

The last time you find something in the Bible is usually key and builds a consistency through the Scriptures. There is also the doctrine of the last thing that God says in the Bible, the last mention. That is pretty powerful as you go through and study it.

I showed you in Revelation that the last thing Jesus did before He ever closed out the book, He had to give one more invitation for man to get saved. Then He closes the book with a prayer for the Lord to come. Where Revelation was an invitation for man to be saved, in the book of John, as we came through the life of Peter and his struggles and his losing his discipleship, we saw that God gave one more invitation before He closed that book for us as His people to find ourselves where Peter is, to get back to the Lord.

We have seen it time and time again how the stories of men's lives in the Bible, and the circumstances that they face, show us the great doctrines of the Bible. Through their lives, we see and understand the great principles of the Word of God that we can apply to us.

Most important, as I said last week, you guard and keep those five key necessary areas that will keep you close to God and certainly in the work of God. You never want to lose your perspective because when you do, then you are going to lose your purpose. When you lose your purpose, it is only a matter of time that you lose your passion. When you lose those three things, then you lose your ability to perceive things; you lose your perception. Finally, you lose your position, like Peter. He was no longer Christ's disciple.

When these things go, and they always kind of go in the order that I gave them, from me watching it happen in people's lives and in my own life over the years, then you see nothing that God is doing.

## I. The Christian Life: A Box of Crayons

I look at the Christian life for a believer. I relate back to my grade school days, and maybe some of you older folks knew kids—you do not do this anymore—but back in the day, we used to do a lot of coloring in school. The thing that you really wanted, if you were really top-notch, was one of those big boxes of Crayolas that had 88 colors in them.

Now, I have news for you. There are only seven natural colors in the spectrum that God created. So, to come up with 88, you have to put some overtime in. But it was a big box like that, and you opened it up, and there was every color in a rainbow in there. Even if you were really into it, it had a crayon sharpener built into the back of it. How many remember those days? My goodness.

I always looked at the Christian life just like that. When we were on fire for God, and we got God's perception and the passion and the purpose, life is like that 88-box of crayons. Every color in the spectrum is there for you to enjoy and to have in life. But in that box of crayons, I have met a lot of Christians that just pull out one color: it is black. Every picture they see in life, they color with a black crayon. They lose the spectrum of the 88 beautiful pictures that God wants to paint in our lives together.

I remember back in my days of that, that always made an impression on me. As I grew in the Lord, I looked back on that, and I thought to myself, that is what God wants my life to be: a box of 88 colors, that everything in life gets painted in a beautiful way.

As I said, God's plan, God's purpose for every one of us is He saved us, then He wants to grow us, and then of course He wants to use us. The devil's plan, as we talked last week, is to stop God in our lives from ever either being used of God, or if we lose our discipleship like Peter, to ever be used again.

We talked about how we know from what we believe in the Bible, we know we can never lose our salvation. We know that. We understand the great doctrine of standing in state. We understand that. But there are five things you can lose without ever losing your salvation that will make you just as miserable as any unsaved man or woman that ever walked this planet. It is those five things that I gave you last week, and our guarding against that.

In our lifetime, we too will deal with the issues in our own personal lives that Peter had. Nobody is going to be immune to it. So I told you last week, you cannot be really critical and be mean to people who struggle like that, because it is something we all go through. They are good people for the most part. They are not bad people who are just out there in the world. No, they are really good people just like you are. But we struggle with things in time. Those things will creep out of the box and start to steal those five things from us. In time, we lose our perspective, our purpose, our passion, and then our position.

We talk a lot about the warfare of the believer, Ephesians chapter 6, the whole armor of God. Yet I want to tell you that keeping those five things will be the very battle that we all have to face every day of our lives.

John told us in Revelation 3:11:

*Revelation 3:11*

*Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.*

There are people out there, circumstances out there, things out there that will take that crown from you. He said in 2 John 1:8:

*2 John 1:8*

*Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.*

I could tell you as sure as I am standing here, that would be my prayer for every one of you and everybody that is saved. But you will understand, and I understand, that is not going to happen. There will be people who do not get a full reward.

Then he said in Revelation 16:15:

*Revelation 16:15*

*Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.*

Of course, that is a reference to 1 Corinthians chapter 3, 2 Corinthians chapter 5, the judgment seat of Christ. Last week's message was a great key to our staying in the fight, everything you need to get back where you once were. I told it last week, it is like the reset button in our Christian lives. It was a step-by-step process of how when you fall into the situation like Peter, that you lose those five things. All you have now is the one color in your crayon box that is covering everything with that color. It is the way back.

## II. The Path to Understanding God's Word

Today we are going to finish out the book of John. John has been a special book to me because in John is, and we are going to talk about it today, one of the verses that absolutely changed my life after I was saved. John has been a great book to study. I have enjoyed it immensely putting it together every week. There are so many things I saw that I had never seen before, just as we were spending time together in it.

You should be able to see by now how the Gospel of John is different from the other three Gospels. Also, you should have a better understanding and hopefully an appreciation of John's five wisdom books that are found in the New Testament and how they will apply to us in the church age. You should be able to see how the whole Bible is built around these wisdom books. There are five in the Old Testament. They are given primarily to the nation of Israel, but they apply to us indirectly. Then there are five in the New Testament that are directly given to us.

