

## I. The Crucial Role of the Book of Acts and the History of Higher Education

Last week, we began a study out of the Book of Acts. We have been coming through the Book of Acts in Bible Institute. I have told you how absolutely crucial the Book of Acts is to understanding how the New Testament really goes together. I showed you that everything in the Book of Acts is defined, everything you are going to find going into the future of the church. No stone is left unturned. The Book of Acts will give you the warning signs as we move into the church age, what you want to stay away from, what you want to realize is not going to be good for you. Last week, we came through a number of things, but specifically, I showed you in Acts 19 where you find the first Bible college in the Bible.

We began to look at the history of higher education. I wanted to show you, basically, from going through the history of that, it helps us understand why we are in the mess that we are in today. Most of God's people will never learn the lessons of history. As I have said many, many times, if you have not learned the lessons of history—and the only thing that men ever learn from history is that they never learn anything—then you repeat them over and over again.

I showed you last week how God moves to establish His government and His kingdom all through history. Then I showed you how the devil will move in opposition to that. If you want to make the Bible very simple, and you want to put all history into a very easy application, it is simply this: God moves through history to accomplish His plan, and the devil moves in opposition to stop it. Everything in history is just that simple, once you get it into the biblical context.

I showed you how, when God established His plan for man, He established three basic institutions. He established, first of all, marriage and the family. Then He established civil government. And then, of course, He established the New Testament church. I talked about how you see in the history of higher education that, in time, its only purpose and tool is to destroy all that God wants to do. Of course, this is covered in the book of Ecclesiastes.

Listen, you need to get this fundamental thing down. God's form of government is a theocracy. It is a kingdom and a King, Christ on the throne, and a kingdom that is run in righteousness. The constitution of that kingdom, found in Matthew 5-10, is called the Sermon on the Mount, but in reality, it is the whole Word of God.

The devil's counter to that will be, as I showed you in the book of Ecclesiastes, the philosophy of man, the many devices that are in man's heart. In the book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon goes through 34 of the "allergies"—the philosophies: existentialism, socialism, Nazism, fascism, capitalism, socialism—they are all in there. At the end of it, he tells us that everything man comes up with is vanity. At the end of that book, which we looked at last week, he says:

*Ecclesiastes 12:13*

*Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.*

The devil's counter to God's kingdom will be the devil trying to establish his kingdom through the nations from the Old Testament all the way up. You see it in Daniel when you come to that great chapter in Daniel of the upcoming Gentile nations, when the times of the Gentiles then come in. Last week, it starts with the nations in the Old Testament. It builds itself up to the Greek Empire, which is given the credit for really changing the view of everything in life, and then moves into the Roman Empire in time. The finalization, in about 325 to 400 A.D., all moves into the Roman Catholic Church and then from there goes out into the world.

In every aspect of higher education, it will be an intellectual attack on truth. I showed you last week where higher education no longer educates; now they indoctrinate. It is to take the fallacies of man that are against the Word of God and to grasp the minds of young men and young ladies when they are at their most impressionable, teachable stage of their life.

I also qualified that I am not talking about if you go to medical school to be a doctor, or you go to law school to be a lawyer, or you go someplace that is 100 percent okay. I am talking about bringing in all of the damnable heresy to destroy your mind and your faith in the Word of God, all for the purpose of getting the mind of men to go against God and His Word.

In life, we will either get the mind of Christ or we will get the mind of man. It will either be through the Spirit of God or through the spirit of man. As you go through history, this system of higher education destroys everything, first of all, in Europe where it was developed.

We took time last week to show you the process of how it got into Europe. It comes through after the Dark Ages, and we find it in what is commonly called the Renaissance period. Renaissance means 'rebirth of knowledge.' It was a time when Europe countered the rebirth of the Reformation with a rebirth of knowledge that was based on the great intellectuals of Europe, the German rationalist mind. I gave you a list of them last week. Liberalism, Communism, Fascism, and Nazism came out of that. It was called the Age of Reason or the Age of Enlightenment, but it was nothing more than a ploy to take and destroy the minds of the great Reformation period that God was using.

