get it. That is why. It is over. That is done. It is a thing where in the last moments of the sand going through God's hourglass, we need to be about our Father's business. We need to never not look at our road through life without palm trees on it. We need to think everything we do the day he died on the cross, and I am telling you right now, the only way you always keep yourself with the perspective of who we really are in the flesh is to keep saying who he really is on the throne. That is why some of you get it and some of you do not. That is why you are going to find it all through life, all through the ministry, it does not change. The last thing he said before he ended his public ministry was five things that we need to carry on the work.

Let us hold up there and pray. Father, we thank you and praise you for the Lord Jesus. We love you. Thank you for this great book and for how now you have closed out your public ministry. We love you. Lord, God's people have so many issues. It is so easy to get confused today, so easy to believe things that are wrong because we want to. But Lord, it just comes back of our loyalty

to the Word of God, not a man, not a movement, not some establishment, but to the book. When a person violates the book, he goes his way and I go mine. When the situation dictates getting out of the Word of God, I am done. I am done with the book. That is where we got off the track so many years ago, and we are so far off the track now we do not even know where the train station is. Help us, Lord, in this church anyhow, help me, help the people that are helping me, help every one of us to stay true to that book and to never take our eyes off the glorified Christ sitting on the throne of heaven and letting that change us by showing us who we really are. We will thank you and praise you in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen. God bless you. You are dismissed.