

Treasures

in

Wisdom

by

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This wisdom we're going to find out, can only come from God. Your cover of the study booklet you were given is gold, speaking of the golden wisdom, and of course that doesn't refer to my words. That refers to the gold which we find in the book of proverbs specifically, and of course all of the word of God.

(1Cor 1:22-24) "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: (23) But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; (24) But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

Now, what we have here as you notice is that the Jews require a sign, and if you go through Jesus' ministry you'll find that to be true. How many times they say, show us a sign and we'll believe you, and that's not hard to interpret because if you go back through the Old Testament, the Jews had sign, after sign, after sign. They lived by signs, God manifest Himself by signs, and so the Jews require a sign; then the Greeks with their great philosophers seek after wisdom. You remember that great sermon that Paul preached on Mars' hill, (Acts 17:21-34) and they were just so much interested in wisdom.

Paul is saying that "we preach Christ crucified," (1 Corinthians 1:23-24) and what he means is that Christ met the requirements of Jew and Gentile on both counts. Christ was the sign to the Jew and of course became a stumbling block, but Christ was also the wisdom to the Greek. Both the Jew and the Greek came together in Christ and they still do, and so it is Christ that Paul is preaching here. It is Christ that we want to set forth and

when we lay hold of wisdom, we are in reality laying hold of a person and that is Christ. It's not just these wonderful words that we're talking about, and we're able to just say these marvelous wise things. No, wisdom is Jesus and that is what we're after; not only that we have Him to instruct and give information to others, but Christ becomes wisdom in my own life. He becomes an expression of wisdom in me, and so we find "we preach Christ crucified; unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and to the Greek foolishness, (24) but unto them which are called," and I trust that is us. God has called us and here we have it. "Both Jews and Greeks in Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God," and this is what I want to make a very, very important point of. This is God's order throughout the scripture: the power of God, and then the wisdom of God. You will find that God gives His power first. Why is that? He wants to get people's attention, but once God has the attention, He has something much greater on the agenda than just all this mighty dynamic power. We have seen over the last few years and there are so many of these demonstrations of power, and people wondering if these mighty spectacular events are of God. We know that some of them are supernatural events, we hear of great and mighty healing and thank God for all of these things, we see these mighty demonstrations where people are calling them power of God and I believe so many of them are, but what has happened is that men have become so obsessed with the power of God, they have left the wisdom of God out. They want only power and demonstration, but God says I'll give you my power first, and again you can find this same order throughout the scripture. Christ, the power of God and He demonstrated it, but God did that in order to give us the greatest thing, and that's the wisdom of God, and that's what has happened in our modern religious world today. Yes, God has graciously favored men with mighty power, but when He wanted to draw the men to the wisdom of the word of God, that's too much work, that's

too much time, and that's too much energy on the flesh. No, No, No, No, No! Just give us these mighty signs and wonders with our God, and when that happens men begin to add their own fleshly activity. Why do they do this when God said, I only gave you my power in order to show you who I was, but if you will listen to me I want to give you my wisdom, and wisdom is unending because wisdom is Christ and we cannot exhaust Him.

In (1 Kings Chapter 18) there's an example of what I'm talking about, of how that God brings forth His power in order to bring forth His wisdom. I'll give you a couple or three examples of this and as I say, once you see it you can just go throughout the scriptures and it just pops out right off the page: it's just as plain as it can be what God is doing. We don't need to be at a loss as to these things and we do not need to try to explain all of this. God tells us exactly what He is doing, and He is doing it even in our present age. So, before we go any further let me just emphasize that we should be obsessed with the wisdom of God more than being obsessed with the power of God. Don't discount the power of God, but let's be obsessed with God's wisdom. In (1Kings chapter 18) is the story of Elijah and if you read through this entire story, you'll find it was Elijah that came to the prophets of Baal and set up this test: the prophets say it's Baal, Elijah says it's God. Let's see whose God has the power and so Elijah said, we'll set up these altars, put our offerings on there and get it all ready, but we won't put any fire under it. The God that comes down and consumes the sacrifice will be the God. Baal's prophets said fair enough and they went all day long crying out to their god, they cut themselves with lancets and went all through these religious things that people will even go through today, and nothing happened. Now, we know that God brought the fire, and scripture says that the fire fell and it consumed the sacrifice, it consumed the stones, it consumed the water, and it

consumed the dust. I mean, God manifested some power that day, but did God do that just to say, "Look what Elijah can do?" You see, this I fear is what is happening today in our world and we need to be aware of it.

When demonstration points to men rather than God, something is desperately wrong. What I hear and see today in so many places are personalities, and names of men that are being lauded rather than God. Oh, they mention what God has done, but I'll tell you from where I have been listening and hearing it is men that are receiving it and that's not right; God should be the one. Now, I want to notice as we said that God brought forth His power, but notice what God wanted as the result of that power. (1 Kings 18:36) "And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, **let it be known,**" and there are five points of wisdom that He wanted to be known.

