

2 Corinthians 5:17

Sunday 6/5/2022

Boy, I'll tell you what, between the old pathways and right there, I'm just ready to go home to heaven, amen? Ready to go home to heaven, amen? Third time's the charm. Ready to go home to heaven, amen? Wake up, thank you. Hello, good morning, here we are, let's go.

Now, I thought today, in a practical way, we have been talking about a lot of things out of John chapter 14 as we've been working our way through that book. We have really been focusing on building the right kind of relationship with the Lord. We've talked about this many, many times, and I just want to give you a little more depth to it today. My job is to help you totally understand how to build that relationship.

We've been talking a lot about it on different levels of spiritual growth. Every one of you are on some kind of different level as you're growing spiritually, but we all have the same goal. That is found in Ephesians 4:15, which is simply growing up into Him, and knowing Him as the key to that. We have been talking a lot about loving God, loving the things that He loves, hating the things that He hates, putting all those things into your life to help you to get to the place where you really see and understand all that God has for you. That's really the bottom line. The bottom line in all that I try to do, and all that this church does, is to try to get you to the place where you really see and understand all that God does have for you.

I. The Importance of Understanding God's Work

In the Bible, one of the great key words will be the word "understanding." You'll find throughout the wisdom books where it talks about knowledge, where it talks about facts, and where it talks about understanding. Knowledge is the information that you get in life. Facts is the knowledge that you get that you apply to something in life. Understanding is understanding the insides of how it all works.

You go to a mechanic who's going to fix your car; you want somebody who has understanding. You want somebody that when he listens to it, he looks at it, you describe it to him, he pretty much formulates from his experience and his understanding how it all works. In the world, the world has its own brand of understanding, but in the spiritual world, understanding is understanding what God is doing behind the scenes, no matter where it may be down through history, no matter where it may be in your own life, being able to see the circumstances that will come into all of our lives. Instead of being lost in the fog and not understanding what's really happening, you have the understanding of what God is doing because you understand how He works.

You'll find in the book of Proverbs and the book of Psalms, which are two key books in building your relationship with God, you'll find the word "understanding" or a variation of that 87 times in those two books. Clearly, the key to getting out of those two books will come away with understanding who God is and what He's doing. Then you come to the book of Ecclesiastes. The book of Ecclesiastes is the book where he presents the world. You'll find all the "ologies" of man that he has come up with to get around the Bible in the book of Ecclesiastes. You'll find in the

book of Ecclesiastes, not one time until you get to chapter nine, where you'll find anybody has any understanding. In Ecclesiastes 9, it's a worldly understanding of how to make money. But there is no understanding in the world of God.

This is what I want to try to talk to you about a little bit today. It's not just important that you see who God is and all that He's doing, but for you and for me as Christians, it's absolutely crucial to understand who we really are in Christ. Everybody can talk about God, what He does, this, that. But the real question this morning is, who are you really in Christ Jesus? I want to step out just for a week out of John 14, and I want to give you a few keys in putting it all together as understanding who we are in Christ and as we build that relationship with Him. It really is the most important thing for me to help you truly understand who you are and everything that God wants with you.

Let's pray. Father, we do thank you and praise you for the Lord Jesus. We love you. Thank you for all you do for us. Thank you for the Word of God. Thank you for the folks that have come out today. I know we got a host of folks that are on vacation and they're traveling. They'll be coming back today or this week. Pray for them that you'll give them a safe time, give them a good time, but bring them back safely. Open up our hearts today that we might be able to look into this great book, the Word of God that you've given us, and help us today, Father, to not only listen to it and to hear it, but to leave here and learn how to apply it, that we may have that understanding that God so desperately wants us to have. We'll thank you and praise you in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.

II. The Foundation of New Life in Christ

Now, I want to start with a very simple pattern to show you how this works, and to start with 1 Corinthians 3:11. Don't bother turning to it; we'll get someplace in a moment here. It says in that:

1 Corinthians 3:11

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Now, that's the day you got saved. When you got saved yesterday, you laid a foundation in your life. You want to come and sit up here? No, you don't want to. You laid a foundation in your life, and it's a thing where from this point on, when you lay that foundation in your life, you build on that foundation. The Bible likens your body and me to a temple, to a building, and a building has to have a foundation. When you trusted Christ as your own personal Savior and you became a Christian, you laid that foundation. Your salvation is that foundation of your new life in Christ.

Here's how I try to help you with that, just so you understand the process. This will be the beginning of your spiritual growth process. This is the fundamental job of every pastor, whether he does it or not, whether he recognizes it or not, and every church, whether they do it or not. This is the fundamental job.

