

I. Review

If you have your Bibles this morning, we are going to turn to the book of Psalms, chapter 27, in a moment. You will remember last week, we were in Psalms chapter 26, verses 1 through 12, and we talked about probably what I think is the most important aspect of our Christian life after we get saved: how we should never stop growing in the Lord. **Spiritual growth after salvation is the key to everything in our Christian life.** As we have come through Psalms week by week, we have talked about all the different aspects of building a sure house, our fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

➤ The Depth of God's Fellowship

In our minds, we get so detached from real Bible truth and real Bible principles. You take the aspect of fellowship with the Lord. I think that most of God's people really do not understand the depth of that statement. For most of us, fellowship is, "Yeah, either I am or I am not," or "I am somewhere in between." We really do not see what is behind the idea of fellowship.

I am telling you right now, back in Genesis 1:1, when God began His way of moving down through time he put Adam and Eve down in a garden. I know that test failed, and I will tell you why in a second, but that is the model and the pattern. God's original plan was to have a second heaven, a universe, if you like that term, a second heaven filled with His creation. His spiritual beings that He created, starting with Adam and Eve, that He could have fellowship with all through eternity. God is holy, God is perfect, but God was lonely. God wanted to share everything He had with somebody. Him being the supreme being in the universe, there was nobody. The angels could not understand; they do not have souls. So, He made a creation. That creation is you and me. He put that creation down in a garden. The Bible says, in the cool of the day, God walked and met with them, and they fellowshiped together. What an incredible time that must have been in a perfect world with no sin. No wild animals, just the most beautiful paradise, accented by God Almighty coming down and having that fellowship that God wanted to go out through all of eternity.

The devil wanted to stop it. What the devil did, in Genesis chapter 3, he comes down and he takes from Adam and Eve the very fellowship that God wanted to have with them. When God comes down in the afternoon to meet with them, they are not there. God says, "Adam, where art thou?" If I can just add a little bit to my sermon here, God knew exactly where he was. When He said, "Where art thou, Adam?" He wanted to see if Adam would be honest to say where he was. Sometimes that is what God will do with us. He will ask us where we are at, but He already knows where we are at. He just wants to see if we are honest about where we are at. You know what happened. Fellowship was broken. The curse came onto Earth. Everything now is upside down.

So God begins a plan, all part of His original plan. It was no surprise to God what the devil was going to do. He now postpones that eternal fellowship for 6,000 years with man in that little parentheses called time, with eternity on both sides. What God does now, He gives man a choice. Every man in the Old Testament, every man in the New Testament, and every one of you have to make that choice. That choice is, as John said so eloquently, to trust Christ as your own personal Savior and be saved. But it is more than that. That is just the entry level. That is the open door for eternity that God wants to have fellowship with us for all of eternity. Right now in this world, He wants to have that fellowship. But that fellowship is in the midst of a world of darkness. It is a fellowship that we have to work every day of our lives to keep.

Last week, I showed you out of Psalms 26 and out of the book of Haggai why today, now that you are saved, we should never stop growing. That fellowship that God so desperately wants with us now, that it is going to be infused in eternity later, is the beginning of everything for us. How a child of God today, in the world we live in, could forsake that fellowship? I understand why, because they do not understand the real depth of God's fellowship.

➤ Nine Ways to Maintain Fellowship

I gave you last week, if you remember, nine ways that you do that:

1. You judge yourself through the preaching of the Word of God. That is why God designed preaching, why you should be in church this morning and some people are not.
2. Examining yourself daily and proving your own self to the Lord.
3. Building a relationship of trust, because as I said last week, there is no real relationship if there is not trust in it.
4. Walking and seeing and understanding His lovingkindness, not just kindness. The world will show you kindness. God will show you lovingkindness.
5. Separating ourselves from evil company and associations.
6. Washing ourselves daily to stay clean, to keep that fellowship.
7. Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of loving going to church.
8. Witnessing publicly, publishing the Word of God.
9. Having our feet in an even place.

Notice there are nine. The book of Galatians is the ninth book in the New Testament. You will find there are nine fruit of the Holy Spirit of God. If you want fruit in your life, these are the nine things that you do: how to maintain your sure house, to ensure you keep growing, to ensure that constant fellowship.

II. Psalms 27:1-6

Today, we are going to enter into Psalm chapter 27. Again, we will see this Psalm as a tribulation Psalm. I told you how I would show you that Psalms falls into three categories doctrinally: the tribulation, second coming, and the millennial Psalms. So, this will be doctrinally Israel going through their time of trouble, which we know as the tribulation. It will be David historically and his struggles in life, but understanding the great parallels of how the Word of God comes together inspirationally in a practical way, we are going to see our struggles in life and how we as God's people, through that fellowship, can navigate through the rough seas of life.