Number 1 - "**That thou art God in Israel,**" God demonstrates His power to point to Himself, not to men and His instruments, or this great one and that great one. I've heard of people saying oh, if I can only get to this meeting, I know there is the healing. For crying out loud, God is not bound to one meeting. You see, God wants our attention on Him, not simply on great and mighty signs, wonders and miracles. So first and foremost, the wisdom of it is that there is God. "Thou art the God in Israel."

Number 2 - "**That I am thy servant.**" Now, he's not wanting to put himself up here, he is wanting to distinguish the difference between the prophet of God, and the prophets of Baal. God will let people know whose His ministers are, and He does that so that we will know who we can listen to, because there are people in this world that you do not want to listen to. Why? They don't measure up to the scriptures, they don't measure up

to God's standards and principles, and so he says to us here that they may know that I am thy servant.

Number 3 - I've enjoyed this so much over the years, and it is **"I have done all these things at thy word."** Elijah wanted them to know that this was not my idea; this is not out of my own head that I concocted all of these things; it was God who told me about this sign. Now go further than that because you see, I see people today who want others to think they are called and ordained of God. I believe that many of them are, but here's what I want to notice about Elijah. If this is out of Elijah's own head, do you know that this man called for a three year famine, and he didn't get to go off in some penthouse and enjoy it away from everybody else? Elijah had to go through the judgments just like everybody else did, and when he prayed for three years famine, he was praying for hardships for himself too. Now, how many would do that today? See, they wouldn't out of their own mind say, I think it would be good to have a famine here today; they don't do that. So often I see people that are wanting to line their own pockets at the expense of other people, but you see and make no mistake, when you and I pray for the will of God, don't be surprised if we become a part of the hardship that goes with it.

Every parent can identify with what I'm going to say now. If you pray that God will work in the lives of your children, you had better know that you're going to be just about as much a part of the hardship in their lives as they are. It's that simple, and so those prayers are not simply out of our own hearts, and it wasn't Elijah's idea. I did it because God said to do it, and he was willing to bear the consequences of being in harmony with God. That's the wisdom that you and I are going to have to learn in our lives.

Number 4 - (1 Kings 18:37) "Hear me, O LORD, hear me, **That this people may know that thou art the LORD God.**" We see again that Elijah wanted the people to know that "thou art the Lord God."

Number 5 - He wanted them to know, oh such wisdom. **"Thou hast turned their heart back again."** How wonderful it would be if those witnessing these demonstrations that are indeed of God, would realize that the importance is not for the supernatural wonder, but that God wants to turn people back to Himself, and get them just to listen to His word. This is what God wants to do, and so remember that He gives the power first, and then He gives the wisdom later.

There are many examples of that as I say, and I'm not going to go into all of these and turn to them, but you can make a note of it. Moses was a powerful person that learned this. Moses went out and saw that great sign of the burning bush, but that is one sign that I haven't personally seen, and I really hope that I would be like Moses and realize that something is kind'a out of the ordinary here. The scripture says when God saw that Moses turned aside to see, then He spoke to him. Now, I want to bring that down to our day. As I say, I haven't seen any bushes burning, but there was a crow here last year that was making a lot of noise, and a lot of interruptions, and our sister Ida Fern has one wail of a right arm; she practically hit that thing with a rock. Now, if you want to call that as a sign, you can; I don't know. The only sign she wanted was for him to leave and he did, but at any rate what I'm getting at is this. There are times that things will happen which are unexpected and extraordinary in people's lives, and sometimes they chuck it off to coincidence. Oh, it would have happened anyway, or that was just a happenstance. God honored Moses when he turned aside to see, and God will honor you when you turn aside to see. When Moses turned aside to

see of this mighty power that God had demonstrated, you can just read page after page there of the wisdom that God gave to him, showing him who he was and what He wanted him to do. It wasn't the burning bush that become the center of attention and focus, it was the wisdom of God, and that's what He wants in your life and mine. He will use His power to get our attention, but once He has that, He wants to lead us into the depths of wisdom. You'll find them right here in the word of God, but that's why people don't go after wisdom because it's so unspectacular just to study.

Then I hear of these that are getting all of their mighty revelations supposedly from God, but they ain't coming from this book and beloved, if they don't come from the book, you had better not be listening to them. You may be hearing a lot of things in your head, but if it doesn't measure up to this book, you better begin to wonder what you had for supper last night, because it wasn't God. So, it is tremendously important that we measure every revelation that we hear by the word of God.

Then another example of God demonstrating His power, and then His wisdom was when Saul of Tarsus saw this bright light, it knocked him to the ground, and he hears this voice. Well, you know Paul didn't go throughout his life just with that one testimony. Yeah, I got knocked down and I saw a light. God got his attention, and then He filled him with the very wisdom of God. So keep it in mind, God shows us His power, and then He shows us His wisdom. Now, most of the scriptures and the message we have for this week is going to come from the book of Proverbs. I'm going to give you a short outline, so let's go to the ninth chapter of the book of Proverbs, and I trust that you will ponder the entire outline after you go away, and let the Lord build on this for you.

