

Psalms 1:1

Sunday 9/17/2023

SEC: Review of Walking with God

Last week, we finished up our first part of the book of Psalms. The first week we had an introduction to it and an overview, and then the next week we did an introduction to it. Last week, we actually began Psalms 1:1 proper.

We have been talking about our walk with God, based on Amos 3:3, which is the verse we have really built this whole thing around. It says,

Amos 3:3

Can two walk together, except they be agreed?

I have showed you that to walk with God will require us to be in agreement with God on some things. Last week, I listed seven of the major ones. We could find more, but I just wanted to make the point and show you based on what the Bible tells us.

1. We have to be in agreement with the right Bible.
2. We have to be in agreement with the right doctrine.
3. We have to be in agreement with right music.
4. We talked about being in agreement with the right association with people.
5. We talked about the right attitude toward the world and the things of the world and the agreement that we should have with God on that.
6. We talked about the agreement of the right worship.
7. We talked about being in agreement with God's church.

We are seeing the church as two aspects: the church triumphant, which is the spiritual body, defined for us in the book of Ephesians, and then there is the church militant that is defined for us in the book of Acts. I showed you how God's program today will only run through a New Testament local church. There are many para-Christian organizations out there that do some good things; I am not taking that away from them. But your allegiance, your ministry, should all run, no matter what you are doing, through a New Testament local church. It is the key to the success of God's blessing in whatever you are going to do.

I told you last week that the Bible is God's written contract for us. It really is the book that lists the agreement that God wants us to have with Him. So, at the judgment seat of Christ, there will be no issue of "I did not understand." He will just pull out the agreement, which we were supposed to study and read and pray over and love. He will just pull out the Word of God, His agreement, and just simply ask, "What part of this did you not understand?"

It is easy for us to look back and see that when we got saved, we had to make an agreement with God for salvation. We had to see that we were a sinner, knew that we could not get to Heaven on our own, all of those things. For whatever reason, and I never totally understood this, God's people, after they get saved, never really follow any agreement. Yet, there is an agreement after you get saved.

SEC: The Importance of Psalms and the Church's Collective Walk

If I can be honest with you for just a moment and share my heart with you about something, I really, as your pastor, want to give you the book of Psalms. I know of no other book that in so many ways will be a life-changing book for so many people. When I come to the Bible to teach it, whether it is Sunday morning or Thursday night or one-on-one or Bible Institute or whatever the case may be, and it is really true when it comes to Psalms, I will do everything in my power. I will use everything in my ability that I have learned to help you get the book of Psalms down. I will take time with each chapter.

I had some ladies in the church who had come up to me and talked about doing outlines of the book of Psalms. Last week, you got your first outline. I told you last week that we were going to be two weeks behind on it just because we got started late. Well, these gals were not going to put up with that. So, they worked hard this week and they got both outlines done for last week and the week before. From this point on, and they are available in the bookstore, they will be online this afternoon. From this point on, we will be up to speed week by week so that you can put them into your notebook, have them to go back and review and look at them and really understand, because I want you to get the book down that represents the heartbeat of God. I think for us to actually have a walk with God, we have to get God's heartbeat. I do not know of any other book in the Bible that does this.

We have been here now over 20 years. It does not look like we got a lot done because we have only, in those 20 years, come through three books of the Bible on Sunday morning. We started with Romans, and there was a reason why I wanted to do that with the young church: to give everybody a foundation of what we are supposed to believe. Then we came into the book of Proverbs, which was the mind of God, and we got that done. That took us seven or eight years to do that. Then we got into the Gospel of John. Now we are in Psalms. I really, really, really want us, with where we are at now in our church and what God is doing, to focus on the thing that is going to carry us through. That will be to get and understand the heart of God in your life and my life and in this church together.

I told you Thursday night, I preached last week, and before I got home in the afternoon, there were already some questions coming in from people who wanted me to redefine some things, go over some things, or clear out some things that I just mentioned and did not get into, like the seven things that God loves and the seven things that God hates. Then there were people who wanted me to talk about other aspects of the book of Psalms. That is really what it takes. If you have questions about anything, this is the time on Thursday night that we can take the time to help you understand it. Under no circumstances do I want to just blow through this and just leave questions in your mind about anything. We need to learn to work and learn together in this. Us walking as a church together, hand in hand, as we walk with God as individuals, but yet at the same time, we walk with God as a church, because that is what it is going to take.

SEC: The Necessity of Fact-Checking

You remember last week I gave you the great story in Luke 2:46, which is my favorite story in the Bible that really keeps me accountable. It is the story there where Jesus and His parents and

His siblings were going on a journey to Jerusalem. They were walking on the road and they were talking, laughing and everything. But when they got to where they were going, they found out that He was not with them. They had been walking a whole day, and now they suddenly look around and say, "He is not here. Nobody knows where He is at." So then they retrace their steps and they find Him on the third day. I told you what a great picture that is and what a great illustration in the Bible that is, is where Christianity is at today. The key word in that story was the word "them," supposing He had been with them. Unfortunately, a lot of people today in Christianity think they have a walk with God. They are supposing they have a walk with God. But if you really pinned them down and opened up the Bible, they would not have a clue that in their walk with God, to have a walk with God, what they need to be in agreement on. They are lost on the road to Jerusalem.