We talked about several months ago, Matthew 7:24, of a man that built his house upon a rock and a man who built his house upon the sand. When the wind and the storms came, the house that was built on sand collapsed, but the house that was built on rock stood firm. I want to show you today how your sure house stays firm when the howling winds and storms of this life beat upon your house.

If you will allow me today, I want to read Psalms chapter 27. We are going to break this down into two sections. I will read verses 1 through 6 today. It says this:

- 1. The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?*
- 2. When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.*
- 3. Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.*
- 4. One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.*
- 5. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.*
- 6. And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.*

Last week, in Psalm 26, I showed you how to never stop growing. The need to build a sure house and then maintain it, and then to publish the wonderful works of God to a lost world without Christ. Today, I want to show you that when you commit your life to publishing the Word of God, you are going to find that the real battle now begins: the battle of the Christian life, the warfare of the believer.

I remember when I first got right with the Lord, I went to camp where I got my introduction, and with my father in the Lord, and all of the young men took me in like our young men take many

of you in. I went to that camp, and Doctor Ruckman was preaching that week; it was senior high week. He was doing a chalk talk on Ephesians chapter 6, putting on the whole armor of God. I had never heard him before, and I sat just mesmerized at how he articulated the Word of God through drawing it and preaching. I will tell you, it was opening my eyes to things. I remember he kept going on and he was talking about the battle, and then he stopped, and he said, "If you decide you are going to take your stand for the Lord and you are going to stand, and having done all to stand," he says, "the battle you are going to get into as a Christian is going to make all the battles of this world look like a bunch of kids shooting marbles." He says, "If you stand for the Lord and get in this battle, the Battle of Gettysburg, the Battle of Iwo Jima, the Battle of Saipan, every war that has ever been is going to be nothing compared to the battle you are going to get in as a child of God."

Now, I got to say, I loved it, but I did not understand that and believe it. How could that be? Here I am sitting in an auditorium in a tabernacle with 200 kids, everybody is singing, and I am thinking to myself, "How can that be?" I want to tell you something, after 50 plus years in the ministry, I know what he was talking about. I am going to tell you, you see, before you got saved, you posed no threat to the devil. He has got you; he is going to give you everything you want and make you all full of the world and everything in it. Then you are going to die, and he is going to get you in hell, and you are going to burn forever. You were no threat to him as an unsaved person. But the moment, the very moment you trust Christ as your own personal Savior, you are the worst threat that he could ever imagine. Just like when he saw Adam and Eve down in that garden and God coming down and fellowshiping with them, and he said, "I cannot let that happen, I have to stop that." **The battle with the Christian life is simply this: the world, the flesh, and the devil taking that fellowship from you and God.** There lies the battle. Now begins the warfare of the believer.

As you publish the Word of God through your life and show His wondrous works, you will find there are some things that you need to understand. Many of you, if not most of you, are there right now. The Missions Conference coming up is going to take many of you to the edge. You are standing, teetering, on the edge. You have got a lot of Bible knowledge, God is using you, and you just need somebody to put you over the edge.

When I was in the army, I was in the paratroopers, and they would train you, train you, train you, and train you. I mean, you would run everywhere, do everything, I mean, I cannot even imagine, but you never were a real paratrooper until you made your first jump. I want to tell you something, there is something about standing in that door at 1,500 feet. You might know that they put them in alphabetical order, and my last name starts with "A". I looked at the guy behind me, and we were all scared to death. Everybody wants to pretend you are really tough, and you really got it. But let me tell you something, that old wind whistling by you, you see ants down there, they are people. I mean, you are sitting in this plane, 15 on this side, 15 on that side, and then this guy who is the jump master comes up and he says, "Inboard side, stand up! Starboard side, stand up! Hook up!" There is this wire running down and you will hook your line on it. He says, "Stand in the door." Well, okay. There is a light and it is red right now, but as soon as that turns green, you are either going to be a paratrooper, or you are not. I told the guy behind me, I

said, "Look, if I freeze, push me out." And he says, "Okay, but if I freeze, will you pull me with you?" You are standing right on the edge of that door, and when you step off, now you are a paratrooper.

Some of you are standing right on the edge of that door. You have been trained, you have been taught, I have given you everything in training I know how to give you to make you where you are at right now. Now, it is time. In that week of the Bible conference, you know what God is going to do? He is going to make you. You are going to step out of the door, and you are going to become what God wants you to be. There will be some people that will just blow that off. You have got bigger plans than to be here that week. Okay, I am good with that. I really am. But there are some things you need to understand if you are going to publish the Word of God and show His wondrous works.