If sometime you get a chance, I would not pay a lot of money for them, but if you can buy the twelve volumes by Will Durant. Will Durant was an unsaved historian who wrote a chronicle history of human history. It is worth reading. It took me a while to get through it years ago, but there are like twelve volumes of it. He breaks history down into each book; one is on the Renaissance period, one is on Caesar versus Christ. His series is called The History of Civilization. I would not pay more than two dollars for the whole thing, but the bottom line is it is a great insight into what has nothing to do with God. It will show you what is going on over in Europe and then later on in America.

## II. The Decline of Christianity in Europe and America

Today in Europe, churches are monuments; they are museums. You have the big churches that were built back in the 1400s and 1500s. I actually stood at the Wittenberg Church where Martin Luther, at the same door, nailed his ninety-five theses years ago. Every place through Europe, they have these big cathedrals that were built two, three, four, five hundred years ago. But now they are museums. Of course, Europe is completely without God today because of where it all started, because of these intellectual minds that destroyed everything in Europe. Today, Europe is amoral.

Today in America, if you meet somebody who goes to a church someplace and you start to have a conversation, obviously we believe the King James Bible is the Word of God here. Not every church believes that. So you begin to talk, and obviously your curiosity gets the best of you, and you want to know if that church believes and teaches the King James Bible. That is the question you usually ask. You will say, "Hey, your church, yeah, you have a good church over there. What do you use for the Bible? Do you believe the King James Bible is the Word of God?" You will either get a yes or no.

In Europe, it is totally different. In Europe, when you talk about a person who goes to one of these churches, you want to ask if your pastor is an atheist or if he is a believer in God. Because in Europe, they have absolutely no problem with a church having a pastor who is an atheist, who does not believe in God whatsoever. The sermons that he preaches are about being a tree hugger, saving the planet, saving gay sperm whales. He is in the whole mindset of the intellectual stuff that goes on that has nothing to do with God. I am telling you, it is an incredible concept. God has completely gone from Europe. Europe today, as a mission field, would probably be the hardest mission field because it is a continent that has completely rejected everything that God is. It has been praised by intellectualism, humanism, social justice issues, and climate change. Those are the issues now that they have made spiritual issues.

In time, as I showed you last week, it comes over to America in the late 1700s and into the 1800s, and certainly well entrenched by the 1900s. Through the Roman Catholic Church and through the Jesuit movement, which we have talked about before, and the Oxford movement, it infiltrates every university and college in America.

So today we ask, "Does your church believe the Bible as the Word of God, and does your pastor teach the King James Bible as the Word of God?" But soon it will be just like it is in Europe. This thing is not getting any better. The question that you will ask people in the near future will be, "Does your pastor or church even believe in God anymore?" Whatever is in Europe comes over to America, and it is all headed that way today. We refuse to learn the lessons of history. We refuse to look back and see how the devil has operated here, and then we become brain-dead, not understanding that he is bringing it here to us.

We have a lot of Bible believers today. You are all Bible believers. You have a church full of them out there; they are all over the place. Listen to me for a second: this thing is not getting any better. I know a lot of churches like to talk about the great revival that is coming to America. There is no revival coming to America. You cannot have revival without the Word of God, and America has dumped the Word of God. So there will be no revivals in America. What is

dangerous about that is you think that what the devil is doing in a bunch of stupid churches out there is a revival, and that it is what God is doing, because you have lost the concept and never seen a real revival.

So let us just see how this thing goes. Say the Lord tarries His coming for another hundred years, and things keep deteriorating the way they do. I preach a lot about families here. I preach a lot about your families being a heritage of the Lord to continue on and carry on what God started in your life. Many of you young couples have gotten a hold of that; you are doing a great, great job. But unfortunately, you are in a minority. Across this country today, Christian parents care nothing about training their children in anything that they need to know. They leave it up to somebody else. What happens is, over the next few generations to come, as you Bible believers die off, this country will go exactly the way Europe went.

I have a guy that I know in the ministry whom I loved very much. When he was alive, he was one of the greatest preachers, greatest motivators. He was in demand all across this country to preach. He was an incredible motivator preacher. He believed the Bible from cover to cover, including the cover. But like all guys out of that era, he lost his kids. As time went on after he passed away, the very kids that once believed the Bible was the Word of God, who sat under his father's teaching and sat under his preaching for years and years, they all rejected what their father taught. They all dumped the Bible. They got involved in cults. It was unbelievable. They had kids, and their kids were even farther down the road from God than the original kids got. They all married unsaved people, and their kids that will grow up will continue to go down that road. In three or four generations, nobody in that family will ever remember the man that God used so mightily.