Then I told you about fact-checking. I watch this all the time in the political world and how somebody will get up—a congressman, president, somebody—and he will get up and he will spout off in his speech all these things that he claims to have done or not done or need to be done. Then after it is all over, you have the journalists who listened to what he says or she says, and they do a fact check. Most of the time, they have said a lot of things that are not true. For a Christian, for you and for me, that is really the key: fact-check everything. Somebody tells you something, including me, fact-check them. Do not just believe what they tell you is the truth. Fact-check everything.

The Bible verse for this is in 1 Thessalonians 5:21, where it says:

1 Thessalonians 5:21

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

I told you that the Word of God for you and for me will be our process of fact-checking to see if something is really of God or if it is not. There are many things that look like they are, but when you check the facts, they are not. I am telling you right now, do with it as you please, but this is one of the greatest tools to protect yourself from losing your walk and staying in agreement with God in your walk by just being honest enough to check it out. Take the Bible. Take what somebody says. Find it in the Word of God. See if they line up. Simply doing this honestly, as simple as it is, would solve every problem in Christianity today and the issues that we have. But people will not do it.

SEC: Defining Cults and the Importance of Biblical Truth

Do you know what the definition of a cult is? We have lost the definitions of a lot of words today. People will look at this church, and I have had it all my ministry and my preaching, and they say, "Well, he is a cult." If you are a Bible believer today, you are a cult. Yet there are all kinds of things out there. People do not like it, that is the first thing they call it, is a cult. They never understand what a cult really is. It is like the word "racist." Everything is racist today. If you do not want Kamala Harris to be the president, you are a racist. I do not want her not to be president because she is black; I do not want her to be president because she is an idiot. Her race has nothing to do with it. But this is where we are at today. Parents who will not allow their kids

at four and five to choose if they are born a boy, now they want to become a girl. When they are four, five, six, seven, if you do not allow them to do that, you are racist. This is where it all goes. Nobody understands what the word "racist" really is. Nobody understands what the word "cult" is.

Do you know what the definition of the bonafide racist is in all of humanity? It is God the Father. He is the ultimate racist. You say, "How could you say that?" It is easy. You just do not follow things through. You are not a fact-checker. God sets the standard for what a real racist is. Do you know why? Because He chose one nation, the nation of Israel. He gave them spiritual blessings He never gave any other nation. He gave them physical blessings He never gave any other nation. He told them that the gifts and calling of God to Israel are without repentance. He chose one nation and put them over every other nation in the history of mankind. That is racist. Do you know what He did? He divided up the earth to send the nations out. Do you know how He did it? Acts and Deuteronomy. He did it by the number of the twelve tribes in the nation of Israel. He is a racist when it comes to picking one nation and setting them over all the other nations. A lot of Gentiles have a tough time with that. Now I am a Gentile by birth, but when I got my new birth, I am now a new creature in Christ Jesus. I am just fine with that because I know who He is and I know His plan, and I know He picked one group of people. It was not the Hittites. It was not the Moabites. It was not the Klingites or the Klingons or whoever you want to make them to be. It was the nation of Israel. He set that nation above all the other nations. Incredible.

Do you know what a cult really is? A cult is any church, any group, any organization, any Bible study, or any person that will dismiss the truth and the facts that are well established in history and the Bible to put together and have a false belief system that has nothing to do with the Word of God or history. Now, look at the American cults. Just take them for a moment. We know them as lovingly as the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Mormons, the Seventh-day guys, the Charismatics, that whole group. Do you understand how they got started? Do you realize that almost without exception, every man who left and started the church, started those cults, came out of a Baptist Bible-believing church? Almost every one of them.

How did that happen? I will tell you how it happened. Nobody was fact-checking. So what they did was, they got disgruntled with the Baptists. They just got disgruntled with the Bible. They were so prideful that they were unteachable, and they thought that they had the answers; everything was in them. So they pulled a lot of people out of those churches and started their own church, their own group. They came up with a non-Biblical hold on people that had nothing to do with anything in the Bible. Nobody held them accountable. Nobody. Nobody asked, "Hey, what are you doing, pulling all these people out of the Baptist church to start your own deal over here? That is not how it works in the Bible. You do not go out; they are sent out." Nobody checked their facts. Nobody held them accountable. Nobody said to them, "What are you guys doing? Do you not know that Paul said in Romans 15 that you do not build on another man's foundation?" Nobody fact-checked. Nobody held them accountable. This is how it all gets started. For you and for me, the greatest tool that we have is the fact-check. It works in history. It works today. Because there are a lot of things out there that people are going to tell you, that men are going to try to get you to believe. A real cult is somebody who will dismiss the truth and facts

that are undeniable in history and right there in the Bible. Do you know why people get caught up in things like that? You do not use the tool God gave you to check the facts. That is how it works.