➤ The Wicked seek to Dismember Your Sure House

Last week, we looked at the wicked, who would seek to dismember your sure house. Dismember your family. Take you out of God's church. You can look back through the Bible and history, and you can see the devil, and I have told you this before, God moved, the devil moved. The devil moves all through history to stop God's plan, and once you get saved, he will then move through time to stop God's plan in your life. When this happens, you want to remember this. When this happens, it is places like Psalms chapter 27, because you will get it. It will come your way. You see, riding in a plane, jumping out the door was fine, but the real battle started the moment you hit the ground, and the bullets started flying. In a missions conference, you can stand on that edge, and you can jump out, and you can say, "Okay, God, I am going to do it." But the real battle is going to start when everybody starts coming after you. When this happens, you want to know this. It is places like Psalms 27 where you can find the comfort, you can find the refuge, you can find the encouragement, and your fellowship and your walk with God in the face of all the opposition that will come your way, and it will come.

III. Encouraging Yourself in the Lord

One of my favorite places in the Bible, that if you look at my Bible, it is probably worn thin, is in 1 Samuel chapter 30, verse 6. It has always been a source of comfort for me, because it is a little excerpt out of the life of David. It says in 1 Samuel 30:6,

*6. And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: **but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.** 1 Samuel 30:6*

Here we see and understand, David was God's choice for the people, not Saul. David would be the greatest king that Israel ever had. When you get into Chronicles and Kings, all the other kings are compared back to David. He and his walk with God would be able to rid the nation of Israel of all the lasting enemies. He killed all the giants. He wipes out the last of the enemies that Joshua did not wipe out. He sets up the land that when his son Solomon comes, he is going to build the temple and establish the kingdom of heaven. Yet, his own people turn against him. His

own people, the people of God, God's people. This is not the Hittites or the Syrians; this is God's people who want to stone him. But David, in the midst of the opposition and the distresses of his life, verse six says, "*but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.*" How do you do that? What does that mean? Is that just words to you? You see, that is a pattern for us to follow, based on a story in the Bible, based on principles. You are going to find if you too decide to minister to the people that God gives you in the New Testament church, you will find yourself where David is at in 1 Samuel 30 and Psalms 27. Psalm 27 will be a commentary on 1 Samuel 30, David encouraging himself in the Lord, showing us that in the face of opposition, there will be times when you will need to encourage yourself in the Lord. The real question today is, do you know how to do that?

Today, I want to help you understand how to encourage yourself in the Lord in the face of the opposition that will come.

➤ 1.) The Lord is my Light and my Salvation verse 1

1. The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid

Now, I am going to move back and forth in this inspirationally and doctrinally so you can get it all down. Historically, you already know what it is, but I am going to move back and forth so you can get all of your notes in your Bible, get the doctrinal and inspirational, and cover all of that. So when he says here, "*The LORD is my light and my salvation,*" doctrinally, in the last three and a half years of the tribulation, Israel now is in the wilderness. At some point, God reveals Himself to them in the light. You will find this in Isaiah 9:2; you will find that in Isaiah 60:1-3, other places too, but you start right there.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. Isaiah 9:2

- 1. Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.*
- 2. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.*
- 3. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Isaiah 60:1-3*

They are out there in the middle of the wilderness, and suddenly God reveals Himself to them in a great light. I do not think I have ever told you this, but the example of this will be the Apostle Paul in Acts chapter 9. You see, Paul is not one of the original 12. Paul is the 13th apostle. Paul is the apostle to the Gentiles. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 15:8, he calls himself a Jew that is born out of due time.

And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. 1 Corinthians 15:8

Paul, doctrinally, even though historically and inspirationally, that is God revealing Himself to him, Paul in that story, is a picture of the nation of Israel. A Jew born out of due time. God revealing Himself to Paul is exactly how God is going to reveal Himself to the nation of Israel.

You know what Paul does? Paul goes to the Gentile world. You know what the Jews do after God reveals to them? The 144,000 in the book of Matthew, they go to the Gentiles. It is a pattern; it is a picture.