Years ago, probably in the 80s, I had a single college and career class, and I had a bunch of young college kids, just like many of you here today, and I saw that they had a need. I wrote what we know as our discipleship lessons. Most of you are familiar with them. Many have been

through it. Many right now, you're going through it. We call it Discipleship One. The importance of it is that this is what we do. When you have that foundation, this is laid out in Isaiah 28:9-10, where he talks about building a wall. He talks about line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, there a little.

What happens is when you lay that foundation, you need to begin to build on that foundation the building blocks of biblical truth, Bible doctrine, the great principles of the Word of God. Obviously, you're building a wall. That wall, as you build it up on that foundation, it will keep you safe, but it'll keep out all the things in the world that want to try to come into your life. This is where most of God's people miss the boat. They lay the foundation, but they never begin to build. They never build any building block. That's why you'll find them 10, 15, 20, 30 years after they've laid the foundation, they know nothing about the Bible. They couldn't run you through the Word of God and show you anything out of the Bible other than maybe the four spiritual laws or John 3:16. But as far as they're building on that foundation, it's never been done.

The foundation of principles of the Word of God that help us in time, as you build on them and you put them into your life, this is where understanding comes from. This is where God through those principles will show you what He's doing. In the course of life of what you do and what you get involved, He'll use those and you'll see it. Then you'll say to yourself, "Oh, I understand now." And that's how you grow.

III. Becoming a New Creature in Christ

Then in time, I saw the need for the next level. I began to put a series of lessons together that would bring people from Discipleship One up to that next level. Of course, we call this Discipleship Two. This was built around a verse that I look at as a definitive verse of putting it all together in an understanding format. This will be now you can turn to this one, 2 Corinthians 5:17. This verse, when I saw this many, many years ago, it really began to be the definitive for me of what the Christian life really is.

2 Corinthians 5:17

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

Now, this verse tells us that something changed about us when we laid that foundation, when we trusted Christ as our own personal Savior, something changed. But you ask yourself, "What changed?" You look the same. You're not any taller. You're not any thinner or any heavier. What changed? You see, that's the great question. Of course, I wanted to cover that in Discipleship Two. I wanted to take the people who had laid the foundation, they built on the basic building blocks, but I wanted to get them out to the next level. That's my job. My job is to get you everything that you need that you can have everything that God wants you to have. That's what our job is here.

I talked about out of that lesson, fundamentally, the seven things that changed about you the day you got saved, the day you laid the foundation. Those seven things are what made you a new

creature in Christ Jesus, and the old things are now passed away. Many of you have been through that, and we have that available for anybody that wants to get it. But you know what? If you asked most Christians, five years in the Lord or older—give you five years just to figure it all out—if you would ask them what really changed about them the day they laid that foundation, and what really was different about them, and what old things is He talking about that passed away, they couldn't tell you. And yet this is the key to understanding who you are in Christ, knowing where you once were, now where you're at, knowing that you are a new creature in Christ Jesus, knowing that the old things are passed away, and then realizing the seven things that changed about you the day you laid that foundation.

I talked to a pastor this last week, and he told me that he was witnessing to a Mormon. He said, "I talked to this guy, and we were going through the Bible." He says, "This guy, this guy," and he says, "this is like most cults, he really didn't know what he believed. He just believed what somebody told him. But it was obvious when I started to talk to him, there was no depth to him, and he really didn't understand not only what, but why he believed what he believed." He says, "It really dawned on me how shadowy it was." I looked at him and kind of chuckled, and I said, "Yeah, well, don't just hold that against the Mormons, because most of God's people are the same way. They laid a foundation, but they don't know what changed. They don't know what really happened. They couldn't sit down with a piece of paper and tell you the difference if their life depended on it."

My job, of course, is to help you to put the pieces of understanding together in a logical, truthful format, because the key to the Bible, the key to God, the key to your life, the key to your work, the key to your family will be understanding—the ability to see not just what's on the surface, but to understand why and what's really going on. Not just understanding who God really is, but understanding how and why you are part of it all. We were told in 1 Corinthians 3:10 to be a wise master builder. You don't just slap the bricks on. I built a wall one time, and I thought I knew what I was doing. I had no clue. That wall fell down two days after I had it up, Benny. I knew nothing about interlocking the bricks. I just thought you'd put them on there. I thought I was doing good. I was slapping mud, man, and putting that stuff on. The next day, the wind blew that thing right over, man. I didn't know what I... Most God's people build their foundation wall just like that. He says a wise master builder. Then he says we're to take heed how we build upon that foundation.