(Proverbs 9:1-6) "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: (2) She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table. (3) She hath sent forth her maidens: she crieth upon the highest places of the city, (4) whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, (5) Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled. (6) Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding."

We find here that there are seven pillars, and I've heard over the years different people say, I wonder what those are. We don't need to wonder, because it gives us all seven of them right here. Now, before we go into this, I want to ask a question. Is there ever a time when "**I is**," is grammatically correct in a sentence? I know nobody is going to answer that, but okay. Well, don't be so sure. A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, and "**I is**" the next letter of the alphabet. What I want to notice by that: somebody says you better have a point after that. Sometimes we must look at things from a different point of view if we are going to get the right answer. This week our answers are going to come from God's word, and I guarantee you the answers from God's word are not always politically correct according to this world. So, let's be willing to look at things from a different point of view, and if God says you can use "**I is**" in a sentence, it can be done right.

So, here "wisdom hath builded her house." The house of course is the church. This is what God is doing during this age. "Wisdom hath hewn out her seven pillars." Seven of course, is the number of perfection in the scripture, and God has made the provision for the perfection of the church. Now, we know that the whole church is not going to come into that place. The whole church is going to be perfect, and she's going to be complete as far as all the church there, but I'm talking

about every individual believer not measuring up to all of the provision that God had. Now, God has sufficient power and wisdom to make every man that He has ever created perfect. God has that power and ability, and He made the provision for that to happen, but there are other things that enter into this, and so all are not going to measure up, but the church will be absolutely complete as a whole. So, "she has hewn out her seven pillars." Now, what we want in our lives is to make sure that all of the provision that God has made be accomplished in me. Now, I can't make that decision for everybody else. I can't make it for you and you can't make it for me, but if we can purpose in our own hearts that I am going to let God perfect His work in me, then that's the end of our responsibility. Alright: Seven pillars.

Number 1 - "**She hath killed her beasts**," and of course that's the first principle of the completion of the church which is the death of Christ there at Calvary. This is what He did and He made that full provision for everyone in the world. It is God who led Christ to the cross and He died there, and so she has killed her beasts.

Number 2 - "**She hath mingled her wine**" tells us of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost there on the day of Pentecost, and that outpouring continues down to our day despite what some people say. It is still the power of the Holy Spirit that is working in our lives today. He was poured out there, and He was poured out for the entire church age to do the same job. He gives us that power to lead us into all truth, and those things that are outlined there in (John chapters 14 & 16). Paul tells us about the wonderful operations of the Holy Ghost in (1 Corinthians), and all of these different things. See, He is still here.

Number 3 - "**She hath also furnished her table**." It tells us of the full provision of God's word given us throughout this age. You see, God has furnished a full

and rich table, and here's where so many are not coming to eat. Some are content with a little fast food, and that necessary to keep them going. They're content with just enough of the word of God for a reference to make sure that they're right in their arguments and things like that. God didn't intend it that way! God intended for us to sit down at the banqueting table and to be fed, fed, fed in order that we might grow up into Christ in all things, and so she's furnished her table.

Number 4 - "**She hath sent forth her maidens**:" It simply means that God has sent forth His faithful ministers to give out this glorious message and truth. We find that after Jesus was raised from the grave and "led captivity captive," He gave gifts unto men (Ephesians 4:8), and those gifts are those who are faithful to give out the word of God. He has always had those faithful maidens, or ministers who would go forth, and be faithful mouthpieces for God speaking those words that He would give.

Number 5 - "**She crieth upon the highest places of the city**." This simply means that she is going to make every effort to publish her message. It is as we find here if you notice (Proverbs 9:5), "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled." (Proverbs 9:4) "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither." She is crying a message of invitation to come, and what I want to see here is that she cries. That doesn't mean that you can take it or leave it, here it is, no big deal. No, God is making every effort, and this cry really goes beyond the message that God would give through people like myself, other ministers around, those preachers and teachers, and so forth. God is crying out, and wisdom is crying out big time to the hearts of people who are going through various experiences. God is crying to them, will you please listen to Me? This is not an accident that it's happened to you, and it's not a happenstance either. The difficulty that you're in is not necessarily because of your

foolishness though it might be, but even if it is, I am here trying to talk and say something to you. I am crying and putting forth every effort to give forth this message to you, (Proverbs 9:3) because "she crieth upon the highest places of the city."

Another thing I want to notice here in this place, is that God is crying upon the highest places of the city. It means those places that are most seen, and not hidden. We are seeing many today that have the access and opportunity by way of the quote "electronic church," and there are so many media that men are able to use today. Now, I just grow so weary of listening to many of those things, because there's just so much garbage produced, but what I want to realize is that many times in the midst of all of that, there is truth. I think Paul put that in perspective in (Philippians 1:15-18) when he said, "some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; (16) and some even supposing to add affliction to my bonds: (18) but he said I rejoice that Christ is preached." You and I can do the same thing, though we don't agree with the tactics, and the ways of so many of the modernists so to speak. If they are giving forth any hint of truth, we can rejoice that truth is going forth. (Why?) We rejoice, because God's word never returns to Him void. Even though their reasons, their methods, and their ways may be wrong, even though it just grieves us because it so far from what God wanted, we can still rejoice when even one little morsel of truth goes forth. God says that the truth is going to have effect, His word will not return void, and this is a part of wisdom crying upon the highest places of the city with this message that she is giving out.

