

## I. Introduction to the Conference

Today, I'm going to take a little deviation from Psalms. Of course, for the next two weeks, we won't be in Psalms; we'll be at our conference. If you haven't received your review from last week, it's in the bookstore and online. We're glad you're feeling better; you were under the weather last week. This is going to be a great time. Thank you very much. To my sister Sharon and John, who are watching, I have your Predator Bigfoot camouflage shirt on that you sent me for Christmas, along with six other shirts. I want you to know this is my favorite. I love it, and I slept in it last night. It's a little wrinkled, but we're good to go. Thank you very much. We love you. You're the best sister and brother-in-law, really, you're my brother, that one could ever have. So thank you for that. We'll be sending you one of the bean bags because I know you have a bad back, Sharon.

Today, I want to lay out for you what, without a doubt, is the most important week of our year as a church. We are just one week away from kicking off and starting the Mission and Bible Conference, a combination conference. But first, I want to talk about our team that we sent to Costa Rica. They are now, obviously, back home. These 15 people, and Miles had some of his down there when we worked together, formed the first international mission trip of our church. They were our pathfinders. They were the first team in to learn the lessons of going to another culture. They have now truly set the standard and the model for our future missionary trips. They're going to be invaluable.

*Sam, the missionary down there, sent me a copy of his prayer letter. He was talking about the things at the church, and then he said this: "We also are thankful for Miles Wallace and the work teams from Talking Rock Baptist Church and the Old Path Baptist Church. Their visit was a great blessing, not only because of how much they accomplished, but also because of their unity, servant hearts, and their dedication. They completed several important projects on the church and camp property, including painting the roofs, installing gates, improving stairways, painting camp bunk beds, and adding lighting throughout the property. They also helped with additional electrical work and general campus improvements, all essential safety upgrades. While they were here, we also went out together to distribute John's enrollment throughout the community. They gave away over 3,000 booklets that included an additional invitation to our church's Christmas program. In a predominantly Catholic culture, this outreach provided a valuable opportunity to reach individuals who might not otherwise attend a church service."*

Both Miles and the missionary told Danny that no group that has ever gone down there compared to the team we sent them with what we got done. In fact, the missionary said that when our team left, they were a year ahead on their projects. It's an example of how I've tried to teach you. The teams blended together. We talked about the four essentials of making a mission trip a success: flexibility, adaptability, compatibility, and durability. This team was truly pulled together that way. All of them, even though they may be on different levels spiritually in their growth, are definitely leaders on their different levels and can work together as a team to accomplish the

mission. They're a great example, and they're the first ones that we've sent out internationally. We have sent them to other churches, obviously, to New York and Boston and all those places. This is the first team that was really the test for our church.

## II. Leadership Training and Discipline

I told you years ago, some of you will remember this and some of you will not, that my style of ministry is different than most men's style of ministry. I understand the concept when the Bible talks about the warfare of the believer, that Jesus Christ is the captain of our salvation, and that we are to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. I understand that completely. I told you from the get-go that my style of training leaders, men and women, will be different than most places that you will go.

I remember telling you that within the military community, you have many special operations groups. Within the 82nd Airborne, which is the oldest airborne in America, you have today what they call the Rapid Deployment Battalion. That is a section of the 82nd Airborne that can be dropped into any part of the world and in 24 hours be there, get a handle on the situation, and begin to do what needs to be done. I remember telling you that that was my model for you. I want to be able to train you to the point where when God gives us something to do, like Costa Rica, and that was the model test, I can pull 15 of you who all have different lives, different skills, and different gifts to bring to it, and then drop you into a place in another culture where they don't speak your language, where the food is different, the people are different, and yet you blend together. Everybody pulls together to do the work.

This is why I train you in a no-nonsense commitment here. I hold you to a higher accountability than most pastors do their people, because to whom much is given, much is required. My leaders are held to a higher standard of accountability in ministry. When I give you part of my ministry, which is my life, I have standards that I expect you to follow, standards that I myself hold myself accountable to. This team going down there is the perfect example. The great thing about it, I told Miles this, and he was telling me this, the great thing about it, I could pick the next 150 people out of this church, almost throw you in a team. It isn't just those 15. I could pull from this church 100 more people, throw you into teams, and you'd accomplish it the same way, because of the way you've been trained, because of the way that you have been disciplined, the way you have built in your life your own self-discipline. It just isn't discipline about the Word of God; it's discipline in how you deal with the Word of God in your life. This is what sets you apart.