IV. The Simplicity of God's Word vs. Man's Complications

Now, let me just say this, and I know this goes against what's out there today. The Bible, it appears to be a complicated book. It's not. I will tell you that the Bible is an amazing book. I will tell you that the Bible is a powerful book. And I'll also tell you that the Bible is a life-changing book. We got warning labels on everything today. There ought to be a warning label on the Bible. It ought to say, "Warning: Reading this book can take a damage to your ignorance," because that's exactly what it'll do. It'll impact your life.

Yet the Bible is a simple book. When you get the understanding, you realize the Bible is just a simple book of history. But it's not history from man's perspective; it's showing you God's

perspective, what He's doing in history. That's what's important. The Bible is a simple book on why man has the issues that he has. The Bible is a simple book on how man can fix the issues that are bad in his life. And the Bible is a simple book to simply understand how that if you're a Christian, you're different now. Old things are passed away. All things become new.

Man likes to make things so complicated. He really does. Everything in the world today that is so simple... The Bible tells us in 2 Corinthians 11:3 that the devil wanted to destroy the simplicity that's in Christ. That's exactly what man does today. He wants to take everything that is so simple and basic and make it so complicated.

Children today, when you raise your children, you get everybody out there that tries to tell you, if you have children that don't behave, they'll have a list of behavioral disorders that a child has and all that stuff. I mean, you want it simple. When I was growing up, we had a kid that had a disorder and he wasn't behaving; he was just a spoiled brat. Everybody knew that. But now we got to lift it up. When I was growing up, we had drunks. We had bums. You couldn't find a drunken bum in this town if you looked for it. Now we have chronic alcoholics. See, you almost want to be one; that sounds so good. We've changed everything. We've taken the simple truth of what it is in life and tried to cover it up to make it look better than it is.

I remember one time, you guys don't know who Gene Krupa was. Gene Krupa was a drummer back in the 20s and the 30s. Gene Krupa was probably one of the best drummers that ever lived. But like most musicians, he got into marijuana. This is back in the 20s and the 30s, and he got addicted to marijuana. The people that went to hear him and all the teenagers that liked him, they shunned him, they booed him. He was called a dooper. He was called a drug addict. He was called all these things. Society rejected marijuana back then. You couldn't find a drug addict or a druggie any place on this planet. Now they're substance abusers, you see. They want to make it look good, make it sound good. That's just the way that it does. Man always makes it complicated.

If you look at history, in the 1800s, we went through an agricultural explosion. Then we moved into the industrial age around 1900. Then we moved into the 40s and the 50s, the nuclear age. Then we moved into the 60s into the space age. And now we're living in the information age. There's more information out there that you could have at a fingertip.

I remember back when, this is in the 70s, when I was with a church that wanted a TV broadcast, and they wanted to be on television, Channel Nine. They had big fundraisers because it took about a half a million dollars just to buy the equipment. You had to buy cameras. You had to buy, build a sound place with all the tech. You had to have people that were the directors and all this stuff. They would have big banquets every year and raise, have to raise another 300,000, 400,000. The cameras would burn out, the tubes would burn out, all for a 30-minute television program. We're on around the world on YouTube today for nothing. Times change. You couldn't do that back then.

I'm amazed at you kids. I watch you. You got thumbs that are lightning speed when you do something. I don't know how you do it. I'd be hitting every button coming in there. I sit there and watch you. I mean, it's incredible. I watch you young kids. I watch you how you can do your computers. You got a kid who's four and five years old now. He can open his laptop, turn it on,

and he can find his favorite app and go, and he does. When I was four or five, I ate mud. Times change. It's all to take away the simplicity of everything. It makes it more complicated.

My wife laughs at me because I still have a flip phone. I don't use an iPhone. I don't have any... I have a flip phone. You know why I got that? Captain Kirk had one way back in the day, and I use a flip phone. People laugh at me. There's a guy up at the gym; he just chuckles every time he sees me because he thinks I'm in the Stone Age with this. You know what? How many times a week does yours go bad? How many times a week does it decide to change your format, to change whatever they're doing? My wife complains all the time, "Well, my phone's not working right. I can't get my calls. I can't do this. I can't figure this out this way. It just changed everything." Yeah, that's the world you live in. So I just beat me up, Scotty, and I'm on my way. That's the world we live in today.

Now, I do got to tell you, just to be 100% honest with you, and I know I crack a lot about computers, and I'm not really against them. I have one. I don't know anything about it. I have to call Woody every time. Don't I, Woody? Every time. "Woody, my thing... I can't get my emails. I don't know this. I don't know that." It's crazy. I hate it. But I got to be honest with you, the first computer was with Adam and Eve. You do know that. The first computer... say it again, because you look like you're shocked now. The first computer started with Adam and Eve. And yes, it was an Apple. But it had a very limited information ability. One byte, and it crashed. Oh yeah. You'll be using that all week long next week. You know you will as well as I'm standing here.