In the next couple of weeks, I would like to take some time and show you how those five in the Old Testament dovetail into the five in the New Testament and how they really work for you to make it all come alive for you. But we cannot do that today. These 10 books will actually form the core of the Bible. We will see more of this when we get into the book of Psalms. As I said, I would like to take some time and lay that out before we actually get into the book of Psalms. There are several weeks I want to take and do some specialized things that I want to do.

Today, in closing out John, I want to show you what for me was the greatest two verses that God ever gave me as we are finishing out the book of John. This is why John is so special to me. Honestly, I do not know any other way to lay out the importance of these two verses, especially the one in John, than to show you how they impacted my life. Without a doubt, these two are the greatest two verses in the Bible that God ever gave me. I do not like to speak for you, but I would say in a general sense that would probably be true for you.

My life was really no different than yours. I know sometimes you think because I am a pastor that I live on a plane that is higher than yours. That is not true. My staff struggle just like you have struggles. I have issues just like you. Getting saved and working up to the place where I could be able to be used of God is just like for you it is for you. There was no fast track for me. There was no fast track for you. I came the same way you are going to have to come, and you are going to come the same way that I had to come.

When I got right with the Lord, when I had my John 21:14-21 experience, I was just 20 or 21 years old. That was around 53 years ago, over half a century. When God got me right, it was at a time when there were still good, solid men that still held and believed the Bible. I have told you the story about this over the years, the old guard. You know now how I have talked about that.

With what I saw and heard around me, when I watched these guys, when I heard them, once I really got what I needed to be, I saw where I needed to go. I wanted to get the Bible down as fast as I could. In my life, at that point in time, there was nothing else that mattered. But I was smart enough to be patient. I was smart enough to recognize that at that point, I needed the men that God had put around me, that were in the church with me, that were in ministry that I could look at as models and see men that were doing the work and then develop an understanding of it other than just getting into it. I got into the Bible, but I needed that balance of seeing it.

Many times, young Christians will not do that. They will just get saved or get right with God, jump into the book, and they will ignore around them at their church the tremendous opportunities to learn from people who were once where you are at but are growing up through the levels and can really be of a benefit in your understanding. I realized that God wanted to give me His Word, but at that time of my life, He used the men as role models for me to see the Word of God in there.

I always looked at myself like that Ethiopian eunuch back there in Acts 8 with Philip. He is reading the Bible, and Philip says, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" And the Ethiopian eunuch says back, "How can I, except some man should guide me?" I wanted a book worse than anything else on this planet, but I needed someone to guide me. I was susceptible, as all young Christians are, to getting caught into things that will really destroy your life and take you away from God.

It was in 1971 or 72 on a Sunday night that I first heard Dr. Ruckman preach. Without a doubt, the greatest mind in the 20th century on the English Bible, or really any Bible, and I never forgot that message. It still burns in my heart even so many years later, because that was my start in seeing the majesty of that book that would carry me through the next 50 years of my life. That night, he preached the message, "The Gospel According to Exodus."

I sat there mesmerized. I had never seen a man take a passage of Scripture, Exodus 12, the Passover Lamb, and lay out the parallels between a book in the Old Testament that matched up in every way to the death of Christ, the Passover Lamb in the New Testament. I just sat there. I could not believe it. Bubba and Donny sang five rows back last week. I listened to that song. That was me that night. I was not sitting five rows back, but I listened to what he said. I listened to how he took that Old Testament passage and just made it come alive.

There was a place there, and I just could not believe it. One of those places in there, it talked about the fact that God was telling Israel to take a lamb. Then the next verse, he says, "the lamb that you take." Then the next verse, he says, "your lamb shall be out of the flock, out of the blemish." How many times? Pete got up there and he said, "You see, a lamb, the lamb, your lamb." He says, "The first thing you need, folks, is a lamb. But not any lamb will do. You need

the lamb. But you can know all about the lamb. You have to make it your lamb." I am thinking to myself, "Whoa!" Every verse was just like that.

I will tell you, I sat there that night. He got down about putting the blood on the door. Why did they put the, why did they just not put one blood all over the place? Why did they put blood on this side and blood on that side and blood on the top? He said, "There were three crosses, three people crucified that day. One thief on this side, one thief on this side, and He is higher, He is deity. He was at the top." I am thinking, "You have got to be kidding me." Everything that he said, he laid that out that night, was the start of a 50-plus year love affair with the Word of God.

I wanted that book more than anything in life. I saw what it was. I saw that I knew nothing. That night I walked away, and I remember it like it was yesterday. I went home and I thought to myself, "What do I have to do to learn the Bible? That I too can see it like it was laid out to me tonight."

God, over the next couple of months or a year or so as I was putting things together, God, through different sermons with different preachers, gave me the answer to that. I use these illustrations with you sometimes over again, and I never tell you where they come from because I hope you think that they are original with me, but they are not.