For our own selves, let's be sure we have the right purpose and attitude in giving out God's word. If you look through the scripture, you will find that God used men that were not in their right attitudes. For example, Balaam was not a man of God and he was a false prophet, but do you

know you cannot discount the message that Balaam gave when God forced him to do it. Now, would you like to know whether or not God rewarded Balaam just because he preached truth? I'll tell you, He did not; not the way that Balaam would like to have and you see, there are those who may be preaching truth today, but God is not bound to reward them in the way they think, so what I'm saying to you is this. If we are going to preach truth and give out the message, let's give God's message in God's way, in God's time, and then He will reward us throughout eternity. So, just by saying someone is preaching the truth and maybe he is, that's between him and God, but just because a person utters truth like Balaam did doesn't mean they're going to receive eternal reward for it, and so let us be a part of that which is right.

Number 6 - "**Forsake the foolish, and live;**" This is the sixth pillar, and this is the message that God wants men everywhere to hear. "Forsake the foolish, and live." It means to leave the way of rebellion, and to take hold of God's eternal life.

Number 7 - "**Go in the way of understanding.**" It is one thing to forsake the foolish, quit your rebellious ways and be saved, but going in the way of understanding is the life purpose for the rest of our lives to build on what God has started. It's not enough just to forsake the foolish. That's wonderful but you see, if a person just takes that negative part, and ceases that particular way, he doesn't really build on anything, and this is what God is wanting to build to bring us to a completion.

Now, there are seven of these pillars, and I want to notice that the first five are God's responsibility. You can do this with just really every portion of scripture, and it is really important that we learn to do it. You can basically divide scripture into three major categories and parts. Number one is God's responsibility, in number two are

scripture statements of fact, and there are things that are man's responsibility in number three.

God's responsibility of course are things that only God can do. Notice these first five. (Proverbs 9:2-3) [1] "She has killed her beasts." We didn't have anything to do with that. God did that at Calvary, He designed and carried out our redemption. [2] "She's mingled her wine." God poured out the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. [3] "She's furnished her table." God did that, and is still doing it today. [4] "She's sent forth her maidens." God sends forth His ministers. There are some who send forth themselves, and that's not right but you see, this is God's responsibility to send forth ministers. [5] "She cries upon the highest places of the city." That's God putting forth that effort. The last two are our responsibility.

Number six - "Forsake the foolish and live." That's the choice that we make, and nobody can make it for us.

Number seven - "Go in the way of understanding." That's our responsibility. We're the only ones that can choose to go that way. Now, what I mean by all of this is that we cannot mix up the responsibilities. When we assume a responsibility that God didn't give us, we don't have the grace for it, and that's why people get so miserable at times trying to do the things that God did not give them the grace to do. They're God's responsibility and it's very important that we define our own responsibility, and if it's God's responsibility, let God do it. Just for example, God has sent forth her maidens. If people try to send forth themselves, and I've seen some people that claim they were preachers, and they just wasn't. That's not a judgmental thing, that's just an absolute fact. They didn't know how to preach, and they didn't have a message of that. God sends forth His ministers and gives them the gifts, and I would like to say concerning this, and I've heard this more than one time in

my own experience. I've heard people say, and I've been accused of it. Now, you're just not letting me use my gift, and you're not letting me be the blessing that God intended me to be. (Proverbs 18:16) states, "a man's gift maketh room for him." If God has given you a gift, then He is not dependent on anybody else for you to operate it. God will send you forth, and God will open the gates. The only thing is that sometimes people see the gate they want to go through which is a marvelous, wide, wonderful, spectacular gate, and God says no, I believe it's this one over here. It leads down to that: see that big rocky path down there, the one where that big boulder is that you're going to have to climb up? They won't go through that one, so you're standing in my way. The thing is to let God do His work, and allow Him to send forth the maidens.

Again, the last two belong to us. It's very important that we don't try to give God the responsibility that belongs to us. Have you ever heard this? Well, when God gets ready to fill them with the Holy Ghost, He'll do it. No, that's our responsibility to open our mouth and drink. God is not going to come down, pry our mouth open, and force it down us. Well, when it comes time, then I'll turn my life over to the Lord. No, God says now is the day of salvation, but He's not going to make you or me yield to Him. Now, God will bring all sorts of experiences, and sometimes hardships into our lives, and try His best to get us to go the right way, but God is never going to sovereignly treat you like a robot to make you yield to God. He won't do it, because that's our responsibility, and we're the only one that can make that choice, and it's the same way in going the way of understanding. You and I are the only one that can make that decision, whether or not we're going to study God's word and learn God's wisdom, and it is these last two pillars that we are going to consider this week. (Proverbs 9:6) Number six - "Forsake the foolish and live," and number seven - "And go in the way of understanding,"

First - "Forsake the foolish." Forsaking the foolish is simply another way of saying, forsake the way of rebellion. That's really what a fool is. A fool has said in his heart, there is no God. That means he has denied, and I'm not talking just about the existence of God, but there are people who say oh yes, I believe in God, or I believe in a higher power or whatever. I know there is God, and yet they're still a fool. The fool has said in his heart, there is no God meaning that he has not given God operation in his life, and this is what we're talking about in these lessons today.