V. God's Power Points: Simple Truths for Life

I found over the years that the Bible is filled with just little three-point or four-point outlines that are so easy to remember. Memorization is really part of the Bible, and God made it easy. There are great complicated things in the Bible that He just put them into a little format. When I put notes in my Bible years and years and years ago, I probably got 200,000 notes in there, but when I did it, I was smart enough to know that I couldn't remember everything. So what I did was I found a definitive verse on whatever the subject was, and I put all my material there. So when you asked me a question on Thursday night, I just remember where the definitive verse is most of the time. When I go there, I got everything I need. I learned that by the way God has done His Bible. He's taken that big book that everybody thinks is so complicated, and He's broken it down into just little, little bits of formats that really will help you understand on a larger scale. I call them God's little power points of truth. Little keys.

It's like what people will tell you. I had a Sunday school teacher tell me one time when I was just a little kid in Sunday school class. You know what she said? She said, "Kids, the Bible will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from the Bible." I never forgot that. That's a simple little thing, but you realize that's profound. The depth of that truth, but it's all in just one little thing that I must have been eight or nine years old, and I certainly wasn't paying attention, but I remember what she said.

We hear the little thing one time, "Only when life will soon be passed, only what's done for Christ will last." It's kind of goofy, but I've never forgot it once I heard it. It's things that people

will say to you, the little powerful things. I had a guy preach one time, I never forgot it. I don't know anything about the rest of his message, but here's what he said. He says, "You give the devil an inch in your life, and he'll become a ruler." That's powerful. It's so simple, but I never forgot it. So when God wanted us to remember the great deep things of the Bible, if you're paying attention, He just breaks them down into little three-point, four-point outlines. If you remember that, it's the best, it's a piece of cake.

Now, I use some of these into a full-blown message; I've developed them. You can use them many, many ways. Some I will use as a basic devotion. If I go someplace and somebody says, "Hey, could you give us a 15-minute, 20-minute...?" Yeah, I got probably 200 or 300 of them in the front of my Bible. I could do it all day. I'll work through them into my sermons so you too can have them. I memorized them pretty much, and they are my shortcuts to understanding. They really helped me in problem solving, and they will you too, because they will illustrate in a little basic format great teachings of the Bible. Some of these golden nuggets of truth have shaped my ministry and given me direction in my ministry. You hear me use them many, many times; you just don't know where I've gotten them from.

I used one a couple of weeks ago when I said, "I always take care of the ones who take care of me. I never take anybody or anything for granted." Another one I always use is, "When it comes to your life and my life, always give God what's right in your life. Don't give Him what's left of your life." See, that's very profound, and you'll remember that all the time. Another one that I learned years ago is, "Never put a question mark where God puts a period." That's what the devil did with Eve back in Genesis 3:1. Here's a good one: "He who angers you will control you." Boy, if that isn't a dying truth, that's the absolute principle of life based on Proverbs 25:28.

Proverbs 25:28

He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.

Here's one. You could preach this one: "A man without God has a hopeless end, but a man with God will have endless hope." Now see, you can preach that. You can take that and develop it around that whole concept. You can use them, you can learn from them, and they bring up principles that you can add to it.

VI. Scriptural Illustrations of Understanding

One time back in 1 Samuel 2:3-5, I found the five things that God looks for in a Christian, a real Christian. Those are the exact same things that I look for in men and women that I work with or who do my ministry.

One time I was reading through the book of Psalms 119, one of my favorite chapters. I came across Psalms 119:105. It says:

Psalms 119:105

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

I got thinking about that, and God gave me just a little simple outline that the Word of God is like five different kinds of light or lamps to me. When He says, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, light unto my path," I'm thinking to myself, "Wow!"

The first kind of light it is, or lamp it is, it's a reading lamp. When you read your Bible, people read their books in bed, and they put that little light on the backboard there, and it'll shine down so you don't wake the person sleeping next to you. Well, that's what God's Holy Spirit does when you read the Bible. He illuminates what you read.

I'll tell you something else. It's a heat lamp. This old world is cold, but that heat lamp will warm your soul, the Word of God.

I'll tell you something else. It's a safety lamp. It'll show you where the pitfalls are in life.

I'll tell you something else. It's a traveler's lamp that will show you the way, John 14.

And for every little child, every little Christian, it's a night light, night lamp. So you and I don't have to be as scared of the dark. Quite an incredible little outline.