Now, you just take that into a family and multiply that in a country. Three or four generations from now, churches will be just like Europe. It will not be about the King James Bible anymore; it will be about, "Do you actually believe there is a God in your church?" I am telling you, the churches are gone, the families are gone, Christianity is gone, and it is just the course of history showing you where this thing is going. The only thing men never learn from history is that they never learn anything, so therefore they pay the price.

This is why your children in the public school system, in the world that they live in, are under attack today. It is unbelievable what they have to face. It is a mind grab right under the parents' noses. In many, many cases with the parents, it is too late. Parents today commit the cardinal sin when it comes to their children. It simply means that they allow somebody else to come into their world and have more influence on their child than they do.

I am telling you, that is how the devil will do it. You are going to find that some parents do nothing with their kids in the Word of God. They do not train them in any way, shape, or form, and the world just gobbles them up. You are going to find parents who take them to church all the time, but they themselves do not see their responsibility. So the public school system, and a little bit later on in college, takes from them everything that they once had.

I like watching movies and films. I do not watch them like most people watch them. Nobody likes to see teenagers get cut up with a chainsaw more than I do. But I always look for, because

in every movie you are going to find—and you watch—you are going to find some great principle that they had to steal from the Bible to make the plot of the movie work. I have a whole list of them, and I just watch them with my notebook and write them down.

We all probably have seen the movie *Gladiator* with Russell Crow. You know the storyline. He is a general in the Roman legions. They are fighting these great battles. The king is very old; the king is played by Peter O'Toole, by the way. It is a thing where he knows he is going to die. So they have this great battle, and Russell Crow defeats the armies. The king asks him to come in, brings him in there, and puts his arms around him. They have a very great relationship. He says, "When I die, I want you to be the king." Here is the problem: the king has a son who is a wuss. He is a coward. He is a mess. He is everything a son should not be to a king. But he gets wind of it, and he wants to be king. You know the movie: he kills his father, the king. Then he tries to kill Russell Crow. The whole thing is Russell Crow becomes a gladiator, and you know how the thing goes.

But the great line is this: When Peter O'Toole, the king, brings in his son, and the son is weeping and crying, saying, "Why can't I be king? Why are you going to make him king? I want to be the king," when the king knows he is not kingly material. Oh, what a great line. Boy, I have seen this in Christianity, and I have used this so many times. You know what that old man said to that boy, who is crying and weeping because he is not going to be king? He says this to him: "Your failure as my son is my failure as your father." Write it down, man. Write it down.

I have seen parents over the years lose their kids. Their kids marry some clown out there, and then it all goes south and it becomes an absolute disaster. The parents want to blame whatever happened to their kids on the person that they married, or "this person was a jerk and that person was," and they will go on and on and on. I sit there and I think to myself, "What planet do you live on?" So your daughter married a jerk. Your son married a jerk. How do you blame the people that they married? Did you give them the value system to pick the right mate or not? See? *Gladiator*. "Your failure as my daughter, your failure as my son, is my failure as your father." End of story.

The devil is after your child. It is not a time to be lackadaisical about how you train your children. If you have children that you have lost, there is a way to get them back. I have had four people ask me to preach that, and I will be preaching that here sometime before we get into Psalms. The bottom line is simply this: the kids today are under attack. This church provides one of the greatest youth programs. The young men all around you that you see, the young ladies, the singles that we have, invest in the kids in this church unbelievably. You need to make sure your kid gets to camp. I do not care if they have dance class, skydiving class, deep sea fishing, or if they booked their ticket to the submersible to the Titanic. Get them off of it. They need to be here, because I am telling you, we live in a world where you do not have any options. You live in a world where it is overwhelming, and you do not need to try to do it by yourself.

In the educational system today, all they teach your children is to sin earlier in life and to sin better in life. That is all they get. They are bombarded every day of their life with some of the most ungodly stuff. What do they get with mom and dad? Soccer league. Little league. We think

that because we do something in their life that they like to do, that is enough. Let me tell you something: that is not where it needs to be.