SEC: Biblical Examples of Walking with God: Enoch and Noah

I showed you then a deeper look at Enoch and Noah. Enoch, all the way back there before the flood, in Genesis 5, is a perfect picture of your life and my life as a Christian. We saw it when we tied him into Hebrews 11 last week. Jude 1:14 tells us that before the flood, he was preaching to a lost world the second coming of Christ. Incredible. You say, "Why would God have him, way before the second coming of Christ was ever going to show up, why would He have him do that?" Because He is a picture of you and me. Enoch walked with God, and was not, for God took him. He gets raptured out just like you and I do. He is a picture of the church. We saw it last week. That should be the message that we have for the world: God's coming judgment, which is right around the corner. His family was on the same track. The boy that he had, Methuselah, I told you that his name means, "When he is gone, judgment shall come." Enoch's whole family was a living testimony to the world that he lived in, to the judgment of God that was about to come.

Then we look at the second guy, Noah, in Genesis 6. We now see a little broader picture of how he got through it all. The Bible says that Noah stood alone for 120 years preaching God's judgment. Hebrews 11:7 says that he condemned the world. In 2 Peter 2:5, the Bible says that Noah was a preacher of God's righteousness. Do you know what he is a picture of? The Bible says he moved to build an ark. Somebody says, "Well, in a little story as we tell our kids, he built an ark so all the animals could survive. There were green alligators and long-necked geese." That is how we think of it. Would you like to hear about the humptyback camels and the geese? Anyway, that is not the fundamental purpose. You miss those things. The Bible says that he moved to prepare an ark for the saving of his household. Do you know what that tells me in the day and age that I live in? Like Enoch and Noah, I need to be building an ark to preserve my family from what is coming. Incredible stuff. Of course, nobody is building an ark for their family today.

Clearly, you can see now all the keys to having the blessings of God in our lives through a walk with God in our lives as you are in agreement with God. The thing that really keeps that accountable to you and me will be fact-checking. Amos 3:3, "Can two walk together, except they agree?" No, and do not pretend that you can. Do not suppose that you can.

SEC: How to Lose Your Walk with God

Today, I want to spend some time helping you. Let us look at how we can lose our walk, and let us just check the facts. I told you last week that there are two attacks of the devil today. The first one is to keep people from getting saved. He will do his best to keep men and women from ever finding out the truth of God and finding God's salvation. But he loses that battle many times. Then he enters into the second battle after he loses that one: though he may have lost you to the fires of hell, because now you are in Christ, if he can keep you from growing, if he can keep you from growing in the Word of God, he will keep you from walking with God. Though you may go

to Heaven, there will be scores and scores of people in your life that you could have influenced to Christ, won to Christ, disciplined, worked with, helped for them to grow, that it continues on from generation to generation. He is just playing the odds. If he cannot get you in hell, then he will get you not to walk with God. Where he has failed in the first one, because lots of people get saved, he is blue ribbon one in the second one.

Matthew 7:13 tells us that a walk with God will be a straight and narrow road path. Yet today, that straight and narrow path has been turned into a super highway in churches. We have gotten off the narrow path, the old path of Jeremiah 6:16, and now we are on a super highway in Christianity, where anything goes when the whistle blows. There are all kinds of things. The world is right there, with many turns and side roads that will all take your walk with God from you. Then, like Luke 2:46, God's people today suppose they are walking when they are not.

I told you that Psalms 1:1-3 is fundamentally a prelude to the book of Psalms. But then I also told you that in a practical application of looking at your life and my life and what we want to get from Psalms, Psalms 1:1-3 is a prelude to life. These are the things that you and I will go through and experience, the things that God wants to do for us. This is why I want to spend so much time for us to get the book of Psalms. This is why I want to do everything I can for you, my people, to get it, because with it comes the blessings of God. No child of God, even though they do, should go through life without the blessings of God in their life. I am not talking about just the blessings that the storm came through and the tree did not come down and hit my house. I am talking about the things of the hand of God in your life that makes your life as a Christian outside the natural, that you live in the supernatural. The things that happen in your life that only God can do. The little church that could, based on the blessings of God.

Psalms 1:1

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

Simply put, the attack today, if you are saved, will be to take your walk with God from you.

Let us pray. Father, help us today. These are good people, and I love them beyond belief. I want them, as their pastor, as their friend, I want them so desperately to get this great book. I want it to change their lives as it has changed mine and my family. I want them to see the blessings that God has for them, if they will just begin to be in agreement with God. Help us today. Help me today. Help me to be everything that I need to be to give them everything that You want them to have. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.