I found this little outline one time in Joshua 1:8. As I was reading through, I lined it up to Deuteronomy 6 and Psalms 149. He says there how He put the Word of God in my heart, then in my mouth, and then in my hand. You see the progress?

1. First of all, it gets into my heart. That's Deuteronomy 6:6.
2. The second thing, it gets into my mouth. That's Joshua 1:8. And out of the heart, the mouth speaks, Matthew 12.
3. And then the third thing, the principles get into my hand, and I do God's work.

See how easy that is? There's nothing complicated to it. We make it so complicated because we try to bust through the sound barrier of the Word of God. All you got to do is just see the little outlines that He's put throughout the Bible that will break it all down for you.

Also, I found a little outline in Joshua 1 on courage. You've heard me use this one before. It's a simple formula to help me understand all around me and to take my stand. Three little areas in Joshua 1. He says, God tells Joshua that you have to have:

4. Courage to believe the Word of God.
5. Then He says, if you really want success, you got to also have courage to obey the Word of God.
6. And then He says, if you really want to have the Christian life, you got to have the courage based on believing and based on obeying to rest in the Word of God.

You know, that is the greatest little three-point outline for your life and my life that you could ever want. But it takes courage. It takes courage to believe what God said in the world. It doesn't believe it. It takes courage, even more courage, to obey it. But believing it and obeying it, the end result is you can rest in it.

Now, we got a lot of problems in America. America is an insane asylum run by the inmates. America is about as messed up as you could ever hope to be. But you know what? We could talk

all day long about America's problems, and we could list them out and put them on a board and talk about it for 10, 12, 15 hours. You know what America's problem is? America's problem is, first of all, she has no Bible. When she has no Bible, she certainly isn't going to obey what she doesn't have. And when she doesn't have a Bible and she doesn't obey it, there'll be no rest in America. This is why you have the unrest that we have. It is true of our lives too.

I found a little outline one time in Matthew 26 of two of the biggest issues in my life as a Christian, talking about the apostle Peter in particular. I come away with that: I'm going to either get ahead of God and make my mistakes, or I'm going to get behind God and make my mistakes. The key for all of us is to stay even, keep that balance. We get all excited about something that happens, and the next day the bottom falls out. I've learned, I don't have... with every mountain top there's a valley. I've learned just stay even, just take every day even, take every day as it comes. Of course, that'll keep you from getting behind with God or keep you trying to get ahead of God.

I saw one time talking about an unsaved man, and boy, you can preach this. I saw one time, there are four things in the Bible where He laid out about an unsaved man. He said, an unsaved man is:

7. Without God. You can preach that.
8. An unsaved man who does not have God, he's without strength. You can preach that.
9. And he's without strength, then as an unsaved man, he has no hope.
10. Oh, and then here comes the power punch: Without God, without strength, without hope, he's also without excuse.

Now see, you can develop that. That just gave you four points of every unsaved man or woman you're going to find anywhere on this planet, but you can develop that into a powerful witness.

I was studying the life of Samson one time, and I was looking at his disobedience and his sin. Disobedience and sin is something we all struggle with, we all get into. Many times we get into it because we don't understand the long-range effects of it. When I studied the life of Samson, and you know the story, Samson was a guy who disobeyed God all of his life. He did his own thing, and he paid the price for it. He's a perfect picture of a child of God today who does their own thing. The first words out of his mouth is, "I saw a woman." He's a he-man with a she-weakness. His whole life, he just disobeys every authority figure in his life.

Well, finally, he meets the woman of his dream, Delilah. Tom Jones sang about her many, many years after she was gone. He met Delilah, and God used Delilah to give him understanding. So Delilah sells him into the hands of the Philistines after she gives him a haircut. By the way, I'm going to need a haircut this week while I'm thinking about it. Now he lost all of his strength. So the Philistines, now he had killed thousands of Philistines, and they were afraid of him, but now he's lost his power. It's a picture of a child of God who through disobedience loses the power of God in their life.

Now the world, the Philistines, took him. You know the first thing they did? They put out his eyes, took two sharp sticks, stuck them in his eyes, blinded him. You know the second thing they did? They took his hands and they bound them. And the third thing they did, they put him on a

big gristmill going around in a circle that he was bound to that, blind to that, naked in that thing. For the rest of his life, he went around in a circle grinding the food for the Philistines to eat.

I thought to myself, that is a perfect picture of a child of God who disobeys God, winds up being taken in by the world, and gets their life destroyed. When I came away with that, you know what I learned about sin? It's so... it'll keep you from getting into sin when you understand this.