I remember back in 1976 when I first came here, I started going down to the City Union Mission. I began to preach down there and work with that organization. I had a good relationship with them back then. I remember preaching to all of those men down there. I would say back then, in 1976 and 1977, the average age for a man in the City Union Mission was probably 60 or 70 years old. We still go down to the City Union Mission, and the average age down there now is 19 or 20. Do you see what has happened? It has only gotten worse. It is not going to get any better.

I showed you how, in the late 1700s and 1800s up to the 1900s, this all crept into the American educational system in Christianity. It destroyed Bible colleges, seminaries, and universities. By 1900, the Southern Baptist Convention, which was the largest contingency of Baptists in America, had 40 schools back then. We see what destroyed them because by the 1900s and 1920s, they were totally in apostasy, and they have never recovered from it. They were teaching in their schools at Louisville and some of these other places that the Bible was fabled, that the story of Adam and Eve was not true, that Noah's flood was not true. They had completely destroyed for generations young men and young ladies coming in there under the pretense of learning the Bible.

You know our history, our roots. I keep it before you: J. Frank Norris. This church is the great-grandchild of J. Frank Norris. My pastor in Ohio, Harold Henniger, was one of J. Frank Norris' boys. J. Frank Norris was in the Southern Baptist Convention and saw the apostasy and liberalism, so he broke out. With him, we started what we know today as the fundamentalist movement, independent Baptist churches. They start with him. Nobody knows that today. Nobody cares today because nobody knows their roots. But it was such a disaster at that point in time. Today, the Southern Baptist Convention is no better, no different. Now they have 50 universities, six seminaries, and over 150,000 churches all teaching against the Word of God because of how they have been taught.

Now, let me boil this down to you so you do not think I am a grieving maniac. You probably will anyhow. Here is the fundamental issue that I have with higher biblical education and Bible colleges, other than the fact that it is the local church that trains people. They will tell you that the Bible is only inspired in the original autographs, the Hebrew and the Greek. There has never been a translation that is inspired. Therefore, any translation you have is imperfect. There will never be a perfect translation because it comes from man, and man has imperfections when he does it. So if you want the absolute perfect Word of God, you have to go back to the original manuscripts.

Here is my problem with that. The word 'Bible' means 'book.' The original manuscripts, Hebrew or Greek, were never ever in one book, ever. So when they talk about the Bible being the Word of God, inspired and perfect, only in the original manuscripts, they are talking about a book that no one has ever read, no one has ever seen, no one has ever touched, no one has ever tasted, no one ever in the history of the world ever had a copy of, because they never existed. So what they do is make a fictional Bible.

I had a guy one time that was a great preacher; I really enjoyed him. He was preaching, but he did not believe the Bible was the Word of God. He was preaching one time, and he and I would go at it. He was preaching, and he had a King James Bible in his hand. He was waving it back and forth, making his point, and he says, "Well, I believe the Bible is the absolute perfect Word of God, word for word, down there." Everybody was going, "Amen." I was thinking to myself, "You do not believe that." So afterwards, I got with him and I said, "Hey, congratulations." He said, "What do you mean?" I said, "You finally figured out the King James Bible is the Word of God." He said, "What are you talking about?" I said, "I just heard you. You were talking about the Bible being the..." He says, "Well, I was talking about the Greek and the Hebrew." I said, "Then why were you waving this?" You know what his answer was? "Well, the people know the difference." Really? I do not think the people know the difference. You know why? You do not know the difference. But that is where it is at today.

Today, as I speak, do not be fooled, man. Today, as I speak, there are 5,700 plus different Greek manuscripts you can choose from. In the Old Testament Hebrew, there are over 10,000. Then you have the Dead Sea Scrolls. You have the Septuagint. Guess who gets to decide what are really the good ones and what are really not the good ones? Yes, you guessed it: higher education. They make it so confusing. They will come up with all these scenarios about all these late Greek manuscripts and all this stuff. They will try to make it as confusing as can be, and then they deceive you in the confusion.