SEC: Dangers to Your Walk: Complacency and Success

You will remember that I told you that the key verse in Psalms was Psalms 118:8, where it says that it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. Yet, we are seemingly told a different thing in 1 Corinthians 11:7, where Paul tells Timothy and his followers to "be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." The thing that you begin to realize is that God uses men. But you have got to follow the right ones and not get caught up in the wrong one. The way that you do that is to be a fact-checker. Do not just listen to what they say. Do not be so naive.

Just because a man has degrees behind his name and he knows the Bible and he can spout out a lot of verses, do not be so naive to think that is the guy to follow. Because a lot of Jehovah's Witnesses did it, a lot of Mormons did it, a lot of Church of Christ did it. And here we are.

You have got to look, and I always, I just do not say much, but the first thing I look at when I see somebody that says this or says that, I look at how dynamic they are toward the Word of God. Or do they pick and choose out of the Bible what they want to believe? I have seen that all my ministry. All my life. Fact-checking is not something new to me. In my last 50-plus years, I have seen it all. I have had to wade through it all. I had to shovel some of it out of my life. When I first got right with God, way back in the day before most of you were born, I wanted the truth, and I really did not care where the truth was. If somebody would have told me that the Charismatics had the truth, then I would be standing up here today speaking in tongues more than all of you. If I really thought that the Jehovah's Witnesses were true, I would be knocking on doors yesterday. If I really thought the Mormons were true, I would be living out in Salt Lake City.

I studied when I first got right with the Lord, I studied with the Catholic Church. Back then, nobody knows what a TV Guide is anymore. In the TV Guide, they used to put a thing in there, the Catholic Church had it, that you could send off and get your Catechism teaching to come to your house, and you could take it. You take the test, sign it back in, and then they will send you a certificate that you could take to any priest in any church and get baptized and become a Catholic. I got my certificate. I never used it, but I got my certificate. I studied with the Jehovah's Witnesses. I had Jehovah's Witnesses come over to my house and go through what they believed with me. Almost every cult group, I had them sit down because I was looking for the truth. But do you know why I never got caught up in any of that? Do you know why I am standing here today as a Bible-believing fundamentalist, hell-raising Baptist preacher, and not some Mormon who is going to quote to you out of Joe Smith and tell you how he found the golden tablets with the Moroni angel? Do you know why I am not up here preaching you have got to be baptized to get to Heaven? Do you know why I am not having a healing line up here where you come through and I am going to touch you and pray over you and knock the demons out of you? You need that knocked out of you, but that is not my job.

Because I was a fact-checker. I just did not listen to what they said. When the Jehovah's Witnesses came up with their New World Translation, I investigated the facts why they did. When a Catholic priest, which I have debated many, many times, would give me his line, I just pulled the facts out. No matter what cult group I was dealing with, and I was studying with them, I wanted the truth. I wanted the truth so desperately, I did not care who had it. But I knew that God gave me a book that I could check the facts, that I would never get caught up in something that was not right. And I checked the facts, man. Politicians do not like, under any circumstances, after they are done giving their gas bill, they do not like the journalists getting on and checking their facts. Well, let me give you a little heads up: God's people do not like it either. Check the facts.

I learned early on, and I think today we need to understand, that we talk about the dangers of the world for Christians. But I want to tell you something, there are dangers of success. You never hear a message preached on it. Nobody ever stops to think about it. But when you get successful

in the ministry, let us just focus on that. When you get successful in the ministry and God is doing a lot of great things, it is easy to become complacent. It is easy to become apathetic about things. I do not know what apathetic means, but I heard somebody use it like this, so I am going to use it. Lethargic, I do not know what that one means. Sounds good. I think I am lethargic this morning, but anyway, you let your guard down. In the midst of great things that God is doing, you can lose your edge.

I have seen that same thing happen with families. I have seen families that have three or four kids. The first two or three kids, they really did a good job with, and the kids really turned out great. Then that fourth or that fifth kid comes along, and by this time, Mom and Dad are tired. They have raised three or four kids already. They let their guard down. They think they know now how to raise kids because they had three or four come out pretty good. They think the fifth one or the sixth one is just going to be a walk in the park. Do you know what happens? They get a flyer. You will have a rifle group, like he shoots, and he shoots great tight groups at 10 miles. He is really good. You will have a bull's-eye, and you will have bang, one there, bang, another is touching it, bang, another right in there, bang, another right there. You think, "Man, I really got this down." Then you shoot your fifth one, and it is over here. In life, do not get satisfied because sometimes the devil will throw you a flyer. These families raised three or four or five kids that did good, and then they got a flyer. The parents thought, "Well, this is easy. We have raised all these kids. We know how to do this. This is good." And you got a flyer, and the flyer was different than all the other kids. In your success, there was danger.