11. The first thing that sin will do to you is what it did to him: It'll blind you. You can't see the truth of the Word of God anymore.
12. The second thing that sin will do in your life, it will bind you, and it becomes a satanic stronghold in your life.
13. And the third thing, sin will grind you, and you'll spend the rest of your life walking in a circle, blind, naked, bound to your sin. And the only profit you're going to deliver is grain to the world.

Now he got understanding at the end, didn't he? But boy, the price he had to pay. So I've always thought about that. For me, sin will blind you, it will bind you, and it will grind you. How easy that is.

I've gave you this before, some things that really helped me in my Christian life was that little three little words: faith, fact, and feeling. The whole Christian life, without a doubt, is bound up in those three words. You want the success, it's in faith, fact, and feeling. When you got faith, you laid the foundation, and you got saved. What is your faith in? It's in the facts, the Word of God. And when you put your faith in the facts of the Word of God, it'll always produce the right feeling. You got some people out there that have faith and feeling, but they have no facts. You have people out there that have feeling, but they have no faith or no facts. The true child of God has to have faith. You've got to be saved, but your faith is in the facts, the Word of God, and that'll always give you the right response and always give you the right feeling. My faith and the facts of the Word of God will provide everything I need to know and understand.

Then I gave you a couple of weeks ago four little sure things, and I hope you put those in your Bible. That is the key, getting these down. Over the years, I'll give them all to you sooner or later because I inject them in, but I gave you:

14. A sure salvation.
15. A sure word.
16. The Bible talks about a sure calling.
17. And then the Bible talks about a sure reward.

And that's the total Christian life in a nutshell for you and for me.

When I looked at people in my ministry, here's another one. When I looked at people in my ministry and studied my Bible, God showed me four different kinds of Christian people that you're going to run into in the ministry that I certainly run into and probably every pastor runs into. He probably just doesn't see it. It showed me the four kinds of people that I'll deal with. God's people, not unsaved, God's people in any church.

18. You're always going to find people who make things happen. This will be the self-motivated people. This will be the self-disciplined people. This will be the people who look for every opportunity to be used of God, and they make things happen. God uses them. They have an ability to be used of God because they choose to be used of God, and they make things happen.
19. Then the second kind of people you're going to find will be people who just watch what's happening. They're on the sidelines. There's really no discipline in their life. There's really no structure in their life. And they sit around while everything else is going around, and they watch what happened.
20. Then the third kind of people you're going to have in any church are people who have no clue what's happening. They're the walking dead of Christianity. They never really figured out and understand anything that God is doing.
21. Then the fourth kind of person will be the person who always complains about whatever happened, and that'll be the mixed multitude.

Any church, I don't care where you go, you'll find these four kinds of people. When I saw that, it turned the lights on for me. It gave me understanding why things are the way they are, why people are the way they are, and how you deal with them.

VII. The Transformative Changes in the Christian Life

One day I came across 2 Corinthians 5:17, the verse I gave you a little bit ago. It says:

2 Corinthians 5:17

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

God gave me and made me understand that the old things are now passed away. I'll stop right here and tell you this: A lot of you have problems in your Christian life of moving forward. You can't get going anywhere, and the reason why you can't is because you're always focusing on the mistakes you made in the past. God didn't care about that anymore. Old things are passed away. But I'll tell you this, as long as you keep looking in the past, you'll never move forward. You have to be able to let it go. You have to be able to realize that now you're a new creature in Christ Jesus, all things are passed away, and all things become new. You got a clean slate the day you laid your foundation.

The Bible says that God not only forgives, but God forgets. I talked to a lady one time who just couldn't get past some of the things she did in her life, and she just couldn't believe that God would save her. I said, "You know what?" And finally, I was in desperation. I said, "You know what? When you get to heaven, I know what you're going to do. You're going to run up to Jesus where everybody else is praising the Lord and dancing around. You're going to be over there sweating bullets, and you're going to run up to Jesus the first chance you get, and you're going to say, 'Lord, I did this, and I did that, and I did this, and I did that all before I was saved, and I did all these things. And I just want you to know I'm sorry.'" The Lord's going to look down at you and He'll say, "You did those things? Hmm. I've forgotten that." Hey, God forgot my past. You

think I'm going to bring it up to Him again? He forgot your past. You're a new creature in Christ Jesus. All things are passed away. What are you living back there for? See, you learn those things. That's understanding. That's what you realize in understanding.

When I did that, I saw four key areas of my life that changed. This is true of anybody who lays the foundation.