Thank God for the Book of Acts. We talked about it last week. We talked about it in Bible Institute. Thank God for the Book of Acts. You know why? Because the Book of Acts is built around three cities: Antioch of Syria, Alexandria, Egypt, and Rome. In all of those thousands and thousands of manuscripts, they all break down as they come from one of those three cities. You have the Syrian type, or the Byzantine type, out of Antioch. You have the Alexandrian, called the Hesychian text, out of Egypt. And you have the Roman text that comes out of the Roman Catholic Church. That is all you have. But you see, that is too simple, and they cannot charge you \$50,000 to give you that. It is only going to make it complicated. Of course, that is how it works. The Book of Acts clears it up for you.

### III. The Pastor's Role in Training and the Local Church

Today, I want to give you part two of what we talked about last week. I have to say, I was overwhelmed last week. I received so many texts and emails from people across the country, and many of you felt that last week really rang a bell, and you began to see what the real issues are and how important those issues are today. So this is part two. This is going to pick up where I left off. We are going to talk today about how the New Testament church is to teach and train its people. That is where we are going to focus today.

There are two books that you ought to read. One of them is called *The Death of Biblical Culture*. The other one is called *The Death of Bible Doctrine*. That is where I would start just to get a feel for it, because most churches today are dead. As I said, there are some Bible believers out there that are doing a great job; I do not mean to suggest otherwise, but they are few and far between. I have had people who have left this church before, and they want to go find another church, and

that is great, no problem. They spend the next three years trying to find a church and cannot find anybody who teaches them the Word of God because they are not out there. I am telling you right now, Christianity is dead. Churches are dead.

When you go to most churches, it looks like a halftime Super Bowl party. They have people breakdancing on the stage. I even saw one video where some woman here in Kansas City was dressed up in a cat outfit, dancing around. Man, I would have cut her tail off. We are in a mess. Maybe you can deal with it, and you are okay. What about your kids? What about your kids? Because churches today have been hijacked by the Scholars Union through the higher education that started in Europe, came over here, and infiltrated into our own universities.

I mean, you go to Boston. I was stationed in Boston when I was in the Army, and I am telling you right now, you have all those schools up there that we all know: in Cambridge, in Boston, and all those great schools. Do you realize that they were started to train missionaries to the American Indians? Look at them today. How did that happen? The same way it is happening in the public school system with your children. It is by design.

Young men today want to build a church. I get it. God calls young men and gives them the burden to go and build a church. They are getting advice about how to build a church from men who have never built a church. Instead of getting with a pastor who has a proven track record, getting into his ministry, letting him train you, and building a work, and then seeing how it goes, that is not what happens today. They will hook up with somebody who has either failed in pastoring a church, or he has never pastored one, and now he is put in charge of training you. It is like taking a man who was born a paraplegic, and he is going to teach you how to run the hurdles in track.

For me and the ministry, and I do not pretend to speak for anybody else, I have learned that it is my job as pastor to train you. It is the job of the New Testament local church. Also, I have found in 50-plus years of the ministry, basically three different kinds of people—Christians—that you will work with and you want to try to help. God's people. You will find some people who will get saved, and they will never grow past their salvation. I believe they are truly saved, but they never grow past the day they got saved. Then you have some who grow to a point after they get saved, but then they stop. All of these are good people; I mean, they are not bad people. We are not even going to talk about the bad ones. These are good people. Then you have some that get saved, and they just cannot get enough of it. They want everything they can get out of the Bible. As my old grandma used to say, "They want to get all they can and can't all they get." That is when you used to can stuff, but you guys do not even know what that is talking about. But it is an incredible thing, and all you have to do in any church, I do not care where, is look around you and see what I am telling you is true. Any pastor will tell you that. In spite of that, the pastor's job is to love them and try to help them, in spite of their indifference sometimes.

Yesterday in Bible Institute, we were in Acts 20, and we talked about the church at Ephesus. That is the last church that Paul makes reference to before he goes down to Jerusalem and then gets put in jail. I showed you that in the Book of Acts, which defines everything for us, you have in Acts 11 the church at Antioch, where they were first called Christians. Antioch is in Syria.