We're going to notice five kinds of fools, and we really see all of these in the Proverbs. The first one is the simple fool, second is the silly fool, third is the sensual fool, fourth is the scorning fool, and fifth is the committed fool. The simple fool loves simplicity, Scorners like to mock or to scoff and they delight in their scorning, and then fools. The word simply means stupid, fat, silly, and this is the one where we see the silly fool. These three fools are found here in (Proverbs 1:22), and then we'll see the scriptural basis for the others as we go along.

Number 1 - Alright, let's consider the simple fool. As we read here, he is one who is void of understanding. (Proverbs 8:5) "O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart." So again, the one who is a simple fool is simply one that is void of understanding. He just doesn't know, he doesn't understand and of course, this is so easily illustrated, and it doesn't mean that it is a reflection on a person unless they simply choose to go that way. For example, I'm the biggest fool that there ever would be as far as flying an airplane. I just don't understand how the thing goes, and you would be a fool if you got in there with me. That's a fool, and I'm not taking anything away from my character. I wouldn't intentionally hurt you, it's just that I wouldn't know any better how not to, and you have your choice of

not climbing in that airplane with me, but you see what I'm talking about. When it comes to the things of God, we're all a fool to start out with, but it can be changed. If I had the desire, which I really do to learn to fly an airplane, then I could come out of that state of simplicity, and I'd no longer be a fool. Same thing is true in the things of God. We can all come out of that state of simplicity, and God intends that we should do that, and it is by of course, the study of God's word.

(Proverbs 8:5) "O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart." You see, it's an exhortation, and God doesn't intend that such a thing should happen. Now, when we are in that simple place, as you realize simple means seducible; unless we get out of that, we're going to be able to be seduced the rest of our lives. This is why we need to be educated from God's word to know what's happening in this very deceitful and deceiving world. You see, scripture says that even the very elect could be deceived. I'm talking about saved people, and they can be deceived. Well, what is the answer to that? God's word is the answer to that, and not just learning facts and figures. I'm talking about learning the word of God from our hearts, to where that we simply are able to discern, feel, and know this is not right. We want to come out of that place of being seduced.

Now, here is a mistake and I don't know how many of you have heard of this, but I hope it isn't more rampant than I think. I've heard some parents over the years say well, you know they were going to church, they were Christians and they wanted this for their children, but wouldn't see to it that their children were in Sunday School, or that they were taught. They have the idea that I'm just going to let my children decide for themselves what is right. That's the stupidest thing I ever heard of in my life; you're leaving them wide open to be seduced. In scripture, that's another one of these responsibility things.

God gave you the responsibility to teach your children and believe me, we call on God for all the help that we can get, but God gave us that responsibility. It is up to us to teach our children the ways that are right so that they will come out of this state of being seducible because I guarantee you, if you don't teach them, somebody else will. There are children, and we can even see it today that they're simply a time bomb waiting to go off. Only the truth can counteract that error and darkness, and we need to be not only giving it to our children by way of lecture which most parents are prone to do, but we must give it to them by our example. This is what God says to do and Johnny, this is the way to do it. You see, set the example before them.

(Proverbs 14:15) "The simple believeth every word." You know, that's why he's a fool, and so the simple is very gullible, and we don't want to be that way. We don't need to be that way if we are exercised, and instructed in the ways of God's word He has provided that we should be the other way. Notice: "but the prudent man looks well to his going." This fellow is not so gullible, seducible, or simple that he believes every word; he's just exactly the opposite. He won't jump in where angels fear to tread, as the saying goes. You see, he looks well to his going. If you'll notice here the simple fool, and as we go through these different expressions of foolishness, I think you'll be able to see how there is a graduation into them.

Everyone starts out as a simple fool. If he does not come out of that state, he will go into these others that we're going to talk about, and they get worse, and worse. This is why in teaching our children, as well as ourselves, we want to spare them the agony of going into these next stages of becoming like the scorner, or the silly one and things of this nature.

Now, you will notice here that the simple fool will learn, and one advantage that you have, is that a simple

fool can learn. Now, all of these different fools that we're going to be talking about in these different stages can come out of that, and I don't want to give the idea that they can't. If we say they can't learn and come out of it, then we're saying there's no hope, and I'm here to tell you that there is hope for all of these different types of fools. There is even hope for the committed fool eventually, and over the years I've known, or heard about some committed fools who have come out of that condition. They yield to the Lord, and so God's grace is sufficient even for the committed fool. He goes through some things that he need not have gone through, but he had to in order for God to do what He wanted to do. So, let's realize that if we find our picture in any of these, every one of them can be changed, and that's the marvel and miracle of the grace of God.