22. The first thing that changed was my purpose in life. I want you to understand today that when God saved you and you laid the foundation, He gave you a new direction in life. You have new priorities now. You have new goals.
23. I'll tell you the second thing that changed: The second thing that changed was the passion of man. Passion. It runs so high. In the world that we live in today, you have spiritual issues people are so passionate about. You have political issues that people are so passionate about. You have issues in our society. You have people that are so passionate about being tree huggers, and the going green and doing all this stuff. You got the Black Lives Matter crowd; they're passionate about that. You got the Democrats, their passion. You got the Republicans and their passion. The Supreme Court here just a couple of months ago or a month ago, did something on abortion. Everybody's passion got flamed up on that. It's everywhere. Our passion should be toward the Lord Jesus Christ. Our passion should be toward the Word of God. Why? Because old things are passed away. All things become new. I don't have a lot of passion in all those things. You know why? Because until we get the right passion with the Lord, we don't have any ability to fix any of that. It starts with us in our relationship because our passion changed.
24. And I'll tell you something else: Our patience changed, or should have, learning to wait on God. I'll tell you, patience is the hardest thing for most of us. I'm not a very patient person on many things. I tell you when I call a place in a business and I get the phone answered, and you don't get a real person, try to call your cable company sometime. Try to call your phone company. Try to call anybody. You get this automated system where somebody comes on and says—they lied to you—they say, "Your call is really important to us." Now enjoy 40 minutes of a flute solo. Never mind.

But you know, I remember one time at the church I was at, and this is where it was going. They had a big staff meeting, and the pastor and all these guys decided that they were going to automate the phone system, and they were going to put it up where that when you call the church, you got a voice, and it prompted you to go wherever. It basically took you in a big circle around everybody in the church. I said to them, "You know what, guys, this isn't IBM or this isn't Ford. If there's any place where a church should get a live body on the other end of the line, or any place, it should be a church." But they didn't do it. They didn't do it.

I'm telling you, we don't have patience for anything. I remember when I in Canton down there, remember when the first McDonald's was put in there on Tuscarawas? Yes. First McDonald's was right there. I remember when it said a sign up there, "Two sold." We went to McDonald's, and the hamburgers were 15 cents back then, weren't they, Benny? Fries were 10 cents, and people went there, and it was called fast food because people, we ate at home, we talked, and they wanted to give people faster food service. So they put in McDonald's. A little bit later on,

Burger King, all those places are fast food. It was to be able to give us a chance to get food faster because we're not patient. And then the fast food wasn't fast enough, so they put a drive-through so you could get your fast food even faster. Now that wasn't enough. So now you don't have to go through the fast food restaurant or the fast food drive-through, and you can call an Uber driver, and he'll get it even faster to you. You know why? Because we don't have any patience. We don't have any patience.

When I was a kid growing up, we got a new pair of blue jeans. We hated them. They were stiff. It wasn't until you wore them for about two years, and they got worn out, and they got faded, and then you felt comfortable. I hated going to school with new jeans because they're stiff. Like I said, they're ugly, they're dark blue. I'd go out and just roll in the dirt just to get my mom to wash them over and over and over again. You kids don't understand that. You go to a store now, you get your jeans that already got holes in them. You walk into a place now, and you got 501s, 502s, 514s, 536s, 598s. You get any jean you want, at any degree of fading you want. You know why? We ain't patient. We don't want to wait for it. We want it now.

Now this is not a knock because it's the world we live in, but everybody, when you graduated from school, many of you, not all of you, I understand that, but many of you, you got a new car for graduation. Hey, I'm happy for you. You know what I got when I graduated from school? My draft notice, but that's the world we live in today. My mom and dad didn't have a new car for years. They saved to get a new car. They didn't buy a brand new house. They lived in apartments, but we don't want to wait for that today. This is part of... I'm not knocking it. I'm glad you got one. I'm glad you got married and went and bought a house. I'm thrilled for you. I'm saying the world has changed. Everybody wants it right now. And I don't have a problem with that. I really don't. If you want to go out, in fact, I was going through my closet. I found a pair of jeans that already had holes in them. Somebody gave me years ago. I'm going to start wearing them. I want to be in vogue. I don't have a problem with it in any of those things, but I'll tell you where you're not going to be able to get in a hurry: And that's when it comes to God and the Word of God. You're going to have to do it His way. And that takes patience. That takes patience.

In 1700, the great word was, "Give me liberty or give me death." In World War I and World War II, it had changed now, and it said, "Give me liberty." And today, "Just give me" in every aspect of our life and society. You know as well as I do, James 1:3 says that the trial of your faith works with patience. That's why we don't want it.