But for you and me, inspirationally, this light will be the Word of God. It is the light that God gave me through the Word of God to guide me through life. This guiding is one of the greatest aspects of the Bible that is mostly unknown today with God's people. We know that the world is darkness and that in that darkness lurks all the deceptions of the devil. The reason why I say most of God's people do not understand this is because most of God's people get caught in these deceptions. He will spread snares, he will spread nets, he will dig pitfalls all through the aspect of deceiving us. You should know, just as God will use people to do His work, the devil will also use people to undo God's work. If I may be so bold, most of the time it will be God's own people. Did you ever see how the devil crucified Christ? Sure, the world was behind it, but what did the devil use? God's own people killed God's own Son. Just as God will use people to reach the world, the devil will use people, many times God's people in your life, to try to stop you.

Yet the Bible tells us in 2 Corinthians 2:11, oblivious to most people, that we are not ignorant of his devices.

Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

Yet, we are. Yes, we are. When you understand your Bible, I mean really understand it, you will find that God has laid out how the devil will use people to undo God's plan in your life, to dismember your fellowship with God. I have tried to give you these over and over again in our over 20 years here, through our time in the Word of God together.

A while back, we did our Bible Institute. This is where most of you who are now really doing the ministry got your teeth cut into the Word of God. Then we went through the People Ministry, and I taught you how to deal with people. Then we went through the Principles, which God works by. Then I took you through the Patterns of Human Nature, understanding why people do the things they do. Teaching you biblical counseling based on the Word of God and understanding definitive passages like Thursday night. Then how God will always give us patterns, models through the principles. God will develop in you in time, through the light, (verse one) a sixth sense of the Word of God. This is not spooky stuff. This is not charismatic gobbledygook. This is you getting the Bible in you, which is light, and it beginning to illuminate what you look at.

Every situation you will face, you start out by understanding God never violates His own principles. So you stay with the principles. You will learn that the principles and the patterns that will lead to spiritual growth, what we try to build into you here, those are the good ones. Ah, but you will also learn the patterns and see them unfold in a person's life that will lead to disaster. Those will be the bad ones. But in time, through the light, through God giving you wisdom and understanding, you yourself will never be vulnerable. You should never become a victim. You should see and understand what is sure in life and what is not sure in life. Verse one tells us that the Word of God is light.

It says in John 1:5, that light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.

And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. John 1:5

The real tragedy is most of God's people who are saved and, in the light, do not comprehend it either. It will illuminate and line up every situation in life of the people you work with. It says that Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path everywhere you go, that you can see what is coming and never get blindsided. That is what the devil wants to do. He wants to blindside you. He wants you as a Christian to turn off the light, walk through this dark world, and then nail you when you did not see it coming. There is no need for that.

In the FBI, you have people who are called profilers. These are people who will study the patterns of different criminals, obviously for the ability to catch them. If you have a serial killer out there who is killing people in a certain way, that is a pattern. Serial killers do not change their pattern. So they study the pattern and they look for the mistake that somebody is ultimately going to make, and that is how they catch them. So, if a man is a serial rapist. If he is a pedophile, or he is a terrorist. It does not matter. The ungodliness of man will always fall into a pattern. The FBI is smart enough to know that if they profile that kind of lifestyle criminal, they can catch them. They do the same thing with the weather when you have a hurricane out there in the Atlantic someplace. What do they do? They try to show you it is over here now, or it is a thousand miles off landfall. But this is the direction it is going to come, and it is going to go up the coast or it is going to go across the coast. How do they know that? Weather models based on previous weather patterns. They come up with showing you where it is going to go.

I had a buddy of mine one time who worked in the federal government and he worked with counterfeit money. He and I were good friends, and I always would ask questions because I wanted to know, because so much of that applies into the Bible. I said, "You know, it amazes me, you can detect counterfeit money." I said, "You have got to be on top of everything. Do you know how many different counterfeit monies that people print? How do you stay up on all of that and find it?" He laughed and he said, "Well, that is not how we do it." I said, "What do you mean it is not how we do it?" He says, "Well, we do not study all the different fake counterfeits. We just really study what a real one looks like. When you know what a real hundred-dollar bill looks like, the phonies just stand up and scream."

When you really want to know what a real soldier for Jesus Christ looks like, the phonies will stand up and scream. Knowing what is real, your fellowship depends on it. Knowing what is real, knowing who is real. Building profiles by which people will do things, by the patterns of human nature that are all found in the Bible. God will do this through the lives of people. We call this character studies when you study them in the Bible. I call them profiling studies. God will do it through people found in the Bible that through their lives, their circumstances, their dealing with God, what they do right, what they do wrong, will all fill a pattern. I am telling you, from Genesis where he said, "Yea, hath God said?" to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John where he said, "We have no king but Caesar," these are all patterns.