A couple of weeks ago, I followed this. I love this. This guy who escaped the jail in Pennsylvania, he could climb the wall good, or whatever his name was. They actually had the picture on the camera in the prison. One guy standing over here, guarding it. He is over here looking around, and then there is a wall. I was going to demonstrate this for you, but the screws in my back will not allow me to do this. He is crab-walking up the wall. I mean, he is going up the wall, got up on top, got out of the jail, got out of the prison. It took two weeks to find him. The best part of this whole story is when they did find him, the dog got him. I love that. If I had been the guard canine officer, and that dog was mauling him in there after he got a rifle and all the things that he stole and all the things he was doing, I would say, "Anybody seen my dog? Why, anybody hears a dog, I will just let him chew on him for a while." Do you know how he got out of that jail? There was a guard right there on duty. He had been a guard at that facility for 18 years. He is now looking for a job. I think he is doing fast food at Wendy's. He got complacent. He did that job for 18 years. Nothing ever happened. He thought, "Oh, I got this down." So he was not paying attention, and the guy got out. There is a danger in success. Because you get feeling so good about everything, and hey, I am telling you, the price of freedom is eternal vigilance. You cannot ever, in Christianity and your walk with God, take a day off.

Do you know when David got into trouble? David's fatal furlough. The Bible says there was a day when the kings went to war, and David stayed home. You cannot get out of this battle. I am telling you right now, guys, we are in a war. It is a shooting war spiritually. We never can take the luxury on this side of Heaven to take our finger off the trigger. God does some great things here.

People are getting saved, coming into the church. It is unbelievable what He is doing. That is the time, in all the joy and happiness about it, you cannot ever not know somebody is crab-walking up the wall. The key is always to have a good balance. We have talked about this many, many, many times. When you get a good balance in your life, you have got to balance the good balance. Then you have got to balance the balance that you just balanced for the other balance. Balance in our lives keeps our perspective. Not falling trapped to the successes of God, though how thankful we all are for what He does and in awe of a little church that could. We cannot ever lose our perspective. We are in a war. In combat, when you let your guard down and you think nobody is looking, you get a sniper bullet right between the eyes.

SEC: The Three Stages of Losing Your Walk

So let us look at Psalms 1:1, and where we now are going to see how you lose your walk, because it says:

Psalms 1:1

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

We will see we keep our walk with God through a balance of just three things here. You want to get this down.

8. Be careful where you walk.
9. Be careful where you stand.
10. Be careful where you sit.

For the fact-checking Christian, when it comes to these three areas, when I check my facts out of the fact book that God gave me, then my walk should be in Christ, Colossians 2:6. My standing should be in the power of His might, Ephesians 6:10. I should be seated in heavenly places, Ephesians 2:6. These three areas will determine if you walk with God or allow someone to take your walk from you. Then you wind up supposing you have a walk.

Our verse today, we have looked at how to have a walk with God. Now I want to show you how you will lose your walk. Revelation 3:11 tells us:

Revelation 3:11

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

This is a great lesson for all of us because within that, "let no man take your crown," you walk all the way through. If you lose your crown, you lose your walk also. When you lose your walk, you lose your crown. It is an incredible study for each one of us.

The reality of Christianity and the Christian life and churches will be: you always have folks who will develop a bad attitude toward anything that God does. Any church on planet Earth will have that element. That principle is taught all the way back with the Nation of Israel in the book of Numbers and other places where you have the mixed multitude. Where all the Nation of Israel wanted to get as close to the Ark of the Covenant, which is a type of Christ back there, you had

the families that were right there. Then you had the tribes that were right there. The mixed multitude got as far away from that as they could, yet they wanted to be part of the church, the Nation of Israel.

There are a number of reasons for this. Some just will never grow, and this will lead to problems in time. When God saved you, you were a baby Christian. No baby can walk by itself. It goes through a process of Mom and Dad that gets it to the place where it can run track, play football, play baseball. But at the beginning, as a baby, it could not take any steps at all. You carried it everywhere you went. It is the parents' job to help little babies spiritually begin to walk. It is the church's job to help the parents help the kids. Because the goal for every one of you, at least in my mind, and I know this is not going to work for everybody, I get that going in, but my goal is for every one of you, Mom and Dad, to learn how to have a walk with God and then be able to translate that down to your kid, that you build an ark, and the preparing of the saving of your household.

Some will have so many issues in their life they just cannot get past it. I understand. I try to help people with that. Sometimes it is their past. They cannot get past the past. When you come to this church, I do not care what you have done. I do not care where you have been. All I care about is where you are at right now and where you want to go from here. Because that is all God cares about. But sometimes people just cannot get past the past, and they just stay there. They develop a bitter attitude about things. I have seen them where their kids got in such disastrous messes that were just unbelievable. I mean, totally tragic. And they just cannot get past that. Sometimes pride gets in the way, and they develop an unteachable spirit that they think they know more about. You folks who have disciplined people, you know what I am talking about. You see it. This is a problem in every church, in every state, in every city in this country. It is not just localized to one church.