25. And then the last thing, the fourth thing that changed about me was my perception.

Perception of things and men and life. Being able to see, like I said last week, what others can't see. Perceive things, have perception into things, have insight into things. This is Isaiah 55:8-9, where it talks about God's ways are not my ways and His thoughts are not my thoughts. I have to get up on that level. As you grow spiritually, that's where you're getting to: seeing everything the way God sees it. That becomes now, as we become a new creature in Christ Jesus, I now have some things that I have that I didn't have before. I have understanding. I have understanding of what God is doing, not what man is doing necessarily, though I need to know that, but more important, what God is doing in spite of what man is doing to be able to do His work. That gives all of us the ability to make good

decisions. Most people, Christians, can't make good decisions. Most of them cannot make any decision at all. Indecision is their biggest problem.

Well, let me just tell you this, folks, and you probably missed this on the way over to church today, but the road is littered with flat squirrels who couldn't decide which way to run. You don't want to have the same problem. I see you laughed at that, but I'm going to tell you right now. See how powerful that was? See how stuck that in? You don't drive and never see a flat squirrel on the road again, not think of what I just told you. That's what I'm saying. You got to use... Christ did it. You use life illustrations to impact and give you truth. And then when you see it, just like those little outlines, it changes everything around you, understanding life and what it's all about, and with understanding, the ability to make the right choices.

VIII. The Three Bottom-Line Changes in Christ

Now, all these things that I've given you today, it helped me in understanding really the bottom line. I leave you with this: The three basic bottom-line changes in my life the day I laid my foundation. I hope you can see this, and I hope you can build off of this. Everything I've showed you in here today, and it was just a tip of the iceberg of what's in there, but to give you an illustration, and you can understand how the Bible that seems to be so complicated breaks itself down in such an easy format to understand if you just follow it. Everything I've shown you today will be found in these last three areas that I want to give you. Here's our real change. Here's the real change that in time, if you grow and do what you need to do, that will give you and lead you to understanding and everything else I've talked about today.

The day I laid the foundation, the day any man lays the foundation, Alexis, the day you laid the foundation just yesterday, I'll tell you, the first thing that changed about you was:

26. The inner man. What on the inside got changed? Out of the darkness, into the light. When I understood that, it showed me now that I'm a new creature in Christ Jesus. When the inner man got changed, God gave me a new heart. He gave me new purpose. It's Psalms 40 where it says in verse one, two, and three:

Psalms 40:1-3

I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.

And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.

The inner man changed. That's what first changed about you. The inner man changed. You're no longer the person you once were on the inside.

27. And then, once the inner man changed, the second thing that changed was the outer man. I'm now a new creature in Christ Jesus. Old things are passed away. This is Romans 12. My body now becomes a living sacrifice.

Romans 12:1-2

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

The rest of my life, I am now to prove all things. The rest of my life, I am to prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God in my life.

28. And finally, because God changed the inner man, and then that changed the outer man, here comes the best part: God changed the end of man. My salvation is sure. I have been sealed unto the day of redemption by the Holy Spirit of God. My sure salvation, my eternal destiny is now sealed. Titus 1:2 says:

Titus 1:2

In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

This old world is not my home anymore. I'm in this world, but I'm no longer of this world. Like Abraham, I'm a pilgrim in a strange land. As Ephesians 6:20 says, I may be here, but now I'm an ambassador of heaven to a foreign country.

IX. Applying God's Truth for Understanding

All these things. When you learn these simple little truths, and this just goes back to what we've been dealing with and everything in John 14, when you now begin to build that relationship and you begin to build everything you can with God, and you lay that foundation, and then you build upon that foundation, you build those building blocks of biblical truth to surround yourself by the truth that God has for you all through these little simple outline formats. It'll really help you to remember the great doctrinal truths of the Word of God, because it's when you and I are faced with things, when things come up, when things that were unexpected, there's a tendency to forget what the principles are. When you ingrain these principles into your life by these little three-point outlines that you look at something and immediately the three points or four points are right there, you can learn to take those and use those in your problem-solving problems in life. The life-changing and life-saving principles of God's Word that will lead us in time to understand it, the key aspect of the Christian life.

Here at Old Path Baptist Church, as I lay them out, you too need to catalog them. You need to put them in a notebook someplace, which is what I did years ago before I transferred them in, and you need to lay those out, and every week you need to go down through them. When you're discipling somebody or working with somebody, use them, give them to somebody else, help them. What it does is it forms for you and for me the great doctrines of the Bible that they represent. Use them in your memorization process to add them to your portfolio of what you know about the Bible, and keep building on that and using those simple little formulas that will lead you to the great truths of the Word of God.

Well, we'll hold up there, preschool workers.