This church, in my mind, this church is something special. I don't mean to say that there aren't other churches out there that are doing it, and there are other churches. I don't look at what we have here as that we are better than anybody else, because we're not really better than anybody else. But I'll tell you what we are: we're better off than most others, because of what you have. You have the living Word of God. You have disciplined yourself through the training of this church and the leadership of this church to be able to go to another culture. God drops you in. Go through a 20-hour plane ride, a bus trip that gets you someplace, get up at 5:30 in the morning, take cold showers because there's no hot water, cannibals all around you at night. No, there aren't any cannibals; I'm just throwing that in there. You get the job done. You know why? Because

God's got His hand on this church. We don't deserve it, but God has His hand on this church. As I said, it's not just the Word of God that you have, but it's the level of discipline that you have with the Word of God.

I don't ask you to do anything that I don't do myself. I don't lead from the rear with the gear. You have to lead from out front. Building leaders is my calling in life for my ministry. It's the only thing I really know how to do good in life.

➤ **Three Keys to Building Leadership:**

1. Leadership is always leading from the top down. There has to be an order of leadership.
2. Everything in life in this church and our ministry will rise and fall on that leadership.
3. Leadership is always from the top down, but there will be times when you're a leader in this, and the next time somebody else will lead, and the next time somebody else will lead. Great leaders are great followers. They can adapt to anything that needs to be done.

I understand not everybody makes the cut. I realize that. I understand that. That doesn't make them bad people. I'm looking for something special in people, and you don't find it in everybody today. But that doesn't make them bad people. It just makes the fact that you have something that God sees in you that He showed me in you that is able to be developed. Because of that, this is why our team was a great success. This is why every team that we send out, no matter who's leading it, will be a success. It's like the old song says, if I can remember the words, "100 men will test today, but only three win the Green Beret." It's special. It's special. In the special operations community, it was built around 10-man teams called A-Teams. So 10 men could be dropped into a jungle someplace with indigenous people. They could pull those people together and they could train 400, 500, 600 people to do what they need to do to protect themselves. It's not for everybody. It takes a special kind of man and woman. That doesn't mean that you all go on a trip someplace. It's not about that. It's about understanding the whole church as a cadre with a goal and a purpose of now on this level that we're going to see in the conference where God is going to take us. But you're going to find that those of you who stay and grow and you make the cut, He has something special for you, special for this church, special for your families.

For me, the great joy is watching what God does in your life. The greatest joy that any pastor can have, and I don't even know if most pastors understand this, but the greatest joy for me is to watch you come in here, watch you fall in love with the Word of God, watch you buy into the ministry God has given me, and then together, as co-laborers, we build it up through the layers, and now here we are. Here we are.

### **III. Conference Preparations and Vision**

Last year in our Bible conference, we did 40,000 John's and Romans. Miles was blown away. He told me, he says, he walked in and he saw 200 people in all the rooms downstairs, putting the Bibles together, coordinated, everybody working together. One section over here, one section here, one section here, the binders, the cutters, the staplers, and everybody. He says, "You know, in both churches I go to, I can't get 20 or 30 people to come out." You see, Miles loves this

church because he needs what this church has. But at the same time, Miles has what we need. The beauty is the Holy Spirit of God bringing us together.

I will build this year's conference, missions conference, around our Costa Rica team and recognize them. On the first night, which is Friday night, as we start the preaching, we're going to award them the coveted missionary specialist patch and the challenge coins that I've had developed for the camaraderie between the mission teams. Everybody that goes on a team from this point on will have a ceremony where we award that. A picture of the team will be taken, and it will go up there on the wall that we can look at those pictures and thank God for the legacy that he's given us in this church. I have some real surprises for you this week that are coming up that I'm not going to tell you about today.

I preached a while back about our missionary vision of going to our Jerusalem, to Judea, Samaria, and into the uttermost parts of the world. That's where we're at now. You're built to a different standard that produces a different level. That's why it doesn't matter if it's 200 people here this weekend putting the Bibles together, 15 of you going down to Costa Rica, or two or three here, four or five here, going to Africa, going to the Dominican Republic, going where? You'll work as a team because of the way you've been trained, because of the fact that God has got His hand on you, and you're something special.

Having said that, today I want to lay out for you this incredible week. Let's have a word of prayer, and then we'll get into this.