You know, I do not give two plug nickels for scholarship. I have a great detest for anybody who tries to destroy and take a stand against the King James Bible. That is my own personal deal. I

am not asking you to be part of it, but you ought to be. But you know why I take that stand? The pattern. You know the first time the devil shows up in the Bible? It is in Genesis chapter 3. You know the first question in the Bible? It was not asked by God. The second question in the Bible was asked by God, but the first question in the Bible was asked by the devil in Genesis 3. Did you ever read it? He comes up to Eve and he says, "Yea, hath God said?" Question mark. Then he changed what God said and corrupted man for the next 6,000 years. That is a pattern.

Now, **I believe we have a perfect absolute Word of God. If you do not, that is your problem.** I believe that God, if He is going to judge me by a Bible, He could not judge me by an imperfect Bible because it would be an imperfect judgment. I could always find a loophole. He gave us an absolute perfect inspired Bible by which He will judge us. But the devil will tiptoe into your life and whisper in your ear through higher education, "Do you really think God knew what He was talking about?" That is where it starts. That is my pattern. So, 6,000 years when I see at Bob Jones University or Tennessee Temple or Baptist Bible College or wherever the case may be, and some professor gets up and does the same thing in class that the devil did in Genesis chapter 3, I do not have to pray about it. Right there. Pattern!

I see the Jews going through what they are going through. I mean, the Holocaust, the Dark Ages, and even today in America, turning on the Jews. But I understand the pattern. Patterns of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Let his blood be on us and our children That is where it started. God has carried it through. Patterns.

Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children. Matthew 27:25

I am telling you; I have tried to give them to you. You have to know this, if you will serve God faithfully for the next 50, 60 years, God bless you. But at some time, you are going to look back and you are going to see that there were people out there that were your enemies for the cause of Christ and tried to hurt you, tried to stop you, and it will be both with God's people and the world. But I must say mainly it will be God's people. You are going to find those who hate you because of your stand on the Word of God and they will not take one. You are going to find that when you build your family right and you do what is right with your family and your family grows up, they are going to have a problem with you because theirs did not. Because you were not willing to compromise. It is going to come your way.

There is a blessing in that. I have been in this ministry 50 plus years. I have written a lot of books. But there is always one I wanted to write and I will probably never write it. But it is about my life journey of preaching the Word of God, ministering to people, pastoring churches, and all the people that were against me. The name of that book is simple: "Where are you now?" Divorced, kids in hell, you are dead. You see, there is a great lesson in that. When you decide you are going to do what God wants you to do and nobody is going to stop you. Why? That is why he says, "I am not afraid. I am not going to fear." Why? Because you know why? They are going to try to stop you in their strength. Look at verse one. "*The LORD is the strength of my life.*" You see, as good as they are, as good as they think they are, somebody in their strength can never match God's strength in your life. The quicker you learn that, the better off you are going to be. I am telling you. When tough times come, these are the kind of things you encourage yourself in.

➤ 2.) The Wicked Seeking to Devour verse 2

*2. When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me **to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.***

3. Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.

Doctrinally, this will be the Antichrist during the tribulation, actually killing and eating the Jews and drinking their blood in cannibalistic worship to the Antichrist. You will find this in Isaiah 6, you will find it in Psalm 14, Psalm 16, Psalm 44, and Micah chapter 3. It is all through the Old Testament. But people are ignorant of his devices. That is doctrinally. Inspirationally, it is very clear. This will be a reference to 1 Peter 5:8, where it says:

8. Be sober; be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 1 Peter 5:8

He wants to swallow you up, to eat you alive. The world, if you let it, you lose the fellowship, you go back to the world. The world will swallow you up because the devil will make sure he brings the strongholds in your life that you can never break.

Now, I need to say this to you. You need to listen. Growing in the Lord is a great thing. I tell you, you can never stop growing. But you need to understand something. This is where so many of God's people check off, get off the bus. They do not understand what I am about to say. You all want to learn the Bible; you all love the Bible. That Bible study we had last Thursday night from the high school kids was one of the greatest things that I have ever done. I really enjoyed it, really impressed me. I will watch you one Thursday night. I will watch what God has done in your life with the Bible. But here it comes. Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived told us in Ecclesiastes 1:18

18. For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

You better write that down in your Bible at some point today, mark that in red, yellow, blue, purple, in every color you can find. The more you get into God's Word and you start to deal with God's people, you are going to find there are some things that are going to break your heart when dealing in the ministry. You see, when you did not want to think about the Bible, when you were just dumb and stupid, you never worked with anybody, your life was a big lollipop. You could lick it whenever you wanted to. But once you decide you are going to publish the Word of God and speak of His wondrous works, you are going to keep that fellowship based on a sure house. You are going to start to work. Now, when you begin to work with people, you are going to see the depravity of man and his sin. One of the most heartbreaking scenarios and circumstances that you are ever going to get into. You are going to see and deal with people who molest little children. You are going to get in and deal with people who have been molested as kids by somebody in their own family. They went and told their mother and the mother blamed the child and not the person that was doing it. These are things you are going to have to deal with. Don't ever say to yourself, "I wish I would have stayed fat, stupid, and happy back here." No, no, no.