Some will be satanic implants. Their whole life has been a self-destruct mode and may be used to hurt any work of God. You saw it in the New Testament in Judas. You saw it in the Old Testament in Saul. You will find that sometimes. But in each case, they will develop an attitude of a mixed multitude. Instead of helping you build something for God, they will try to hurt the work and always complain. They will see the negative in everything. Certainly, there is negative in everything, but I choose not to focus on that, especially when God is doing something. But what happens is when you get so focused on a negative, you cannot see God doing anything. Then you are in trouble. Yet you suppose. I love that word. I know you hate it, but I love that word. Every church on this planet will have this element. They wind up forsaking the seven things that God loves and the seven things that God hates. They wind up forsaking the things that God loves and wrap their whole life around the seven things that He hates. Do not take my word for it. Fact-check it. Yet, as I said, they put out the smokescreen that they love God and are great Christians. They will take all the things that God has given them. They will take the forgiveness of their sins. They will take the grace. They will take the longsuffering that God gives us. They will take the patience. But they will never give that to anybody else.

When you lose your walk, an automatic process takes place of a reversal of God in your life. You will always be saved. You will be up in Heaven. There is no question about it if you are truly

saved. But when you lose your walk, you lose some things. Why is that? "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" You get out of the agreement with God, and that will be the definition of you being out of fellowship.

Now, watch the process here. I told you that you want to have a balance. Be careful where you walk.

Psalms 1:1

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly.

In your Bible, you will find two types of counsel. The word is spelled two different ways. You will find it spelled C-O-U-N-C-I-L, and then you will find it spelled C-O-U-N-S-E-L. Counsel that is spelled C-O-U-N-C-I-L will be a body of men who meet to determine a course of action, like a city council meeting. Counsel spelled C-O-U-N-S-E-L will be the giving of advice or opinions on something to someone. In any church, you will find negative people who will be used to tear down what God is doing by getting good people to walk with them instead of walking with God, and they began to give them bad advice.

The model for that in the Bible in the Old Testament will be in 2 Samuel 15, Absalom. When you look at the life of Absalom, and you do a little fact-check on it, you know what Absalom did. Absalom wanted to take the kingdom from David. Absalom had a bad attitude. He got his nose bent out of joint. He did not like the things that his dad David was doing. So what he did was, he knew that the gate coming into the city was where everybody met, and it was the social place. It was like happy hour, except it was all day long. So he goes down to the gate. He watched people coming in that were going to see his father David. He would hear them talking, "Yeah, well, I am going to go see David because I do not like the way this is going, and I am going to go talk to him." So he would listen, and then he would walk over and he would say, "Hello, friend. You are coming to see the king?" "Yes, I am coming to see the king." "Do you have an issue?" "Yes, I have an issue. I do not like this, I do not like that." He would look at them with those big puppy eyes. He would put his arm around them and he would say, "Oh, if only I were king, I would solve your problem. David, he is so busy. David, he has got so much going on. You will not get far with him, but I want to tell you, if I were your king, I would solve your problem." The Bible says that by doing that over and over, day in and day out, he stole the hearts of God's people. Fact-check Absalom.

When you look at Absalom's life, when he is standing at that gate trying to do what he is doing, Absalom had not built anything in his life. He never did a thing. He got everything he could from his father, David, but he never did anything with it, and he never did anything except develop a bad attitude. He does nothing for God. His father, David, is a man and a king after God's heart who is doing everything to build a kingdom. In fact, he is such a great leader, such a great man in the Bible, that the Bible says that he did what was right all the days of his life except in the matter of the Hittite. Absalom did nothing. Built nothing. But he meets at the gate and says, "Oh, if I were king." Then through deceit, through corruption, through lies, he takes the people from David, builds on David's foundation to try to steal what God is doing because God was doing

nothing with him. Fact-check. Stay away from the Absaloms in life. When you walk with God, you will get the right counsel.

Psalms 73:24

Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.

What a great verse for a New Testament Christian.

Proverbs 8:14

Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength.

Proverbs 12:15

The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.

There it is. You suppose you are right. It is seeing things through your eyes instead of seeing things through the eyes of the Word of God. Again, the greatest tool you have as a Christian is the fact-check system God gave you. Use it and be careful where and with whom you walk.

A while back, unbeknownst to most of you, we get them from time to time, we actually had a satanic implant come into this church. I recognized it immediately. It is like the movie *They Live*; when you put on the right glasses, it said "satanic implant" across his head. You could not see it, but when I put the glasses on there, it was. Anyway, that is not true, but I am going to bring that movie back in. These guys all follow the same pattern. He would come to Bible study and he would sit there, and he would try to interject things into the Bible study, and I would never call on him. It was a thing where I knew what was going on. I mean, I can spot him a mile away. It is like going out in your yard when it is really dark after the dog was out, and you know he just went to the bathroom, and you do not know where, but you know you have got to be careful where you step. Now, if that is pretty graphic for some of you, that is great communication. Those are the practical things of life because we have all been there. Scraping your shoes off and they are driving. Never mind.