Father, we do thank you and praise you for the Lord Jesus. We love you. We thank you for all that you do for us. I couldn't be prouder as a pastor of these people. Lord, I know we're just like any other church. We have our problems. We have our issues. I get all that. We have people. I get all of that. But Lord, you've done something special with these people. Lord, you've done something special with this church, this little podunk church in a little town that goes back to right after the Civil War. Yet, Lord, you've taken us and you have let us touch the world through everything that you blessed us with. Lord, we need to understand that. We need to understand that it's because of people like this that this church can reach out with the sacrifice of joy and give to others what they don't have based on what you've given us. We'll be careful to give you the honor and the praise. We look so forward to the men coming in. Help me develop this today into an understandable format so each kid, each person, each mom and dad, each family can understand the value and the importance of this next week. We'll thank you and praise you in Jesus' name for our sake we ask it. Amen.

#### IV. My Christmas Gift to You

I have one really major goal in mind for our conference, but it really comes in two parts. The daytime, you got your schedules last week, and Danny and Jamie went through all of that for you. So that's your section there. When it comes to what I'm going to preach on today, which is the events during the evening, there are two parts to that that I want you to understand about this incredible week. I want to show you today how to get the very most out of the week that God has given us. There are two parts of this week. As I said, during the day, that's all taken care of. You

know what we're doing now. You can come to that as you want. Then we have the evening, and this is what I want to talk about.

It's Christmas time. It's a season for gifts, family, giving, spending time together. I know I have the kids in here today. If you want to put your hands over the kids' ears right now, that might be a good idea. I don't want to ruin their Christmas for them. You definitely put your hands on Jan's ears, please. And somebody else, hold her nose too so she can't breathe.

Most of you know this. I understand the concept of Christmas has nothing to do with the Bible. Jesus was not born on December 25th. I know you're told that. I know on your Christmas cards you have the manger scene with the star over the head with the three wise men. But when you go through your Bible in Luke and Matthew, you find out that those are two different events. They didn't happen at the same time that way. But it's Christmas. I get that. December 25th, if you go back in history, and you, this information, a guy said one time, "Where did you learn all that stuff?" I said, "It's a conspiracy. They hide that stuff in books." You go to any public library and find out that December 25th was the birthday of Baal the Sun God. It had nothing to do with Jesus Christ.

Santa Claus, I get it. If you would go to Europe where Santa Claus originated, he's called Saint Nicholas. Saint Nicholas is the Roman Catholic saint for children. If you would go to Europe, go anywhere in Europe and you see Santa Claus, you'll have a pope's miter hat on because he's connected to the Roman Catholic Church. It's okay. It's okay. Now, you go to Jeremiah chapter 10, and you can see the Christmas tree is the center of Baal worship on December 25th. They put little balls on it to make it a fake tree of life. The Bible tells you right there that they go out in the woods, they cut it out of a tree with an axe, they put it in a house, they decorate all that up, and it's for Baal. Israel was told not to have anything to do with that. I have no problem with that. I understand. It's okay. I know there are a lot of churches out there that take a hard stand against Christmas. Hey, that's your deal, man. I'm okay with that. If you want to be that way, that's okay.

I have taken the three most pagan holidays that are made into Christianity. Well, two of them, anyhow. Halloween, Day of the Dead, Easter, Astarte, goddess of fertility, nothing to do with the resurrection of Christ in the book of Acts, and of course, Christ Mass. Christ Mass, called X-mas. X marks the spot or your Twitter account, but that's between you and whoever, your provider.

Bottom line is this: I'm told in Philippians 1, verse 18, to preach Christ in pretense or truth. Now, take the three most pagan days and turn them around as outreach days to win people to Christ. Because I am told, whether you understand it or not, that I'm to preach Christ in pretense or truth. Pretense is situations just like this that aren't really biblical or really Christian, but you can use it to win people to Christ. The world is destroyed, even though Christmas is what it is, it's a fun time. I enjoy it. But the world even has to destroy it. You realize last week, a couple of leading Democrats are now saying that the Christmas song, "Jingle Bells," is a racist song. Now, how do you get racist out of "Jingle Bells"? I don't really understand, unless it's, I don't even have a clue. But that's where we're at.

I was at the fitness center the other day. I never say this, the guy said, he's going on and on and on. He says, "Oh yeah," he says the word, and he's a Christian, nice guy, evangelical, doesn't

know anything about the Bible, nice guy. He says, "Yeah, this whole world," and I'm not working out, you know, and I'm lifting 6,000 pounds, you know, and he comes up to me and he says, "This whole world," he says, "Hey, they just got to take Christ out of Christmas, don't they?" I said, "Yeah, they do." In my mind, I'm thinking he's never been in it in the first place. But I get it. I'm okay with it. I'll say Merry Christmas. We sang Christmas carols. I mean, we deck our halls with bells of folly, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la. I mean, I get it. There are certain churches that know Christmas, know Halloween, know Easter. I mean, it's okay if that's your deal. But you know what? In pretense or truth, we preach Christ. We find every avenue we can. If I can use something that the world has made Christian, that people identify with, to win them to Christ, because if we get a little more sympathetic, I'm going to do that. If you don't want to do it, it's okay.