And so, the simple fool. Here's one way that the simple fool learns. (Proverbs 19:25) "Smite a scorner, and the simple will beware: and reprove one that hath understanding, and he will understand knowledge." Now, notice the first part of this. "Smite a scorner, and the simple will beware." I think that those are given in this same verse, because there is such a relationship between the simple fool and the scorning fool, and that is that the simple fool is so influenced by the scorner. The scorner becomes the leader of the simple fool. Alright, what does God say? If you take that scorner that is the leader and punish him, this simple fool sees first hand what happens when you go that way. The scorner becomes an example for the simple fool, and so the simple says, I may be dumb and simple, but I ain't stupid and so he stops, and that's the idea. If I could learn by another kid getting a whipping, believe me, I would do it, because why should I get one? Well, that's exactly the same thing with the ways of God. If you can learn by the example of others before you get to the place where you deserve the same thing, why not do it? And so God says, you smite the scorner and the

simple will beware. You see, it's not only what I am saying here today, and that the simple gets out of the whipping so to speak, it's that the simple learns. Hey, following a scorner is not right, this is the wrong leader and that's what God wants to say. You're following the wrong leader, and so they switch that allegiance.

When children are much younger, you can see it. They have such peer pressure, and then they graduate to peer dependence, and there is a difference in those two terms. I don't care how old you get, you're never going to escape peer pressure. You're always going to have pressure from those around you to accept what is quote normal," and to accept what is popular. You're never going to get away from peer pressure, so don't even try, but you do not have to succumb to peer dependence. That means that your esteem, your worth, and your value is dependent on what peers say and do about you, and that's something that we absolutely cannot fall into. We cannot come into this place where our esteem, our value, and our worth depends upon what other people think of us. We must establish that as to what God says about my life, and that's when we're able to stand alone, and not have peer dependence. When a child is falling into peer dependence, he cares a whole lot more what his friends say than what his parents say but you see, if he can learn the lesson that this kind of smarts when he goes that way, then he'll stop that leader and go back to the parents where the leadership should have been. So, God sets it up as an example that if you go the way of the scorner, look! Just look down the road, this is what's ready for you. I've heard of some parents who knew that their children were going this way, and the law enforcement did exactly the same thing. They thought they didn't even know that they were going according to what scripture says. You know, I know of some parents who gave their children the grand tour of prisons to tell them if you don't stop what you're doing, this is the next stop. There's nothing wrong

with that and God says, here's the example, and you have the power to stop it right now, so come out of this foolishness before you come to the place where you deserve exactly the same thing. Smite the scorner, and the simple will see that, understand, and turn away.

(Proverbs 21:11) "When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise:" That's right, and you know if it happened to him and he's the leader, mister macho and big time, what's to keep it from it happening to me? Again, I may be dumb, but I ain't stupid, and so he learns from that, "and when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge."

I want to try to get most of these done today so we can get on, then I won't have to rush to finish up the last part and cut that short, but I feel these are very important points. If we can find out how to avoid such pitfalls, or if we can find out how to help other people, then you know God has done a wonderful thing. That of course, is what we're looking for.

So, the second fool is the silly fool, and the silly fool would be translated little, foolish, open mentally and this one also translates seducible. We would consider this one somewhat of an airhead, that's our word for it. It is used in (Proverbs 9:13). This is where we can see how it applies to different characteristics, and I will warn you that if you're studying Proverbs, some of these words that are used for fools may not just specifically say these are just limited to one type of fool. You have to go by the usage of them, and so this is one such place with this foolish woman. The word that is used here is silly, and so when we understand that, then we understand what kind of a fool that we're talking about. It's not just in the meaning of the word, but it is in the conduct here. "A foolish woman is clamorous: she is simple (that is, she's silly), and knoweth nothing." Then we'll find out what she does in just a

moment. Now, the first thing we find about a silly fool is that the silly fool, like the simple fool is just void of understanding. He's just foolish because he doesn't understand anything. The silly fool is the one who doesn't want to be instructed, and that's where you really get into the problem. For example, (Proverbs 17:16) "Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it?" What that is asking is why he has money, gold or whatever to go out and get wisdom, when he doesn't have a heart to it. Like a parent, I'm going to send Johnny to law school when Johnny has no more desire to go to law school than he has for anything else. You know, it's stupid to spend all that money to give him this so called knowledge of wisdom in law school, when he doesn't want to do it, and that's the way here with the silly fool. Why is there a price in his hand to obtain wisdom, when he doesn't even want it? So, the silly fool is marked by the fact that they don't want to learn.

(Proverbs 18:2) "A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself." In other words, he will eventually reveal his own foolish heart as to exactly how silly and goofy he is, and really delight in that, and we've seen some people that way. We wonder, why in the world would they want to let anyone see them act like that; that's the silliest thing I ever heard, and yet they seem to be having the time of their life and enjoying it, and so silly.