Antioch, at that particular time, was the hotbed of New Testament Bible Christianity. Your Bible, the King James Bible, the manuscripts, the line that it comes from, comes out of Antioch in Syria. Every new Bible, from the NIV, you name it—every new Bible outside of the King James Bible—comes out of Alexandria. You know that. I said and told you how the church at Antioch shows you the structure. You have the structure there of what a New Testament Bible-believing church should be. But in Acts 20, when he deals with the church at Ephesus, he gives us the six key areas of New Testament ministry. We laid them out yesterday. I taught you that this is what you need to build your church, the last thing Paul gave to a church, to the leaders of Ephesus. Incredible stuff.

I have learned over the years, the pastor's job will be simply eight things. Years ago, and some of you were with me back then, we used to have pastors' conferences. Remember those days? We would bring in 200 pastors from all over the country. Terry, you remember back there, we used to sit down there, and we would bring them in, and for a week, my job was teaching them how to build a church, what they should focus on in their churches, and how to be a good pastor. That was my deal. Everybody had a segment, and that was my segment. I taught it all over the country when I went to other conferences. I would tell them that the pastor's job is simply just eight basic things. A good pastor will master these eight things, and then he will deal with his people based on these eight things.

1. He has to be able to educate. We will talk about that here in a little bit, so I am not going to spend a lot of time. But he needs to be able to teach. He needs to be able to educate people. We will talk about that in a minute.
2. He needs to relate to people. Most pastors today live in an ivory palace on another planet as far as their people are concerned. It is a thing where they are isolationists. They do not want to be around people. They want to pastor a church. They want to do all the things that claim that a pastor does, but they do not want anything to do with people. They will live in a little compound someplace where they completely isolate themselves from the real world and the people in it. Then they claim that they are going to build a church. Usually it is people under them who build the church, and the pastor, he comes out of his office on Sunday morning, speaks, and then goes back. If you want an appointment with him, try it sometime. I tell you this right now: I would not stay in any church for 15 minutes where the pastor would not give you his personal phone number that you can call him anytime. Because what else has he got to do? You are all his world. You are all his life. He needs to relate. He needs to know what you are going through. He does not need to live higher than you live. He needs to know and be able to relate to the problems that you have. Your problems need to become his.
3. He needs to know how to regenerate evangelism. He needs to know how to win people to Christ. We talked about it before. Soul winning today is nothing more than learning how to penetrate the culture that you live in. Finding out where people are at. Find out what their needs are. And then meeting them on that level. Where most pastors stand up at the top of the stairs, the spiritual stairs, and the people are down 40 steps, and he is up there every Sunday yelling for them to get up where he is at. That is not how you pastor. You walk down those stairs, you put your arm around them, and you walk them up one step at a time. Relate. Relate. Regenerate.

4. He needs to learn how to elevate. Build leadership. The failure of churches will always be a pastor's failure to train people to be leaders in his church. This is why in most churches when the pastor dies or something happens, he can no longer pastor anymore, they always look out to the Bible college scenario, find somebody out there to bring in. You know why? Because he has never trained anybody under him to take over. He does not train people. He does not elevate. He does not get you from point A to point Z and get you to the point where you go through the steps of spiritual growth to become a leader.
5. He needs to be able to motivate. You do this through preaching. You may educate through teaching, but you have to motivate through preaching. I am telling you right now, every pastor needs to be able to do both. There are times when you need to teach, and there are times when you need to take the paint off the walls. Most pastors are one or the other. Most good preachers do not make good pastors. And most pastors do not make good preachers. They like to teach. They like to get up there and expository, they spout. That is all great. But your people need to be motivated. You need to learn how to motivate them because we all have one problem when we get led in our rear end. And you need to get off and get going. The only way you do that is through motivation.
6. He needs to understand how to accelerate. What does that mean? It means it has taken me 50 years to learn what little I do know. My job is to find a way to get that 50 years to you quicker. Find out how to get it to you that you do not have to spend all the time that I spent. Read all the boring books that I read. Labor and all the goofy stuff to get one nugget and then put a thing together. My job is to help you get it faster than it took me because we have a job to do. And I do not want you to have to wait 50 years like I did to get it together.
7. He needs to learn to duplicate. What does that mean? He trains you to do ministry with him. You see, this is all through the New Testament local church. This is all through a pastor who has a church, who has a proven track record, who God has used him. If you cannot deny what God is doing, even though you do not like it all, and it is a thing where he duplicates in his ministry what he wants you to do in his and help him.
8. He needs to learn to placate. That is patience, putting up with people. Bob Jones Sr. said one time, "The more I am around God's people, the better I like dogs." Now, I understand what he meant by that, but God's people can be problematic. And you cannot get in a hurry with them. I always balance out dealing with people who take a long time to get someplace, and maybe some of them never get there. But I always look at them where they are at through how long it took me. I wasted the first 19 years of my life. It is a thing where, you know, if God was patient with me to get me where he wanted me to be, why can't I be patient with you? Placate, helping people get to where they need to be, but being patient with them.