I remember hearing a sermon one time, and a guy was preaching. I had just heard that message, and it probably was a month, two months later. Another guy came in, and he was preaching. He says, "You folks really want to learn the Bible?" I am sitting there saying, "Yeah, I do." He says, "You know what? If you want to learn the Bible, let me tell you a story how it goes."

He says, "Once upon a time, there was this kid who lived in his village over in India someplace. In his village was the wisest man that ever lived. He was a guru, and he had all the secrets of life, all the secrets of the universe. This young man wanted to be just like him. So one day he goes down to his home, knocks on the door, and the old man opens the door and he says, 'I have wondered at you for all the things and the wisdom you have, and I want to learn the secrets that you have. I want to be just like you, and I want to be your, I want to be the one that you teach, and I want to learn. I want to get every secret that you have because I want to be a guru too, or also.' He said, 'And I want to learn those things.'"

"The old man just said, 'Okay, I will give you the key to the great mysteries of learning everything. Meet me down by the river at three o'clock this afternoon.' The kid walked away ecstatic. He said, 'Oh, it is going to be some kind of big ceremony. This is going to be great. I am going to get my guru card. I am going to be a guru in training.'"

"So he met him down there at three o'clock, and the old guru stepped out into the water, called the young man out, called him out a little farther, got the guy about up to here, got the guy about up to here, and the kid is looking around and saying, 'Well, what the crowd is and when it was just going to start.' About the time he was going to ask a question and just got his mouth open, the old man took his hands and put them on his head and shoved him under the water and just held him there. That kid was screaming, choking, drinking water. He was going to drown. Just about the time that he could not take it anymore, the old man let him come up to the surface. He

is gasping for air, he is choking, throwing up water. The old man drags him by the neck to the beach and lays him on the thing and stands there before him."

"The young kid looks up and says, 'What kind of fool are you? I came to you, I wanted to get the wisdom. What in the world is this all about? This is the stupidest thing. Is this how you train people?' The old man never said a word. When he was done, the old man looked at him and he says, 'You want knowledge? You want to learn? Well, I will tell you, young man, when you want the truth and you want to learn, as much as you wanted air when you were under that water, that is when you will learn it.'"

The old guy looked out to the congregation and says, "You want to learn the Bible? You want to learn the truth of God's Word when you want it like you want your next breath of air? That is when you will get it." Wow.

I heard another guy preach a message, and he says, "You want to learn the Bible? You think you have to study the Bible to learn it, don't you? Some of you think you have to read the Bible to learn it, don't you? That is true, not true. Oh, you have got to study it and you have got to read it. But the key to learning your Bible is not reading it nor studying it. The key to learning your Bible is loving it." I am getting it. God put some key sermons in my life.

I heard another sermon when the guy said, "For the Word of God to make an investment in your life, you first have to make the investment of your life in the Word of God." I read stories. I read books about the great men of God that lived in the 16th century, in the late 17th and 18th century. I looked how these men burned their life out for God. I looked at men like William Carey, David Livingstone, Adoniram Judson, David Brainerd, John Paton, Robert Moffat. I looked at their lives, and they are men who literally burned their lives out for God.

I asked myself, "What did it take for them to do that? What was the driving motivation that would take a man to Africa for 51 years to endure the diseases, the cannibals, the wild animals, to bury a wife or two or three children and stay with it and not quit and not say, 'Oh, I am burned out. I cannot do this.' The only burnout that they had was they stayed with it to the very end."

I did not understand that. In those early years, as I heard that message, God began to put things in perspective for me. I saw men like that. I saw men in my own world who gave up everything. The work of God and the Word of God was everything in their life. I am a young guy, and I want that. I want that more than anything else. As stupid as I was, if God would have told me to go to Africa and burn my life out, I would have done it. It would have been a foolish thing because I was not ready. But I wanted it. I wanted it so bad.

So off I went, deep into the pool. I bought my first books. This is why I like giving books away to people who come for the first time, because I know what God will do if there is a person out there today and you really have a desire. I know if I just open the door for God to give you the right book, I know what it can do in your life because I know what it did in my life.

I went into that little dinky bookstore we had back then in that church, nothing like the one we have. I bought my first two commentaries, both by Dr. Ruckman. One on Genesis and one on the book of Revelation. He only had about four or five books back then. But I devoured them. I went

to work during the day and worked a full eight-hour, nine-hour shift, came home, got into the gym. Got into those books and went a couple of hours, got off the church or whatever I was doing. Then came back and burned them for a couple of more hours.

Then the next books I got were \*The Mark of the Beast\*. Wow. Then the next book I got into was \*The Kingdom of God and The Kingdom of Heaven\*. No other book in the world, as far as my opinion is, outside the Bible, is better than that book. I am unlocking the Scripture. It took me about 15 times to get through it. Back then I had to dig it out. I had to do it the hard way. I did not have all that you have here today. Even back then I could not see it. I had no idea. My vision was very limited into the Bible. But I did not know back then that God, even at that early stage, was building me so I could give you what God has given me.

I had no idea of Kansas City. I had no idea of God's purpose or God's plan in my life. But I most definitely wanted God's perspective and wanted God's understanding in that book. I wanted to see everything from God's standpoint as best I could. At that time, all I could see was getting the book down. I got into ministry so I could balance everything out with what I was learning, with what I needed to apply. I hung out with the ones that were doing it. They took me under their wing, like you do with people.