Hey, I understand the real Christmas, the real Christmas, the real Christmas, like the originals, the real Christians, is found in Revelation chapter 11 during the tribulation period. There's the real Christmas. It's just where it's all going to. But hey, you don't have to worry about that. You want to enjoy your family, buy your kids gifts, have fun. If you want to believe in Santa Claus, that's fine. If you don't want to believe in Santa Claus, I have some people, "Well, I would never have my kids believe in Santa Claus." Okay. But you put a dollar under their pillow because of the tooth fairy. Or you'll let them watch comics on Saturday morning with Heckle and Jeckle, the Wile E. Coyote and all that stuff. You don't even stop to think about how the devil has set that up, that every one of your little things you guys watch is an unclean animal in the book of Leviticus. You say, "Well, you know, but we've graduated now. We don't have those anymore." Now you have the transponders. You have the hero men, Captain America, Captain S, Captain S. Those are the guys in Genesis chapter 6. It's okay. Believe in Santa Claus or not believe in Santa Claus or the Easter Bunny or whatever the case may be. We'll never send your kid to hell. What will send your kids to hell is parents who don't get them into the Word of God and teach them what needs to be right. End of story.

It's okay for me. It's a time of being with my family as it should be with you. And giving gifts to them because, you know, they're special and I love them. If I can use this time, not only to reach others, but to take a little time and to have special with my family and you, I'm going to do that. But having said that, I want you to understand something. I want you to understand my thinking behind our upcoming conference. It's my Christmas gift to you. I can think of no better gift to give my people than the gift of the next level of your Christian maturity.

*2 Corinthians 9:15. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.*

The unspeakable gift that God gave us was the Lord Jesus Christ. There's no gift that any man can give you that will match the gift that God gave you. I'm telling you right now, there's no greater gift that you'll get this year or any time in your life than the gift that I want to give you. Walmart cards a while back came up with a little slogan, "The gift that keeps on giving." Well, what I want to give you is the gift that also keeps on giving right up to the judgment seat of Christ.

I've been in this business over a half a century now. I just had a daughter that turned 50 years old. You don't look 50. 60, 65 maybe, but not 50. You still look like you're 35 or 40, except for that gray streak down the air where you got to get that thing, you need to get that worked on. In my office there's one of those big Marks-A-Lot that's black. Go get it and just color her. You're beautiful. You're welcome. Did I mess up my Christmas gift by doing any of this? I'm not so naive that all of you will love my gift. It'll be just like whatever other gift you get at Christmas, you'll open it up and you'll say, "Wrong size. This is not my color. It's not my style."

Unfortunately, you'll have people in any church, no matter where it would be, when you open up the box of the week that God's going to give us, it won't fit you. But those of you who see the gift for what it is, your life will never be the same. Also, the future generations of your children will never be the same. It will set the course for our future as a church till the Lord comes back.

This is my gift to you. I mean, I could have bought you all Nike shoes, or I could have bought you all sweatshirts with my picture on it. I could have done anything. This is the best gift I could ever give you. You have no idea. It would have been a lot easier just to put it on a credit card and buy you something than it was to put in hundreds and hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of hours to get you to this point where I can give you what I'm going to give you this next week.

## V. Missions Conference: Sunday, December 28th - Tuesday, December 30th

Let's see what God has for us. Let's talk about the missions conference first. It's going to run Sunday the 28th, 29th, and 30th. Families, putting 40,000 Johns and Romans together that's destined for India. I can't think of any greater gift for you to give your children. I'm saying buy them whatever they want. Buy them the little toys or trinkets, whatever the case may be. But please don't miss the greatest tool you have this next week is, yes, to show them what you provided for them, but then to show them what this conference is going to be.

I'd get a map. Point to where India is. Show them the surrounding countries. Maybe get a little background on the religion of India and tell them that we as a family are going to put the Word of God together to send to this thing. Though we got our gifts at Christmas, we had a great time. We now want to give and send the gift that keeps on giving to others that don't have it. Use it. It's a tool. You put Bibles together. You say, "Well, my baby's just a baby." Put them in a stroller. Put them down there next to you correlating the Word of God. When my kids were growing up, and they weren't even growing up, they were little babies in the crib. I used to read the Word of God to them. Did they understand it? No. Did they answer back? No. Most of them crapped their diapers. I'm not sure what that meant. But I was smarter than to know that that little baby in that crib has a subconscious. When you read the Word of God to them, the Holy Spirit of God does something to it. When they sit next to you, and you're in no hurry. You're in no speed demon. Danny laid it out. We're projected this thing. You put that, get you a stand there, put them on a little chair in a little car seat or whatever, and put it together and just let them goo, ga, aa, goo and mess their diapers and let the Holy Spirit of God do something with them. Your kids, on whatever age level they are, this is the tool that you need to use. Don't miss it. Don't miss, don't

get all the gifts for them that you want to give them and miss the greatest one that you can give them, the one that I'm giving you.