Hey, **when you are going to do the ministry, it is a battle. It is a warfare.** You are up against the most wicked, vile thing you are ever going to face and an evil human nature. You are going to see man's depravity. That will be hard on you. You will see people who are a disaster. You will see families that generation after generation after generation has produced nothing. You are going to try to give to them because that is what you do. You are going to try to open up your life, open up your home, open up your world to them to try to embrace them out of the darkness of that family. You will never be able to do it. They will use you, they will lie to you. They will take everything you have and find a better deal. It is not the fact that they use you that would bother you. It is not the fact that they would lie to you that hurt you. Oh no, it is the fact that you see a family that is so dysfunctional. When you look in the dictionary, find the word dysfunctional, the family picture is there. The real grief and the real sorrow is you know you have the truth to help them. You could take that darkness and turn it into light. You could fix every problem that they have. But it will not happen. That will grieve you in your heart. It will bring sorrow to you. Do not ever say, "Well, you know, I just wish that I stayed dumb and happy and now I got into this." No, no, when you start to publish the truth of God's Word and turn on the light, not everybody wants the light.

I have seen grandparents take those grandkids and try to do everything with them. But after years and years and years of those kids seeing the godless depravity of mom and dad, try as you will, as good as you may try, those kids are never going to make it. You cannot undo what God's program is designed to do, and that is train up a child in the way he should go. Or you do not train up a child, and away they go.

You will find people who once loved God. My life is filled with this one, and they are good people, they are not bad people. They once loved the Lord, they once loved God, the Word of God was everything, and then something happened. Now there is no love for God anymore, no caring about the things of the Lord or the Word of God. You are going to see and have to deal with lives that are destroyed. You will stand there with the Word of God in your hand. You will stand there with the truth. You will stand there with the light! **But light rejected becomes lightning. God's judgment.** It is going to tear your heart out. It is going to keep you up all night some nights. You will try to focus on something to have a good time and all you will think about is that family or that person. It will tear your heart out that you have got what they need but they do not want what you have. Yeah, there is joy and happiness in the ministry. Yes, there is, but there is also grief and sorrow.

I know this is true for so many of your lives. People that you invested your life in, people that you took in, people that you actually tried to help, at the end of the day, they get a better deal and they turn on you. The quicker you learn that, folks, the better off you are going to be. That is why you can never let that stop you. My philosophy is I save as many of them as I can. Some I will, some I will not. But you never focus on the ones you lose. You always focus on the one that God gives you and you grow.

➤ 3.) When I am Surrounded, I will be Confident & not Fear Verse 3

3. Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.

You see, these are the keys, my dear friend, to encouraging yourself in the Lord. I told you the Bible will have a pattern and a model and a principle for everything you face. There will be a time when it seems like you are surrounded by the world, the flesh, and the devil. Like David, who was the greatest king, that only wanted the best for the people, but they wanted to stone him. There will be times in your life where you too will be surrounded.

The model for this will be found in 2 Kings 6:8-18. You have the story of Elisha. Elisha is the prophet of God. He is up against the wicked king of Syria. This is the picture historically, but inspirationally, of you being the man or the woman of God up against the wicked king of Syria. Elisha defies him. He wants Elisha to do this. Elisha says, "Absolutely not. I am going to do what God wants me to do." He took his stand with the people of God. So the king of Syria sends an army. He finds out where Elisha is and he sends an army, and that army surrounds the encampment of Elisha. The mountaintops, the valleys, the roads, completely surrounded and encircled. In the morning, Elisha, the man of God, has a young guy with him. This will be a picture of your pastor or some of the older Christians here that work with you and you are just a young Christian. This young guy comes out. "Oh, what a beautiful morning. Oh, this is wonderful. Oh, I am going to wash my face, brush my teeth, get in some prayer." Oh, he looks around at all around the mountains, and he sees the king of Syria in his army. This little guy runs in and wakes up Elisha. Who is sleeping very solemnly, by the way. He says, "Why are you sleeping? We are surrounded. There is no way out of this. What are we going to do?" This is where David was in Psalm 27:3 and where you will be. This is where David says, "when I am compassed about, I will have confidence and my heart shall not fear."