Back then, we too had a Thursday night Bible study, much like ours. It was any question you want to ask about the Bible. I will tell you that in four or five years, I never missed a night. But I also never asked a question. I figured it out very quickly that if I wanted to learn the Bible, this was another avenue. I realized that other people were asking questions. My goal was to get the question down and the answer down. Then during that week, get it into my Bible that if the next week somebody asked the same question, I could answer it. That way I would get two or three or four things a week. Add that into a month, into a year. That is like freebies in learning your Bible, and then the Holy Spirit of God putting it all together.

When I got to Kansas City around 1976 and 77, right before I got here, I found a guy down in Xenia, Ohio, by the name of Greg Estep. He was the pastor of Charity Baptist Church. He had a little bookstore down there, and he had every book of the Bible on cassette tape that Dr. Ruckman had done back in the 60s and the 70s when he had his Bible Institute. He was selling them. I went down and bought the whole set. I started for the next 15 years what became a journey for me in laying out the books of the Bible. Book by book, from Genesis to Revelation.

I remember books like Isaiah were 90, 90-minute tapes. It left no stone unturned. Ezekiel, 50-60 tapes. Jeremiah, it was an endless, endless breakdown. It was just what I needed. I would sit there four or five hours a day, have my job, have my family, but that was the time that I was not going to not get it. Book by book, the key chapters, the key verses, the natural divisions.

Maybe during that time or after that time, I do not remember exactly, I spent another 10, 11 years laying out and connecting all history, church history, world history. A man said through a message one time, "The God of the Bible is the God of history." I believed that. I found eight tapes on Hebrew history. I still have them. I would never dare play them because they are 50-some years old. But they were the... I must have went through those 20 times. Breaking down every book of the Bible, historically, doctrinally, inspirationally, getting the Kingdom of God and

the Kingdom of Heaven worked out. Matthew, Acts, and Hebrews. I worked out the book of Romans. Took me six times to get through it.

### III. The Power of Two Verses: Luke 24:45 and John 21:25

When I hit a point in my spiritual growth that I really wanted that book, God dropped the bomb. That bomb was more powerful than anything that was dropped on Hiroshima or Nagasaki. It made those A-bombs look like firecrackers on the 4th of July. Because at that point, God began to give me the next two verses that I needed. Today I can tell you everything I have ever learned about the Bible, no matter how little that may be. It all took a new level when God gave me these two verses.

It came out of the blue. One time I was just coming through the book of Luke, and I got to Luke 24:45. It is one of those things where it is like the Holy Spirit of God just... You know how you get a yellow China marker and you mark the verses in yellow? Well, it was like God just marked that for me to see it.

*Luke 24:45*

*Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures.*

At that point, I now understood and grasped that if I was ever going to get the book down, He was going to have to open my understanding. It was no longer about my ability to read or my IQ, it was about my relationship with Him. One of the great words in all of the Bible, understanding, which leads to perception and perspective.

A moment, a minute, immediately I remembered when that verse, when it says "He opened their understanding," I thought of David and the material that I had read in David's life. Tom Malone wrote a book called \*The Psalms\*. I must have got it back in around 1973. Great book. I read Arthur Pink's book on the life of David. Incredible book. I found a book one time that simply said \*David, Shepherd to King\*. It showed how David started out as a shepherd, the issues that he had. But as the Bible says, he wound up being a man after God's own heart in Acts 13:22.

*Acts 13:22*

*And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.*

I saw how that his whole life was built around the Word of God, and I knew there was the answer for me. I knew by then that Psalms was the heart of God, and I knew that Psalms 119 was the key of David that is found in Revelation 3:7. I already knew that. I just never connected it all together.

When I got that verse in Luke 24:45, I immediately went to Psalms 119. You know what I found? I found 176 verses. 176 verses of a man in each verse asking God to give him His Word. Along with that, some of the verses will go along that, "Lord, if you give me your Word, this is what I

will do for you." So I built my own prayer out of those 176 verses, based on Luke 24:45. Changed my life.

I asked God to do the same for me that He had did for David. I told Him that to the best of my ability that I would burn my life out for Him if He just gave me the understanding of His Word. That everything else would become secondary. That all I would care about would be the Word of God or the people God gave me.

Back in 1977, there was a group called The Doors who wrote a famous song, "Come on, Baby, Light My Fire." I would get alone in a room with God, and I would say, "Oh, Lord, light my fire." I would set an empty chair up across from where I was, and I had that prayer still marked in my Bible. I would read that prayer to God, asking Him to give me His Word based on Luke chapter 24, and then tell Him what I would do for Him if He gave it to me.

176 verses in Psalms 119. Did you ever see what the last verse says?

*Psalms 119:176*

*I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.*

That is the road back. That is the road Peter had to use to get back. It is the road I needed to get back, and it is the road that you need to get back. We have all gone astray like lost sheep. The key is not forgetting where God found you and what He gave you.