So I see it coming, man. So I just ignore it. Then the next step, and I am watching this the whole time. I am a fact-checker. So I watch now that he kind of came in. But let me just say this: if you are listening today and you are a satanic implant or some kind of heretic, let me tell you, this is the wrong place to try to come in and pass off your heresy. But they all follow the same pattern. Next thing I know, he is getting a couple of people aside over here. "Hey, how are you doing?" "I am feeling fine." "Yeah, well, me and my wife would like to take you out to dinner and just fellowship a little bit." Translation: "Bob will not call me in Bible studies, so I am going to invite you out to dinner. We will pay for it. And then I am going to try to indoctrinate you with my hellish, damnable heresy." But you guys are smarter than that. I trained you that way. Every case that he did that to, you guys called him out on it and said, "Why would I want to have dinner with a heretic? Pack up your bag and be gone." And he is gone. He could not penetrate it, but they will. They will. You just have got to be careful with that thing.

Then the next part of your progress to leave God's walk will be walking with the ungodly, and be careful first. Then the second part, standing in the way of sinners. Now you want to be careful not only where you walk, but where you stand. Now you are not walking anymore. Now you are standing with them instead of standing against them. This is what the heretic tried to do. My people stood against him. They were not going to walk 10 feet with him. Now, instead of standing for the things of God, something now begins to change in your life. You are getting drawn into it. Now you are not just walking along. Now you are saying, "Oh, oh, really?" See how it works? I have already told you in Ephesians 6:10, your standing should be in the power of His might, but your walk now has changed. Now your stand for God has changed.

As I told you Thursday night, I told you the story about Jim Jones and Guyana back in what, '68 or '70, someplace back there. He took all those 300-plus people down there, developed the cult. He was Jesus Christ. He was God. He even took the place that he had them, and his name was Jim Jones, and it was called Jonestown. He was the end-of-the-world guy. He said, "You know what? We are all going to go home to Heaven together." And he mixed up the Kool-Aid with the poison and drank it. Moms, dads. Moms and dads gave it to their kids. Over 300 people died in the jungle of Jonestown. Yet with that, you see that that kind of cult mentality always is an isolationist because he was not in a city or a nearest city. He had to take his church out in a place that was isolated from the real mainstream, so nobody could fact-check it. Now once you start walking with them and now you are standing with them, they are pulling the Kool-Aid. The Bible says standing in the way of sinners; there is your key word. You are not going God's way anymore. Now you are going their way. Walking with the ungodly. All the time, Proverbs 12:15, you are right in your own eyes because they tell you you are, and you do not fact-check. Revelation 18:2 says basically, in the story, the old attitude we always use, that birds of a feather flock together. My mama used to tell me that. And through the counsel you get from ungodly, disgruntled, out-of-fellowship people, the mixed multitude, you will not follow the Bible in fixing the issues because I do not care what problem you have. I do not care how deep you think it is or how long it is or whatever the case. In the Word of God, there is a way to fix whatever problem you have that you do not have to have those feelings. But we choose not to because we are not just walking with them now; we are standing with them.

Now you say, "Bob, how do I keep from that happening?" I am going to say it again: fact-check. Check them out. Check the seven things that God loves and the seven things that God hates. Romans 16:17 says:

Romans 16:17

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

That is in the Bible for a reason, to protect you. Look at them. Look at their kids. Look at what comes out of their mouth. Out of the abundance of the heart, their mouth speaks. Look at what they do in their church, if they even have a church. What do they build or what have they built? And what do they invest their life in destroying? Be careful where you stand. Do they exercise the four godly characteristics of Christ that we all should have? Do they exercise grace,

forgiveness, longsuffering, and patience? All the things that God gave to us, but they are not willing to give to anybody else. Be careful where you stand.

Then to finish the final leg of your walk, and I use the word "leg" tongue-in-cheek, the final leg of your walking away from God, keep in mind so far: walking with the ungodly, standing in the way of sinners. Now the Bible says you are seated in the seat of the scornful. You are not walking with them anymore. You are not standing with them anymore. Be careful where you sit. Now you are one of them. Now you too pick apart the church, the ministry, the pastor, the people. I have seen it all my ministry. Over the years, I have seen so many of God's people fall for this three-point trick. I have seen it in every church on Earth. I have talked to pastors for years. I have seen it in their churches when I preached that they would pull me aside after preaching and tell me what their problems are, the people they are struggling with. It is everywhere. It is like cancer.

When you get to stage three: walking with the ungodly, standing in the way of sinners, and now you are sitting in the seat of the scornful, when you get to stage three, it is like cancer. You are a dead man walking. You are not walking with God. Now you are right in your own eyes, but you cannot see anything that God is doing. Your self-righteousness has blinded you to anything that God is really doing. It would not matter what God was doing in your church. That church could win a thousand people to Christ today. That church could reach a country for Christ. That church could build men and women who know the book and turn them out all over the place. That church could have the hand of God on their work in an incredible way. But all they see is through their own deception. They are blinded to any real work of God, and they will deny that anything that God does because He will not do it with them. Yet their denial is so great, their deception is so ingrained, they now suppose they walk with God, and they lose their own kids to the world in the process. Yet, like everybody that does not fact-check and stay in the Word of God and walk with God, they blame their issues on everybody else. Do not let any man take your walk, which will ultimately lead to you to lose your crown. Fact-check. Prove all things.