When we started this church 20 years ago, we started with 12 people. I designed it around these eight concepts and developed my teaching around seven classes that you need to have in any New Testament local church to train people. Paul told the elders at Ephesus one of the things that he said, "I have not shunned to teach you the whole counsel of God." There is a curriculum within the Bible if you are going to really learn the Bible. You do not need a Bible college. You do not need a seminary. You do not need a Greek or Hebrew lexicon. All you need is a Bible-believing church with a pastor who understands it in a King James 1611 authorized version of a bunch of people that believe it.

A pastor can do this or he can accomplish this any way he wants to. The mechanics of it are free for you to develop however fits who you are. I do it through a number of different ways. What works for me maybe will not work for everybody. It is okay as long as you get it done. First and foremost, I saw my plan, and I did not do it right away, but my plan was to start a Bible Institute. Because in that Bible Institute I can teach you on a level more consistent. But if I am smart, I dial it into everything else that I am doing.

I have always, ever since I started the ministry 50 some years ago, I have always had a Bible study with any question you want to ask about the Bible. Because I want to motivate you through my preaching and teaching to get into the Bible, but you have to have a place to ask questions. I do it through Sunday morning specifically by design through a book of the Bible or a series of messages like this one today. We have it through special one-on-one meetings with small groups that we work together, like camp and things that we are going to be doing. Then we have the special teaching time in with a specific book or with issues in mind, like we have done on New Year's Eve. We have taken multiple New Year's Eves and taken a five-hour period and just knocked out a book. I did it through the people ministry. When you got to a point in your life, I realized that my next level to elevate you was to get you on a level of working in ministry with people with me. So what did we do? 80, 90, 120 of us. Remember those days? Now look at you today. You work with people in my ministry. When I give you somebody, I do not even think about it. I know you are going to do what needs to be done because of the way you were trained. And then a one-on-one, everybody is special. There is not a loser in a bunch. You may decide you are a loser. I will never decide you are a loser. Because the job of a pastor, no matter where you are at today, the job of a pastor is to see what you could be, not what you are not. Too many pastors can never get there. They look at your problems in your life and the dumb things that you did and pretend that he never did any dumb things. You see, a pastor needs to look at his people and he needs to see them and see in them what they do not even see in themselves sometimes. And then he needs to try to develop that. Sometimes it works, sometimes it does not. It does not stop the fact that you give it the best shot you can. You know why? Because the church is about people. It is not about this building. It is not about anything out there. It is about every one of you here. And the only way you are going to see yourself really special to God, if you see yourself really special to my ministry, whether you make it or not.

#### IV. God's Curriculum: The Seven Classes of the New Testament Local Church

Today I want to show you the seven classes. Rest assured, I am just going to brief them for you. Your roast is safe in the oven. Maybe. But I want to show you the seven classes that I built all my ministry around. I call this God's curriculum. Completely understanding in my mind that the New Testament local church will be the institute that God uses to train men and women. And also realizing it is my job. And now today, after what, 20 plus years together, growing from 12 to what we have today. So many of you helped me with all the new people coming in. We have a tremendous draw for young singles and young couples. That is the best you could ever hope for because training them and getting them ready to go and do something, they have their whole

lives ahead of them. That is why I am excited about this couple coming from Ohio. That is why I am excited about these two kids coming from England.