(Proverbs 28:26) "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool," and that's the way with a silly fool. See, they won't seek any kind of counsel, understanding, or anything like that. They're just all bundled up in themselves with the way I understand things, and the way I perceive things; that's good enough for me, "but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered." See, this is the one that's exactly the opposite; he wants to understand and to know knowledge. In addition to this, the silly fool is the one who delights in

trying to influence others, and won't keep his silliness to himself. He's the one who wants to spread that around, and I think a lot of times that people in general do that. They think if they can convince someone else that something is right, they can convince themselves, and that happens all the time, and so the silly fool is one who will influence others.

(Proverbs 9:16-18) "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: and as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him," Notice, that it is the silly one that is trying to seduce, instruct, or deceive someone else and here's what she says: (17) "Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. (18) But he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell." So the silly fool is the one who will try to entice others to do the same things with them. They love company in doing this, and they're the ones that really want to try and influence other people, and of course the ones they really seduce are the simple fool, the one that is seducible. You see, they become somewhat of a leader in this matter.

Now notice (Proverbs 1:10-14). Here are those that can be seduced, not only by the silly one, but the scorner and all of these. (10) "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. (11) If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause: (12) Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit: (13) We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil: 14) Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse:" These are the tactics that the silly fool uses trying to entice other people and to draw them away, and I couldn't help but think of how this verse fit so well with the gang mentality of today. Notice, "let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause:" I've heard of some of these gangs, and one of their initiations

is to go out and hurt somebody that hasn't done a thing in the world to them. That's a part of the gang mentality that is going on and then, "Let us swallow them up alive as the grave;" and do all this harm. "We'll find precious substance; we shall fill our houses with spoil: Cast in thy lot among us." Where's the protection? You see, this is that gang mentality. Yeah, you join with us and there's all this protection, these riches, and everything you can possibly ever need. Your family doesn't supply all of this, and so these are the ones that indeed are seducible, and they will go right on with those things, being enticed and influenced by other people. Here we find that the silly one and of course, if you study through the book of Proverbs, you will find this also operates in the very religious mode. The false church and so forth is trying to influence, and she is that woman that we're talking about there, but she is the silly one that has been seduced, and now she is trying to influence and seduce other people.

But, before anyone would fall for that foolishness, notice (Proverbs 1:16-17): "For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood. (17) Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird." Scripture is very plain in telling us that if you follow after such deception as is offered by this silly fool, and others trying to influence you to go into this kind of a situation, there are going to be consequences. You cannot go in the way of foolishness, and not suffer the consequences, and so as you see here that their feet run to evil and they make haste to shed blood but notice this, "Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird." That simply means that if you go out here and try to put a net in the sight of some bird or victim, that's the dumbest thing you can do. They see that and they just go right on, and so these seem to indicate yeah, you can go and set this trap, it'll just be a piece of cake, and that's a lie. People are smarter than that and they're not going to fall for that trap, or become your victim as easily as you might think.

Now, what I want to notice here is that you can also compare this with (Ecclesiastes 10:8). "He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him." These people are those that try to set a trap for other people to victimize them, but scripture is plainly telling us that the one who sets the trap is going to be victimized and fall into it, and we've heard of that so many times. These are those who try to set somebody else up, and they wind up being set up. People try to get around the truth of God's word and they can't do it, because God's word is true and when He says this is the way it is, it's going to be this way. If we don't have enough sense to realize what it says when we read it, God says alright, I'll make it real to you when it happens to you. That's happening in our world every day, and some who are so close to it just have tears running down their faces constantly, because they're caught in their own trap which didn't work on others.

Notice what is said again in (Ecclesiastes 10:8). "Whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him." Breaking a hedge is just God's way of saying breaking and entering, and what it means is that you're going to suffer for it. You're going to pay the price for it, and so all of this foolishness of going in this way is just ridiculous. This is just another expression, or characteristic of the silly fool. (Proverbs 10:23) "It is as sport (the word means derision, or laughter) to a fool to do mischief:" That word mischief is a very interesting word, because it means a plan, a bad one. The word mischief is also translated wickedness, and is translated lewd in connection with prostitution, whoredom and incest. The silly fool can be sucked into this kind of activity, and it just becomes so devastating to him and in his life, but I want to notice the key to this in (Proverbs 10:20): "It is as sport." A brother mentioned this last night, but one great mark of the silly fool is that he is just out for a good time, and of course we find those characteristics in a lot of these other fools also,

but that's just one of them. They're just out for a good time, out for a laugh, and I was amazed when growing up the things that people would do just to obtain a laugh, and I didn't realize at that time, but that's a silly fool. Scripture tells us these silly fools are just out for a good time, even if it is illegal or immoral, it doesn't make him any difference. The object is just to obtain the laugh and a good time. He'll have his fun and his laughter, and it doesn't make any difference who gets hurt, or at who's expense the laughter is, the silly fool is going to have a good time.