Mike will get in town sometime Sunday afternoon, and I need you to sign up down there to help me. One person has so far. That's really encouraging. He'll get here sometime in the afternoon. We'll know next Sunday morning, and we need to be here to get it all set up, get it ready to go. There will be a quick meeting once everybody gets here, and then around five o'clock or so, whenever we get it all set up, we'll go to work and work till we get our first 13,000 done. Kevin and Kathy Bond, most of you, a lot of you met them. They're bringing their whole church over. All that church family will be here part of that whole conference. So you want to get to know them and get the fellowship of them. We're going to be doing a lot of things with them in the future. We'll talk about that in a little bit. We'll work Sunday night, Monday night, and Tuesday night, doing approximately 13,000 every night till we get it all done. The time that we'll be given later, as I said when Miles is going to get here, we'll keep you updated. But the time for putting the Word of God together will be Sunday, five to seven, Monday, six to seven-thirty or whenever, and Tuesday, seven to nine whenever we get it all well done.

Parents, right now this week, use this time to prepare your children for the real gift of our giving. Teach them about the joy of sacrifice. Talk to them about it isn't always about what we get, but also what we have to give to others. Using the gift of God that God gave them and now our responsibility to give that to somebody else. Enjoy your Christmas and your presents and your gifts for sure, but use it as an object lesson to your family putting the Word of God together and make it a special time. Don't just make it something that's on your calendar that you're going to show up to do. Make your whole family part of that.

As you know from last Sunday, Danny, and the schedule now you have, there will be daytime activities that go on almost every day. I'm not interested in that. You can come and do that. I know you all work, and some of you can do some of it, some of you are going to do all of it, some of you won't be able to do any of it. That's okay. That daytime stuff is designed so you can interact with all these missionaries. But I'm dealing with the evening time and the Bible and the family and the ministry together. You may have to pick and choose what you can do for the daytime stuff. But please don't pick and choose from the preaching.

## VI. New Year's Eve & Day

After we get the Bibles together, this brings us up to New Year's Eve. Wednesday night, we're going to have, it's going to be a pivotal night. I know we're going to do the Bibles for India. We're going to have the preaching for the adults, but I don't want to leave the children out. So that night is a perfect night to shift gears, have a night with the kids, go to Dave and Buster's. Jamie and Danny laid out, we have the room like we did last year. They're going to have dinner together. All of that is paid for by the church. That's our gift to you for all that you do. Thank you for your sacrifice for the two months that you have done. This will be not only a great time for our kids, but all of our missionaries will be there. All of the pastors and their families will be there. This will be a great time for us to fellowship with all of the speakers and the missionaries and their families. Kevin and Kathy's church is coming over that night. As you know, seven

o'clock at Dave and Buster's, we meet for dinner, and then you go out through the arcade and you do your own thing. Of course, you need to sign up for that. Jamie tweaked a few more spaces out of them, and that will be filled up by today, I am sure. Obviously, if you miss the cutoff, you can still come. You can still hang out with us. We only have so many we can feed. Again, this is about getting to know and taking the time with our special guests, the pastors and the missionaries. God will take this week to put our hearts together. That's so important. Then after that, to continue our work together over the coming years.

The events on New Year's Day are laid out in your schedule, so I'm not even going to deal with that. You can sign up for whatever you have to sign up for. Jamie explained that to you last week in Danny. If you have any questions, see them. Don't ask me. I have no idea. Mike and Margaret will be coming in that day from Mike Veach's church, pastor up there, and he'll be with us. We'll pick him up and we'll hook up with him.

## VII. Preaching Phase: No Child Care

Now let's look at the second phase. I brought you up through the Putting the Bibles Together and New Year's. Now I want to look at the preaching phase. There are certain times throughout the year that we shut down the nursery to Timothy and all of that stuff. For the conference, there's going to be no child care. I'll tell you why I do that. Two reasons.