Elisha walks out of that tent, looks around, puts his arm around that kid and pulls him and he says, "Now learn something, son. See all those people up there? Fear not." That is what I am telling you young guys and gals. Fear not. He says, "For they that be with us are more than they that be against us." About that time, God opens that little guy's eyes and he sees the host of Syria all around him, but all on top of them is the company of innumerable angels of God, going to destroy the army of Syria. When you get surrounded, and if you do what is right, you encourage yourself in the Lord in places like 2 Kings chapter 6. You just open your eyes and you see, no matter who is against you, greater is He that is for you. Here lies the pattern.

One more profile on not fearing your enemy. I have told you before, there is a mini-series out that I think probably every kid ought to watch. Every parent ought to sit down and go through with them. There are two, but the first one is Band of Brothers, which is the commentary, a 10-part mini-series on World War II and the famous 101st Airborne. The second one is The Pacific, which deals with the Marines that fought the Pacific. But in Band of Brothers, it shows you how these guys as a company, Easy Company, end up in the Battle of Bastogne as it unfolds, which we know as the Battle of the Bulge. Hitler's last endeavor to try to win the war was to secretly put together 200 divisions, sneak them through the Ardennes Forest, where the weakest part of

the American lines was, cut the supply line and hopefully get to gain the advantage to get us to surrender or at least make some kind of peace. Bastogne was a city that had seven roads in and out. It was the hub. There was nowhere they were going to survive without Bastogne. The Germans could never pull it off, and they stuck all the troops they could find, but they sent the 101st Airborne and the 82nd into Bastogne. They pulled them out of a rest area. The weather was like 20 degrees below zero, snow on the ground, they did not have any winter clothing. Sometimes they only had two or three rounds of ammunition between them. They were stuck in that forest to hold off that impending German army, and they held that thing for day after day after day after day. A reporter comes in and he is interviewing for the folks back home, and he gets with Captain Winters, who is the commander of Easy Company, and he is talking to him and he sees they do not have any food, they do not have any clothing, they do not have any ammo, they do not have any supplies, and he says to them, "Captain, don't you know that you are surrounded?" His answer was classic. His answer has encouraged me as a child of God and a soldier of Jesus Christ ever since I heard it. You know what he said? He said to him, "Captain, don't you know you are surrounded?" He says, "We are paratroopers. We are supposed to be surrounded." We are Christians, we are soldiers. You are supposed to be surrounded. Yet, we fold up.

Along with that great story, will be the great principle found in Isaiah 54:17,

17. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.

You see, this is the promise to every child of God who will take their stand. This is the promise that when you get surrounded, whenever your world falls apart, this is how you encourage yourself in the Lord and never lose that fellowship.

➤ 4.) Our Eternal Fellowship with Christ & to Behold the Beauty of the Lord verse 4

4. One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.

He says one thing here, but we are going to break it down into two so you can better understand it. The first thing he says, "*that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life.*" Doctrinally, that will be the Jew going into the millennium and dwelling in the land in the house of the Lord forever. Psalms 23:6:

6. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

We gave you that. But for you and for me, it is our eternal fellowship with Christ that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, never allowing anything to break that

fellowship. I told you, **remember the number one thing God did this whole thing for was the fellowship with His creation.** Right now, I have to walk in the light as He is the light to have that fellowship in this old dark world. But I am telling you, when He comes back, I will not walk in the light, I will be the light. I will have my glorified body, (1 Corinthians 15) and we will fellowship all together and nothing will ever break it. But you have everything you need, make sure nothing breaks it now.

➤ To Behold the Beauty of the Lord

The second thing, "*to behold the beauty of the LORD and to enquire in his temple.*" Folks, there is only one way you can truly behold the beauty of the Lord. That is in the book of Song of Solomon, God's personal love letter to every one of us. It is in the Song of Solomon you will find how Christ looks at you and how much He loves you. But it also shows us how I should look at Him and how much I should love Him. There is a description of the Lord Jesus Christ in there that is one of the greatest descriptions found anywhere of who the Lord is, what He looks like, all of His character qualities, that you and I can behold the beauty of the Lord. Then he says, "*and to enquire in his temple,*" that is your body. My inquiring all about Him through the temple, my body, in a Book that will reveal Himself for Him.