You look at those 176 verses in Psalms 119, I will tell you right now, there is enough mathematical possibilities in those 176 that everybody on planet earth that ever lived down through history could carve out their own prayer out of it, you included.

God gave me places like Psalms 119:97-104:

*Psalms 119:97-104*

*O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.*

*Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me.*

*I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation.*

*I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.*

*I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.*

*I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me.*

*How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!*

*Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.*

Understanding is the key. That verse needs to be the attitude that we have toward that book. Without it, you are wasting your time. Get your black crayon out and color life.

Then He gave me Psalms 119:105-112. These are both part of my prayer. I was real spiritual. I knew seven was the number of God, so I got 14 petitions of prayer, two times seven.

*Psalms 119:105-112*

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

*I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.*

*I am afflicted very much: quicken me, O LORD, according unto thy word.*

*Accept, I beseech thee, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O LORD, and teach me thy judgments.*

*My soul is continually in my hand: yet I do not forget thy law.*

*The wicked have laid a snare for me: yet I erred not from thy precepts.*

*Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart.*

*I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes always, even unto the end.*

You know what he is saying in verse 109? He is saying, "I have the control to let my body go anywhere I want it to go, but I am not going to let it do that because I am not going to forget your law." Then 110, "The wicked have laid a snare for me," you bet they will. Every day, every hour of the day, 24/7. "Yet I erred not from thy precepts. Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage forever, for they are the rejoicing of my heart." There it is. What is the rejoicing of our heart this morning? "I have inclined my heart to perform thy statutes always, even unto the end," burning your life out for the Lord Jesus Christ. I found all through here what I will do for Him, if He would open my understanding and give me His Word.

As I developed my understanding of the Word of God, slowly making a lot of dumb mistakes, God gave me my second verse. With this one, I never looked at the Word of God ever again the same way. When I got into ministry, I never looked at my ministry the same way. When I had a family, I never looked at my family ever again the same way. As I grew, God in His timing gave me two verses that set me on a course. That was the greatest journey of my life.

I am telling you, the greatest days in a man's life will be simply two. It will be the day of your salvation, and it will be the day that he really sees the Word of God for what it truly is in his life. Now nothing ever will absolutely stop him.

I heard a sermon one time talking about burning your life out. I had a guy one time was preaching, and he says he was preaching to a bunch of preachers, and Christians were there too. He says, "Every child of God and every preacher here today, you ought to get so into that book that you are willing to just burn your life out for God. You know why? Because everybody likes coming to a fire. Everybody likes chasing fire trucks." He says, "If a man or a woman will get on fire for God, everybody in town will come watching burn."

Understanding these two days will change a man's life forever. Through the good times and through the bad times, these two days with these two verses will sustain him and get him through. Like David, David's life is one of the most tumultuous lives that you will study in the

Bible. He has problems. He has issues. But the key of David was the love he had for the Word of God that got him through. At the end, when it was all said and done, the Law of Last Mention, God said he was a man after His own heart.

God gave him one of the most amazing studies that you will ever take in the Bible. It is called the sure mercies of David. I know when we do a Bible study on Thursday night and we talk about sure mercies of David, I will keep it short and sweet. I will tell you, it is a picture of your eternal security. That is true. But a little deeper study will show you that the sure mercies of David went beyond eternal security. That sure mercies of David was given to his children. All based on the Word of God. Through the good times and the bad times. It will keep a man. It will preserve a man. Even when he screws up. Even when he, like Peter, falls out as long as he gets back. It will keep his children close to him. Develop them to be part of his life and ministry. It will build his grandchildren generation after generation. Through the book and the promises and your understanding of what it will build. And your generations to come. Into a solid ministry team together. The legacy. Of a family generation after generation. Serving God. Fulfilling Psalms 127:3-5.

#### IV. The Spiritual Inheritance and Legacy

I get it. I deal with people all the time that have problems with their kids. They have lost their kids. I get it. I understand that. There is no criticism to it because they have all made mistakes. But I am telling you this. There is a way back from that. If you have lost your kids, there are five things you have to do to get them back.

I say to you young couples. Your wife left. Is she having that baby now? I say to you young couples that have young kids. You are raising and growing. Training up. I will do anything to help you. I love your kids. I want to be there for you and help them. Because I know the struggle. Some of you are single parents. I get it. Some of you know your situation looks hopeless. It is never hopeless. It is only hopeless when you do it your way. Never hopeless when you do it God's way.

Five things. Psalms 127:3-5 says:

*Psalms 127:3-5*

*Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.*

*As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.*

*Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.*

What an incredible verse for every parent. What an incredible verse. That your children and your children's children. Therefore, God's heritage, my dear friend. They are not for yours. Therefore, His reward.

Moms and dads, three little things you want to remember out of here.