Today in the public school system, you hear this all the time, Kansas City, really bad. You will find that these same seven classes that are in God's curriculum are in the public school system. And you will also find today that in a public school system, not only in Kansas City, but across America, students are at their lowest form of understanding and teaching. It is a disaster. 85% of the students in America are substandard when it comes to these classes. But unfortunately, they are at the lowest levels in the history of Christianity, too. In the public school system, they produce a group of people who will never succeed in life. They will be dependent on something or somebody. All their life they will never really do anything. It is a thing where they are absolutely, you know, cannot function in life. The second one, God's people and churches, where the first will be illiterate to life. God's people today will be illiterate to the things of God. And they, too, as God's people, who are the aristocracy of heaven, who God has done to us, the aristocracy of heaven, who God has a plan for each of you will never fulfill it. They will stand for nothing, but they will fall for everything.

These seven classes are just like when we went to high school. This is God's school. I made it real simple. I made it, first of all, simple for me so I could figure it out, and then I try to make it simple for you.

- 1.) English Class
- 2.) Civics/Government Class
- 3.) Biology Class
- 4.) Science Class
- 5.) Music Class
- 6.) History Class
- 7.) Math Class

This is the core of my Bible teaching to you, of this church. The whole counsel of God, anytime I do or teach, will be directed at these seven. In the back of my mind, these are the seven classes. Sometimes I will do it directly, sometimes I will do it indirectly, but this is where I am going. God's Bible School will be a New Testament local church and a pastor who understands it and how to get it to you.

I will tell you something else: there are no experts, there are no scholars in this school. We are all students who are just on different levels of learning. My job is to help you get up through those levels, and I will help to elevate you.

In our Christian world today, we have people who homeschool. That can be a very good idea, or it can be a very bad idea. The key to homeschooling will be the parents' ability, self-discipline,

and structure to know how to train their child in the curriculum. In most cases, they have not done right with their kids in the Word of God to begin with, so how in the world are they ever going to do it in a homeschool system? So thinking they will do a good job will be a tragic mistake, not a good idea, though there are many people who do a good job with it.

Many pastors are just like that. They have a job as a pastor, as a parent has a job with their children, but they do not possess the skills either to be able to understand where their people are at, or what their people need. They were trained by a system that took the Bible away from them, so they have nothing to give you. That is the problem. So in most cases, pastors and parents turn out kids and people through a non-biblical system.

Now, seven classes. There is one class that you do not want to have in this curriculum. Math is good, science is good. No drama class. God's people have too much drama in their lives. You know why they have drama in their lives? Because they spent more time with that class than they have with these seven. If you put these seven in your life, you will not have drama in your life because you will learn how to deal with it the right biblical way, so that it will never take advantage of you. It is just that simple. Drama comes when you fail the other classes.

Those are the seven classes that you need to get down and see higher education for what it is: God's eternal, established protocol through the New Testament church. It is just that simple. At the end of the day, this church will be about three things:

9. Learning from the past.
10. Excelling in the present.
11. Investing in the future.

If you put those things into play in your church, in your life, as a pastor to his people, you will turn out what we turn out here.

I know we are not a perfect church. I tell people, "If you are going to try to find a perfect church, when you find that perfect church, do not join it, because it will not be perfect anymore." There is no perfect church. What you have is a perfect Bible with imperfect people. The Bible gets as close to what God wants us to be as He can, if you get the right curriculum. End of story.

Listen to me, I am done. I am going to be gone next week. I am going to Ohio. Danny and Jamie and we are all going to our annual pilgrimage to Mecca. I am telling you this: if you are the kind of person that you find out that I am not here, so then you are not going to come, wherever you go, just keep on going. If there is any time this church needs to be strong and stand, it is when I am not here. John is going to teach Bible study Thursday night. He always gives you good stuff. Next Sunday, I have a secret guy coming in to preach to you, and I am telling you, it will be worth your trip. I am not telling you anymore, and some of you already know, so shut your mouth. But I am telling you right now, it is going to be a good next week. Then I will be back next Sunday, and then we will hit it hard, get ready for camp. But you need to be here because this church is not about me. There are plenty of guys and gals here who teach the Bible just as good as I do and know it as good as I do, if not better in some cases. So you need to support this work. Do not just be the person who says, "Well, when Bob shows up, then I will be there; when

he is not, then I am going to do something else." Then just keep on doing it. That is not what I am looking for. I am looking for a day when I am not even up here anymore. Then what are you going to do? So look at this as Bob's "dead practice." I thought it was a good illustration. Sign up for the 4th of July.