4. Your child needs to learn to sit through a service. End of story. I have been places where somebody was teaching and the kids were in there. The kids are running up and down the aisle, running in front of everybody. I appreciate the parenting skills that many of you have that you tell your kids, "You know what? You need to learn to sit in church." If they can't sit for an hour in church, if they're made that most of them are, I'd reevaluate my parenting skills a little bit.
5. I want to give you something to work with. I don't care how old your kids are unless they're little bambinos. Whatever is preached that night, when you go home, you ought to sit down with them, take a very easy approach, break it down and say, "Now what did we all learn as a family?" And help them get the most out of it. You see, I want you to get the most out of it, but your kids need to get the most out of it.

We have some of the greatest workers that the world could ever produce that takes care of your kids. Many of you are part of that. I love and appreciate that. There comes a time when parents need to take their kids and when God gives you something, you take it home and give it to your kids. It's just not simple. I know you probably have parents, there's any church that say, "Well, you know what? I just want to sit here and enjoy it and let the..." No, no, no, no. You're missing a point. That's okay for 360 days a year. This is something special. Not only special for you, you need to make it special. Hey, I have made it special for you. You need to make it special for your kids. You say, "Well, I don't have any kids." Shut up.

## VIII. Conference Speakers and Schedule

Sunday morning, December 28th, we're going to kick it off. You do not want to miss this Sunday. This Sunday will be Mark Palma and his wife. I've known Mark for probably close to 40 years. I met him at the Old Baptist Bible blowouts up in Rochester, New York when we used to preach with Dr. Ruckman and all the gang up there. I did that for probably 15, 16 years. Mark became a good friend of mine. Mark was always into athletics. He's a very athletic guy. He's developed a ministry program to the Dominican Republic. What he does, and he'll explain it in great detail, but what he does is he uses sports, in particular soccer and pickleball. In fact, the first question he asked me if he said he was coming, "Is there any pickleball court out here?" I said, "Oh boy, do we ever. We've got a lot of time in that plan," and he's loving that, I guarantee you. But what he does is he takes teams down there and he works through a church, gets all of these kids to come. Believe me, you go into a third world country and put the word out that you're going to do that, you'll have a thousand kids there. Then they teach them, play with them, and then they minister to them and try to win them to Christ.

He told me when I talked to him on the phone 35 years ago or so, he came out to Kansas City and we had put a sports ministry together, Little League, basketball, everything. Our sports Little League program was so successful, we held Little League clinics and actually three or four of the Royal players would come out and host it. It was incredible. We used all of that as a ministry. You see us doing it on a smaller scale now with our volleyball and our softball. But it was the same concept. The coaches were men and women that I trained, the umpires were men and women that we trained. We ministered to so many families that way. He came out here and he saw that and he told me on the phone, he says, "I want you to know that when I came out there, what I'm doing in, down south, down in Rio de Janeiro, I went after that ministry back there." You want to meet this guy. You want to hear what he's got to say. Using this will be, they're going to be here the whole week. They're coming in Friday and stay until the following Monday. What an opportunity.

Some of you met him up at Rochester, up in New York at Mike Veach's 50th anniversary. I'm told that he got a group of you and sat you down and told you what he's doing. To all of you young guys and gals who were into the sports, going down to Dominican, two or three of you, four or five of you, to use your athletic skills to win people to Christ with him, he's going to lay it all out for us. He's so excited to be here. I am so excited. You do not want to miss that Sunday morning to hear him preach. It will be incredible.

Then we go through putting the Bibles together, have our New Year's Eve. Then on Friday night, after we put the Bibles together where we start officially, this will be January 2nd, our preaching. That night we will have Mike Veach as our speaker. He's the pastor from Bible Baptist Church in Staten Island. Some of you were just up there for the 50th anniversary. I preached the 40th anniversary 10 years ago. Mike is without a doubt one of the best preachers you're ever going to hear. I booked him in to preach two times. You're going to be so blessed to hear him. The Friday night service will start at 7:15. But I want you to understand this. I've arranged for a question and answer series starting at 6:30 with the missionaries, and on this Friday night it will be Mark Palma and his wife. We'll meet up in the Timothy room at 6:30. Be on time, and we're going to have a round table where you can ask them any questions you want to ask, and they'll explain in

greater detail what they are doing. You want to take advantage of this time. Mike will preach at 7:15, and it will be a powerful service, and Mike will kick it off. Tonight that will recognize our Costa Rica team and kick it off from there.