1. Lo, children. They are God's heritage. They are not yours. They are His reward. Within His heritage, not yours.
2. The second thing, verse four, arrows. "As arrows are in the hand of mighty men; so are children of the youth." We launch our kids in the directions that they go in life. They are going to hit whatever target you aim them at. It will not be their teacher's fault. It will not be their friend's fault. It will not be anybody's fault but ours. Yet there is always something you can do. But it does not necessarily start with fixing the kids, though they need fixing. It starts with fixing you. That is where it always starts.
3. Happy is the man. That is the third word. Children, arrows, happy. "Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them. They shall not be ashamed." At the end of your life, generation after generation. You young couples right now making the right choices, doing the right things. Putting the right things in your kids' lives. Making sure you do it the right way, the biblical way. Using the things. Getting the help that you need. Quit getting bad advice. Your quiver is full.

You know what makes a man happy if he is a Christian? When he looks at his children, his grandchildren, and they are all serving God and doing what is right. Your quiver is full. That is the greatest happiness on this planet. I am telling you. If you are not in that situation today and you want to be, do not get upset about it. Do not get mad about it. Just start doing what is right.

Rose, where are you at? This week you start ordering 10 boxes of 88 color crayons. That is what you need to do. You need to dump that black crayon you are painting anything with. You need to start getting back to your purpose, your perspective, and your passion, where God found you.

At that point in my life, I grasped the great truth about the Bible that I have ever seen. That when it comes to the Bible, I did not get everything that God said and did.

*John 21:25*

*And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.  
Amen.*

I realized I did not get it all. I realized that there were many other things that He said and did. I began to see early on all these other books that tried to deal with that. I read a book one time about the lost books of the Bible. The books that did not get in your book that should have. You realize as I speak to you this morning, you have four Gospels in your Bible: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. But in the world, there are over 80 that they say should be in there. The book of Enoch, the book of Jasher, the book of the Apocrypha, the Dead Sea Scrolls. You did not get everything that He said and did, but what He gave you is what He wanted you to have.

I get over to James 4:5, it says, "Do you think that the Scriptures saith in vain? The Spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?" Really? That verse is not in any Bible. He says Scripture, but it is not in your Bible anywhere or any Bible anywhere.

He said in Acts 20:35, "I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give

than to receive." Find it in your Bible. I will give you a million dollars. You say, "Oh, come on, Bob, you do not have that money." I will get it together for you. Find the verse. It is not in there.

Matthew 27:9, "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value." Nowhere in your Bible at all in Jeremiah.

Hebrews 12:21, "And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake." It was so terrible, he could not even put it in because it is not in your Bible.

How about Jude 1:14? "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints." That message is nowhere, anywhere in your Bible. You know why? God did not put it in.

When God opened my understanding to see Luke 24 and then to see this verse, and then He showed me I did not get it all. The dynamics of the Word of God completely changed in my viewpoint of life. I already believed from day one, I believed that the Bible is a supernatural book and the King James Bible was the only true Word of God. But now I saw how that out of everything He did and said, that the Bible told me the world itself could not hold it all. That meant to me that He handpicked for me exactly what He wanted me to have.

At that point in my life, the Bible became my personal book. I am sorry if it is not that way for you. Maybe someday it will be. But I am going to tell you right now, that day when I saw that out of everything He did, He handpicked what He wanted me to have. The Bible became a personal book to me, and right there is the key to everything in our lives.

I will tell you right now, and I do not presume to speak for you. I do not judge you for anything you do. You make your decisions in life just like I make mine. But I am telling you, until that book becomes personal to us, and you understand what I am saying about Him opening up your understanding and you getting to that point and then realizing how special it is. The Bible would just be the Bible to you. Oh, it will be God's Word. There will be nothing personal about it. You have a King James Bible, so what? There will be no real investment past your salvation, because we get saved and that is where our investment starts and usually ends.

God's people over the years, I have noticed, come in two flavors or two packages. There are some who will know some things about the Bible, and there are some who will really know the Bible. It all comes down to you looking at that book as your own personal investment that you make an investment in.

I cannot tell you how those two verses changed my life, and I had no other way to be able to preach that last verse in John without doing it the way I am doing it. Otherwise, it had just been a theological discourse. No longer could I just read the Bible. Believe me. I tried in my early years a lot of things that were stupid things to try to learn the Bible.

I heard a guy one time tell me that if you put the Bible, somebody reading the Bible on a cassette and play it while you go to sleep, that in the morning you will wake up and memorize everything

that he said all night. That does not work. Somebody said, "Count the cost." I did. \$20 in batteries the first week. I gave that up, but I wanted it. I wanted it to work. I did.

Somebody said you had to really read it, and so I took a speed reading course. I got to the place where I could probably read 500 or 600 words a minute. Went after I read John, no more. I read the Bible through every 30 days, 50 chapters a day to do that. Did it for three years, no more. I heard another sermon where the guy said, "It is not how many times you go through the Word of God, but how many times the Word of God goes through you?"

I came down to the end of the John. It changed everything. It was one of the many course corrections in my life that God had to make. Let me just say this to you. Do not ever resist course changes that God wants to do in your life. Our life is a journey, and on any journey you have detours you have to take, and let God change course for you. Correct the course. It is okay as long as it is truly of Him.

Now with the understanding I had on these two verses, I began to pay attention to every chapter. No more fast reading. From that point on, I barely got through the Bible once a year. I paid attention to every verse. This is where I discovered the key words that I have given you. This is where I learned about paragraph marks like I have given you. This is where you find the words that will define books and things in the chapters like I have given to you.