Want another pattern, another profile? Genesis chapter 24:65. If you guys do not sing the Camel Train during the conference, you go be Episcopalians, you are out of this church. Someday I am going to have them sing it. It is out of Genesis chapter 24, I am going to have them sing it and I am going to preach it. It is a story about Abraham, God the Father, sending his servant, Eliezer, type of the Holy Spirit, to find a Gentile bride, Rebekah, for his son Isaac, type of Christ. *Oh, get ready, the evening shadows fall, can't you hear Eliezer call, there is going to be a wedding, our joy will soon begin, in the evening when the camel train comes in.* Come on guys, get up here, let's sing! I am just kidding. Camel train, what a story! God the Father, Abraham wanted a bride for his son and sent the Holy Spirit of God to find every one of you. So, Eliezer finds her, Rebekah. Oh, and is she a darling? When you study her, you really see what God is looking for. You guys sing it and I will preach it. But then he says to her the same thing the Holy Spirit of God asked you. John told about it in his testimony this morning, John, the Holy Spirit of God asked you this. It asked every one of you this. When you came to a point in your life the Holy Spirit of God said, "Will you go with this man?" And she says, "Yes, I will go." Here comes the good part. He says, "*to behold the beauty of the Lord and to enquire in his temple.*" All through that story in chapter 24, we get down to 65, he is taking her to meet Isaac. It is a picture of our journey to go to meet my Isaac in the evening when the camel train comes in. All the time they are going, she is saying to Eliezer, Holy Spirit of God, "What kind of man is he?" She wants to know what Isaac is really like, and she is a picture of the church. You and me should be inquiring in that Book of what manner of man He is through our fellowship. I know we are not supposed to talk in tongues, but I am about that close.

➤ 5.) The Sacrifices of Joy verses 5-6

5. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.

*6. And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle **sacrifices of joy**; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.*

We see the ultimate victory here we have against all of our enemies. Doctrinally, going back and forth, this will be Israel running into the wilderness, Matthew 24, Revelation 12, and God preparing a place and protecting her. Inspirationally, it is Him in my time of trouble, literally hiding me from my enemies in the secret place of His tabernacle. He hides me there. Then He sets my feet upon a rock, a sure house (last week), even footing. Then He lifts up my head above my enemies round about me. I am able to see what the enemies could never see, and that is God's presence and God's deliverance through His strength. This will be in Song of Solomon 4:4, Psalms 144:2, and other places.

My goodness, and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; my shield, and he in whom I trust; who subdueth my people under me. Psalms 144:2

This will be the Tower of David, the high tower where God lifts you up. In fact, in Song of Solomon 4:4, it talks about the neck of David's tower.

Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men. Song of Solomon 4:4

He lifts up your head higher than your enemies, and through the principles and the precepts and the patterns and the profiles, you can always see what is coming. For those of you that love the Bible, I call it David's high tower. For those of you who are hillbillies in southern Missouri, it is God's deer stand. Elevate you off the ground so you can see a perspective that you cannot see on even ground. Then offering the sacrifice of joy. Sing praises unto the Lord. All this is based on the victory we have in Him through His Word. **Our ability through the patterns, the principles, the examples, and the ensamples to live above any circumstance in life and never lose our fellowship. Offering the sacrifice of joy.**

I told you that in November and December we have set aside those months over and above our regular giving. I want to pay for all the missionaries, give them a love offering, take care of everybody, take care of your kids, and pay for everything. You know I have talked about two months of sacrificial giving, but now we are going to change that. Now it is going to be an offering every week of the sacrifice of joy. Us giving sacrificially based on the joy that we have that we can give sacrificially to give that joy to somebody else. It is just that simple. Our missions conference is going to be about us coming to the place where we go to the next level that we now give the sacrifice of joy. **Our sacrifice based on His sacrifice that gave me my joy that we can now sacrifice to give that joy to somebody that does not have that joy. Giving so others may have the joy that we have through our reaching the world and giving out the gospel.** 40,000 Johns and Romans going to India. How that will shine at the judgment seat of

Christ. What makes it shine even better, we do not know who gets them, where they go, or what happens to them. Those are the great blessings of the judgment seat. That you and I could sacrificially give here that they might have the joy that we have.

IV. Summary

Now, you could put all these past weeks together and we have one more next week that I am going to talk to you about. Chapter 25, we learned about building a sure house and I gave you all the building blocks that you needed. In chapter 26, once you have built a sure house, you have to keep growing spiritually. Chapter 27, in the midst of the battle, of which Ecclesiastes 8:8 says, "there is no discharge from this war." When you are compassed about and surrounded, when they turn on you, when it looks like everything in this world is against you, you now have everything you need, like David, to encourage yourself in the Lord and never lose the victory, never lose the fellowship. It is probably impossible because we all do things that break that fellowship. Next week, I am going to show you how to fix that. Consistently our fellowship should be down here and when the rapture comes, we just pick it up over there.