So you want to remember that last week when we were coming through those seven things, number five on the list of being in agreement with God was, "Watch out for associations." So be careful who you walk with. Be careful where you take a stand and who you take your stand with. Be careful where and with whom you sit. Let no man take your walk, which will always lead to a man taking your crown. Let us get Psalms down as a church.

SEC: The Collective Wisdom of the Church

I looked at this week. The Bible says Enoch walked with God for 300 years. I thought to myself, and then the thought hit me, what an incredible walk that must have been. Could you imagine in 300 years all that God must have showed him? No wonder he is preaching on the second coming of Christ. He probably had the whole thing down. But then I thought this: none of us can walk for 300 years with God, three score and ten. If you get more than that, then you just get all the problems that life brings as you get older. But I thought to myself, Enoch does not just represent me as an individual. He represents Christianity. This church.

I was on a plane one time, and it was going through some bumpy turbulence. The captain came on to reassure us because it was really bad. It really was. We were going up and down, up and down, dropping and coming up, dropping and coming. He came on the intercom, and women were scared, and people were crying. It was pretty scary. The captain wanted to reassure us. So he comes on the intercom and he says, "Ladies and gentlemen, I have two pieces of information for you. The first one is, we are going to crash." He says, "But the good news is, we are going to be landing ahead of schedule." No, that is a joke. He really did not say that. I waited a year to be able to use that joke. Anyway, he says, "Ladies and gentlemen, not to worry. We are flying through some turbulence right now." He says, "I know it looks bad, but I want you to know that on the flight deck, between me and my co-pilot and the engineer, we have over a hundred years of experience that we are going to get through this time. So not to worry." I never forgot that.

None of us here can walk for 300 years. But if I can just get some of you to walk 10 years, 20 years, 30 years, 40 years, the collective wisdom of this body here will exceed 300 years of walking with God with Enoch, because that is where it is at. It is not about one person in this church. It is not about one family. It is not about the pastor. We are all in this together. What God uses and why God is blessing is because of the collective wisdom that is already here. I watch you young singles. I watch you at activities where I watch you here, I watch you there. You see some new person, you are there. I have people on our Alpha Bravo that you want them because you want to help them. The collective wisdom of any church when it comes to the Word of God is key. It will never be about me. It will never be about any family or any individual, no matter what the case may be. It will be about us as the body, the church militant, getting into the Bible, learning the Bible, fact-checking everything to keep our walk where it needs to be, and allowing God within this church to take all of you. The collective wisdom, 10 years, 5 years, 20 years, 50 years, 40 years. Just like that guy came over and said, "Ladies and gentlemen, do not worry. The collective experience that we have is over 100 years. We know what we are doing." The collective wisdom of this church would be well past 300 years. Everybody who comes in that door gets the best chance they can be everything that God wants them to be.

Some of you need to learn, let me show you and teach you how to disciple somebody that you have never been taught before, because people are coming in that need to be disciplined. Some of you need to step up to that next level. If enough people come to me and say, "Hey, I want to help," I will hold a class and I will train you and teach you and get you ready to go. But the bottom line is, you cannot just be satisfied where you are at with all that God is doing in a little church that could. We do not want to get complacent. Nor do we want the gainsayers and everybody else, the negative side of it, to take away what we know and see and what God is doing. Look at us today. You are part of it. God brought you here for a reason. If anyone here today thinks you are here just by accident, you are here to make a choice. You are here to choose whether you are going to let God develop the right walk with you, keep the right walk you already have, or get to the place where you allow the collective wisdom of this body to give you what you need because we are in this together, man. If we do not hang together, we will certainly hang separately. The strength of this church is in the fact-checkers. Just like that heretic coming in, he did not get to first base. Do you know why? Fact-checkers. Men and women who know their Bible, they know the truth and they know what is right and they know what is wrong. You

have a hard time pulling the shenanigans of an Absalom over them or any other heretic out there. But you are the key. That is why I want to teach you the book of Psalms. I want us to learn it together. I will give you everything I have got.

Together, guys, as a church from day one, we have always strived to do things together. I have never excluded anybody. I have given everybody in this church, wherever they came from, whatever they did, it did not matter. All that matters was where you are at and what do you want to do from here. We have grown together. Now is not the time to stop. We are now faced with the greatest book that will show us the very heart of God. I am not going to miss a trick when it comes to giving you the book that lays that out. I love you. Let us have a word of prayer next week. Pray for all the things tonight at the mission and the guys that are preaching and keep everything going. I love you. Let us have a word of prayer and then we will be dismissed.