Now those three aspects of the Bible came to life, just like they did the night Pete did it back there in Exodus 12. The historical, the doctrinal, and the inspirational. Now I began to see the key verses in each book. I began to see how Christ was laid out and portrayed in each book. I now saw the definitive chapters and the definitive verses. I now saw the natural outlines of each book. I saw now the types, the character studies, the life of Christ. Never in all my life outside of salvation have any two verses changed my life when it came to understanding the Scriptures. That is why as I close this book out to you today, you have no idea what that verse means to me.

## V. The Church as a Family and Ministry Team

In time in Kansas City, and I continued to grow, I saw how it impacted my own ministry to people. You. How it gave me understanding of how to deal with people, how to look at people. Because then I realized that not only did God handpick the things in the Bible for us that makes the Bible so special, but in God's great plan, He picked us to be together. I get it. I understand. Some make it and some do not. I get that. I totally understand that. But it is no accident that God put us together. God will pull like-minded people about the Word of God and then He will put them together because iron sharpeneth iron. They love and want to learn the book.

It taught me how special we are to each other. This is why I just want to give everything I can to you. I do not want you to have to go through. I look at the things that I had to go through, the hard way to learn the hard things. I look at that as the fact that God allowed me to do that so I can make it easier for you. Sometimes God's people do not understand that. It is time to get their nose bent out of joint about that. But at the end of the day, my job is to try to make your walk with God and you getting the Bible quicker, cleaner, faster than it took me to do it. It taught me how special we really are to each other. We are in every aspect of ministry, truly a family.

It taught me to look at each one of you to see how special you really are, the potential you have. Like any parent, it frustrates a parent when they see a child that has great potential but the child refuses to reach that potential. As a pastor, I feel the same way. I look at some of you who have incredible potential. For their life, I do not understand why you just will not turn the corner. I do because I have given you the reason.

How we all should fit together to do God's purpose as individuals and as a ministry team. Paul told us about this very thing in Ephesians 4:15-16:

*Ephesians 4:15-16*

*But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:*

*From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*

That is nothing more than us working together, your strengths, helping my weaknesses, my strengths, helping your weaknesses. This is what we try to do with camp. This is what we try to do on Thursday night. This is what we are going to do tonight and on Memorial Day. I watch you guys out there on Thursday night and sometimes I just walk through and watch what you do. Everybody knows what they are supposed to do. Everybody has got a job and nobody had to tell you to do it. You are out there. Everything is a success because of you, because you have grasped the vision. You may not have it all yet, but it is coming. It is coming. If somebody does not steal it from you.

The beauty of any church should be we all have strengths and we all have weaknesses. When God handpicked us and put us together, it will be the ability to help each other. Iron sharpeneth iron. I tell couples when they come in for marital counseling and they are having issues, and this is true in any church. I always tell couples, "You guys need to help each other. He has strengths and weaknesses. You have strengths and weaknesses."

I tell them the only way that you are going to fix your problems is you are not going to fix him and he is not going to fix you because neither one of you want to hear that. So I am here to tell you that if you want to make this marriage work, ma'am, you have to fix what is wrong with you and forget him, and you have to fix what is wrong with you and try to quit fixing her. When you do that, then this is what you do.

You are up on a mountain. It was a glorious vacation. You climbed to what, eight or nine thousand feet, rough trails over some rocks. Your wife fell off a little ledge and broke her right leg. Immediately you try to help her. You run over to her and you trip and you fall and you break your left leg. Now you have got two choices. Your choice to leave her and go on home is now past. Now you have got two choices. You stay on the mountain and you both die or you will find a way off the mountain. So what do you do?

How does a church survive today? How does a church survive when there are all kinds of things that try to stop it? Sometimes within the church. How does a church survive today? How do we get through everything that we are going to have to face and do the ministry until He comes?

I always tell the couple, "Here is what you do. You broke your left leg. He broke his right leg. So you put those two legs together and you put a splint around them that those two are now connected together. Then you still have a good leg here and a good leg here. You put your arm around each other, hold on to each other, and you walk down the mountain together, bonded at the hip to get the job done." That is how you do it. Your strengths, my weaknesses, my strengths, your weaknesses, and when God puts them together, there are things that you guys do that I could never do. You have no idea how much I call on people to do things for me that I have no idea.

Yet how the devil will work 24/7 to take from you all that makes you so special. God will use you to build His church. The devil will use you to destroy God's church. You either be special and hand-picked to God, or the devil will make you special and hand-pick you to do what he wants you to do.

## VI. Leaving a Spiritual Inheritance

Through it all, I really began to understand what the Bible meant about my inheritance, my inheritance from God. My personal inheritance from God, like Romans 8:17 says, that my inheritance is being a joint heir and millennial.

*Romans 8:17*

*And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*

Also, I now understood, in a broader way, my leaving behind an inheritance spiritually to my family. People will get a will, and after they are dead, they will have a reading of the will, and they will divide up all the wealth, and it will go divided up to the kids, many times special people. Several times over the years, I have gotten a call from some attorney that said, "You are being put into a will, your church is being put into a will, that somebody wants to leave you something." They never tell you who it is. I do not care to ever ask, but people do those things.