There's a song that you're being bombarded with, I'm sure, about the 12 days of Christmas. "On the first day of Christmas my true love gave to me an AK-47 with six floater magazines." You know how that thing goes. You walk through the 12 days of Christmas. In our Bible conference, God has given us the seven days of Christmas. Each day God's going to give you a gift. Each day God's going to have something new for you. We don't want to be in a hurry. I'm asking you to give God that week. The last thing I preached you last week was wait on God. I say wait. Last week he told us that we need to wait on him and this week we need to wait. Give God this whole week to show you what he has for you and then how he'll reveal himself to you. Let time be on God's side, not yours. Give yourself plenty of time to give to God this one week. I've never asked you for anything like that. I know during the day you can come and do whatever you're allowed to do. I know you got to work, but when these preaching services start Sunday morning, Friday night, Saturday night, and then Sunday morning, I'm asking my people be here and meet with these people and get as much from him as you can.

That takes care of Friday night with Mike. Now Saturday, that'll be January 3rd, will be a great time for our ladies in our church in the morning. Kevin and Kathy Bond and their family, they pastor a Living Word, a Bible church right down the road here. They're going to be here with their whole family and most of their church. It was 35 years ago, maybe longer than that. Kevin and Kathy were the first couple that I sent out of my ministry to missionaries to Australia. They did a phenomenal job down in Australia, was down there for many, many years. Now they're back up here, he's pastoring a church, and they are a perfect example of what and how I've trained you. Their whole family is a family ministering together, which is exactly what I've been preaching. In fact, every one of these families is the same way. I handpicked them because of that. They worked with me in every ministry. I married them. Kevin came up from Ohio, I remember where Kathy came from, and they worked with me in every ministry I had. They ran the athletic ministry for the Little League. They took mission trips with me. They are the perfect example of what I talked to you about in 1 Samuel chapter 3 of how God called them. God, like he did with Samuel, established them in the Word and the work that God called them to. They and their families will be here for a Saturday morning around 9 o'clock to 10. We're going to have a ladies' breakfast downstairs. Then, of course, she's going to speak to all the ladies up here. She's one of the best speakers you'll ever hear for women. You'll be blessed by that. The guys, we're going to watch the guys, you're going to watch the kids over wherever over here so your wife's going to come in. I'll be there too. And be part of that. That'll be a great blessing. That night at 5 o'clock up into Timothy again, Kevin and his family will hold a question and answer round table for the missions. Then at 6 o'clock, Kevin will preach to us that night. He'll be a tremendous blessing of what he's learned in the mission field.

Now, listen up carefully. January 4th, this is Sunday morning. We're going from Sunday to Sunday. It will close out our Bible conference. We'll have two speakers that morning. The first speaker will be Luke Johnson. Luke Johnson is from North Canton, Ohio. His whole family, his

mom and dad and his brother and their family and his wife and kids will all be here that week. It was several years ago that I got a phone call from Sean who had been following us on our YouTube channel. We began to talk. I asked him where he was from and he said, "North Canton." I said, "My sister lives in North Canton." He said, "Where at?" I told him. He says, "We're just three, four minutes away from each other." Well, we were going to Ohio to see our families and we hooked up with them. This was four or five years ago. We met with them now every year. I go to that church. Everybody in that church is following us on the website. Unbelievable. It was like my arm was tired shaking hands with everybody because it just spread through that church. Luke now and his family have moved over to another church where the pastor in a year or so was going to retire, too old. Luke's going to take the church. Luke's the one who just wrote the book to have a hold on the King James Bible. He's going to be our first speaker that Sunday morning. Then Mike Veach will close it out and be the second speaker.

I told you, and this is where you got pretty smarter than a problem. We start at 10:30. Most of you don't get here till 10:40. We're starting at 10 o'clock that morning because we got two speakers. So you're going to have to do whatever you got to do. If I need to come over and roll you out of bed, I will be happy to. But somebody needs to get you up that you're here on time. This is our last Sunday. You do not want to miss this. Our service will start at 10 o'clock. We'll have Luke and then we'll have Mike Veach, and then he'll close it out. Then that night, 5:30 to 8 or so, we'll have an open house at Danny and Jamie's where you can stop in. All of them will be there. This will be the last night. You can visit with them, fellowship with them, share goodbyes. By that time, God will have opened up a lot of doors.

## IX. The Gift That Keeps on Giving

Out of this incredible week, my gift to you, my people, learn all that you can. Open your hearts to God right now. Prepare your heart for God to reveal himself to you. Prepare your families. Choose the Christmas and the gifts that show them as an object lesson what we're going to do with the greatest gift that God has given us. No matter what your level of spirituality, God is going to do an amazing thing in your life. This is your church. God brought us together. God has kept us together. He's put us in ministry together. I watch how God in almost every case here has developed you. I've watched what he's done in your life. I've watched you come in in the raw and leave or be here today in the know. God has done some tremendous things in each of your lives. It's an incredible thing now that where we're at. I got to watch you grow. I gave you for the last 20 plus years and will continue to give it to you all I have and all that I know. Everything that I've learned. I've kept nothing back. I have left, tried to leave through the website a legacy that if Jesus doesn't come and I go home to be with the Lord that it'll carry on where people can continue to grow through it.