At the end of your life, you have a bank account, you have a 401k, insurance policies, that is all good. You want that into the will, and it gets divided up to everybody that you want it to go to. They will sell your house, they will sell your car, and they will divide up all your assets. But what a tragedy that within our own family, not to leave your spiritual inheritance to them of all that God has given you. Your spiritual will, what you are going to leave them with spiritually.

Having said that, that does not mean your kids have to be doing right. It just means you have to be doing right. You see, sometimes the validity of a will does not come into after you are gone. Our job is to make sure we leave one. It is such a tragedy with all that we have, all that God gives us, that when it comes to our spirits and our heritage, our kids were bankrupt. Yet in a will, you will include special people you want to leave something to after you are gone, because you

love them. For me, spiritually, that will be you, after my family, my church, leaving you an inheritance of what God has given me. The wealth of what I have learned. I want to leave behind.

Somebody says, "You cannot take it with you." I get that, and you cannot, but your spiritual will and testament, your inheritance that you leave behind. I get it. I am weird in a lot of ways. I get criticized sometimes for putting out too much Bible. People do not like the fact that I preach as long as I do on Sunday, or we take Thursday night and go through deep things and have Bible institute, another thing you have got to come to. There have been people all down through my ministry that did not care about that and did not like that. I have always thought that was, if I may be frank, really stupid.

Let me show you how stupid it is. Next Sunday morning, next Thursday night, or Bible institute, if I told you all to show up and I was going to pass out \$100 bills to everybody, how many people do you think would show up? See? This place would be packed, and I would just walk down the aisle and give everybody \$100. Then I would say, "Let us pray and open it up," and I will give everybody another \$100. You would be back Thursday night if you knew you were going to get another \$100. You see, it is okay if you are going to get \$100, but you come to get the gold of the Bible, the unsearchable riches, the gold bullion that is worth billions of dollars, and it is too much.

I understand also what old Bob Jr. said, "The more you are around people, the better you like dogs." After I am gone, all I want is for you to have the ability to have a better life. I want you to be better after meeting me and being part of my life and part of my ministry than you were before we met. I want you to have part of my inheritance.

In most cases, we never get to thank the person for what they leave us. I never got to thank my dad for all the good things that he did for me. He was a good man, Sharon knows. He worked hard, sacrificed for me and my sister. He grew up in a time where he worked two or three jobs, so did my mom, all to make our family good. They made sure that our birthdays were happy, Christmas was happy. They tried to do everything that they could for us, and at the time, I did not see it. Like most of you young kids, I did not appreciate my parents.

I will never forget when he died of cancer, when I had just gotten out of the army. I never had a chance to thank him for all the sacrifices he made, because I knew at that point that I was who I was because of who he was. He was never a giant witness or never a giant Christian, but he was faithful to the end. There was never a person who he would not help. There were churches that would call him to help them with their sound systems. He would always be there, never take a dime for it. I never got to thank him for all that he did for me.

God gave me my father in the Lord, Mel Sabaka, who picked up where my dad left off and filled in the spiritual blanks. Him, I got to thank. It was shortly before he died, he came out to Kansas City, and we were still over at the Apple Center, and I took him down and showed him all around, and he was just a praise, it was just him and I. I put my arm around him, and I began to cry and weep, and I just, because I knew he was not going to be around forever. I thanked him for everything that he did for me. His spiritual inheritance, he left me. It was a model for me to leave something to you.

In most cases, when you have a reading of the will, it is after the person is gone, and there is nothing to be said. That is okay. It really is. That is the way it probably should be, because the reading of the will of our inheritance that we left to those, our family and our loved ones, spiritually speaking, it will be read at the judgment seat of Christ. That is all that really matters. All based in my life on two verses, Luke 24:45, where He opened up my understanding, John 21:25, where He showed me that out of everything that He said and did, He picked it out for me. From our understanding of them and making the Word of God the number one thing in our lives.

My dear friend, with that today, we close the story of the Book of the Gospel of John. My prayer for you is, may the Lord give you His understanding and His sure mercies of David, that at some point in your life you come to understand that, and then give you the key of David. That no one will ever, ever, ever be able to take your crown, take your garment, and you will be assured of a full reward.

Let us pray.

Father, Thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. We do love You. I love these people more than anything in this world outside my own family. They are hand-picked from You to me. Lord, no family is perfect. No family does not have its issues. But the love within that family overrides all their issues and their problems. The purpose of the family, the devotion of the family, the understanding of the family. Help us, Father, to see how special not only we are to each other, but how special we are to You. Help us from this day forward, never to look at the Bible, church, the people that God puts in our lives, ever again, the same way.

I have watched these kids take of their own inheritance and begin to build it into their families. I have watched them build it into the younger Christians here in this church that they take under their wing, just like somebody did me many, many years ago, and like I did them. I watch a bunch of people that love God, love the Book, believe in this church, believe in the ministry, and we work together as a team. Thank You, Father, for the privilege of being a pastor to such fine people. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name for our sake. We ask it. Amen.