We have had preaching before. Herb Kuntz was always a blessing to us. Jim Lake was always a blessing. Joseph Vastry, Dean Hayes from Pensacola. He's always been a blessing. They actually helped us to get to where we are now. It was part of my madness to build this thing toward an end goal. But now we are ready for a conference that will do for you what I can't do. It's time to expose you to other men and their families that are doing right now what we are doing. Building

a network of ministry together. Glean from these guys all that you can. Samuel, let none of their words fall to the ground. Ask them questions. Be in the little question and answer. Find out. That's where you'll get the inside to where they're at and see their heart. Fill your cup up to the brim. In these last days, we need to give one final effort of labor to do his work. Build relationships with them. This will be without a doubt the most incredible week of God revealing himself to us. You don't want to miss it. The gift to my people that will keep on giving right up to when we stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

## X. The Devil's Devices

Finally, and I'm done. Maybe now you can look back and see the method to my madness. How I've tried to keep before you how that down through history. When God moved, the devil moves. Now that we stand at this week on the very verge of God taking us where we've never been. We need to be ready to be attacked. I've shown you over the last couple of four or five weeks or months. Maybe you can see it now. I tried to lay out through the Psalms how to help you see and understand. That when you live for God what comes from the devil. Get you ready for God to move but also understand that when he moves the devil will move to stop you. Most likely the attack, as it always comes in most cases, will come from within. The devil will try to divide us. We are not ignorant of his devices.

*Proverbs 6:16-19. These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: 17. A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, 18. An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, 19. A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.*

I am just telling you. In all my ministry, every time I've watched God do some great thing, I've watched the devil come and try to stop it, and this is no different. We need to be smarter than the problem. We work as a team to do the work, but it's more than that. We must also work as a team to protect the work that God has given us. To protect each other, to protect our church. I talked about how important it is to stay in fellowship, not get it broken. Protect the leadership of this church, the men and the women, and talk about always seeking his face to have it shine upon you in the face of adversity. Staying focused not only for this week but throughout the coming year. We will be surrounded. We talked about this last week, but that's okay. We're the night fighters, folks. Us and churches, the pastors that are coming in to see us and other churches out there. In a world of Christianity and darkness, we are the night fighters. You're the elite unit of light fighting in the darkness. When God moves in this church, the devil will move against it. I promise you as sure as I'm standing here, and we'll find ourselves surrounded, but that's okay because we are soldiers for the Lord Jesus Christ. We are told to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the captain of my salvation. We are supposed to be surrounded. The thing that you find all through the scriptures, "Greater is he that's in us than he that is in the world." And "Greater is he that is for us than can be against us."

So I want you to enjoy these next couple of days with your family. I want you to have fun with them. Do with your kids. My suggestion is to do what needs to be done with them. Encourage them to do what needs to be done with them. Encourage them. Teach them. Use this as an object

lesson. The whole thing. Don't miss this opportunity. But give them also the gift of our coming together to have God reveal himself to us as a family. No comment, just get for you without taking what God is going to give you and breaking it down to your children. The daytime things, they're designed for you to have fellowship. I understand not everybody can do that. Some of you have jobs and you can't do it. The nighttime from Sunday to Sunday during the preaching. You need to be here. This is where God is going to reveal himself to you. This is where God is going to reveal himself to us and bond our hearts together with these men to do the work that God's called us to do.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you and praise you for the Lord Jesus. We do love you. We thank you for what you have given us, and I thank you Father for you allowing me to give to these great people the gift. The gift of men and women who have labored for years and years and years. Not just me anymore. But men and women who have labored tirelessly and their families tirelessly that we all can learn from each other. And now moving forward, minister together. Lord, let every one of my people who claim to be a member of this church not to let this time slip through their fingers. But to get from God what he has for us and then take it back to their children. Take it back to those little subconsciouses who the Holy Spirit of God can begin to implant all the right things in their little lives. We'll be careful, Lord. We'll come prayerfully asking you to do this marvelous work. You brought us so far. You brought all of these good people together. Bound us together. Help us now to be everything this week that you have for us and to learn from it. We'll thank you and praise you in Jesus' name for our sake we ask it. Amen.