(Ecclesiastes 7:4) is another one. "The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth." Their lives are just consumed with having a good time, and of course I've known some people who think that's what life is all about. They believe God put them on the earth to have fun, and they're just obsessed with it. Then notice, "The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning," and this simply tells us that there's absolutely no escape, nor is there any replacement for genuine repentance before God. You must have that heart that would be broken before Him, and then we can be called the heart of the wise when we are in the house of mourning before God.

Then there's another example given of the silly fool in (Hosea 7:11). "Ephraim also is like a silly dove without heart: they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria." Without heart means that they just don't have their heart into anything. In other words, they don't have heart, they don't have motivation, they don't have intent, they don't have purpose, and they just wander around looking for the next big time. They do not have that commitment and dedication to the Lord, and they despise authority because you see, authority would give direction and they don't have heart. They don't have that direction or motivation at all, and so what they do is so like Israel; they

call to Egypt. Egypt of course is representative of the world in the scripture, and we've seen that many, many times. Assyria simply represents some other great outward power they can appeal to, or that they can put their confidence in other than God. Israel could have trusted and believed God for their deliverance, but where do they go? Assyria: why? Because here was this great mighty outward demonstration of power, and that's what the silly fool sees. They meet his need of someone to protect and help him, and all these various things, and so what happens with this silly fool? It then becomes such a tremendous time of devastation for them.

(2 Timothy 3:6) is another that gives the same word of silly. It means exactly the same thing as we see in the Old Testament, also having that airhead mentality, and wondering how anyone could be so silly with apparently no mental discretion at all. "For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts." This one leads into the next one that we're going to see, because the silly fool once again is the one occupied with just having a good time, a devil may care attitude, being footloose, fancy-free, and it doesn't make any difference. These that Paul is talking about here are so susceptible, because they are following their own lusts and a good time. They're just following all of those things, and therefore they are so seducible. In order to do that, they had to shirk their own responsibility. These of this sort creep into houses and lead silly women captive. Those women should have been minding the home, minding their children, and taking very, very seriously the responsibilities that God had given to them for someone else. They didn't do that, and the only thing they were concerned with is their own good time, and I see that today. You know of women that have children and what do they care, they're interested in their own good time, let them shift for their selves, it doesn't make any difference, and they're just in the way. That's a

silly woman, and so that's exactly what it means. They're just out for, and obsessed with having a good time and doing some of the silly things. That's a silly fool.

The third one is the sensual fool. As I say, it just follows up the silly one, because the sensual fool is the one that is just interested in those things that apply to the senses. So much of this is with various stimulants and so forth: alcohol, drugs, and of course you get into the sexual part of it. Their desires are corrupt, and they just begin to follow those senses. (Jude 1:18-19) "How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. (19) These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit." That word sensual is used in different places of the scripture, and is sometimes translated as natural. Some translators translate it as animal, and that's really not hard to pick out today, because there's some people that just absolutely act more like animals than anything else. You know, I'm just appalled that we live in such a world as we do, and yet the scripture prophesied it long, long ago. Well, the beauty of that is that God is able to shield us from so much, and that He is able to keep us from becoming a part of that kind of chaos. We don't have to be the sensual fool if we simply allow God to give us the wisdom that is going to counteract that, and so keep in mind that the sensual fool is simply occupied with the senses of what he can feel, taste, touch, and hear.

Now, I'm going to give just a little bit to this. I've spoken on it before, and perhaps some are tired of hearing it. I'm tired of giving it, but it keeps coming up, and it's something that just grieves my heart sore. The sensual fool quite simply is addicted to rock music, and I say that without apology or anything like that. The part that grieves me, is that rock music has gone into the church and we have so called Christian rock, and I don't care if you can put all the so called spiritual words you want to a rock

song, it's still a rock song, and it still has the rock beat. As they say, you can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, and that's exactly what men are trying to do. It just does not work, and I could read you testimony after testimony of people that have been addicted to rock music in the world. I have read the accounts of some people who have gone to counselors for their various addictions to one thing or another, they've been in the absolute throes of depression, and they have finally come down to this. There was this one young man that I was reading about that they had prayed with him, and he wanted to get loose from this certain addiction that he had. He wanted to be free, he had prayed, and he had gone through all the different scriptural steps of getting through the addiction. He was still having all of these horrible troubles, and so a very godly counselor led him into this procedure of trying to find out what was wrong. One thing we find out with counseling is that it's not the counselor that knows so much, it's the person that has to uncover that. He's the one that has to find out what's on the inside, and so they just prayed very simply: Lord, why can't I get the victory here? Why am I not loose from this awful bondage that's just tormenting me? They finished praying, and the counselor just looked at the man he was counseling, and the man just sat there staring straight ahead. Music, music; still listening to rock music, and he said that he knew this is what was triggering those thoughts, and all of those things that were going on, and yet men are wanting to bring it into the church. I'm going to read something and some of you may recognize this name. If you do, I'd appreciate it if you just keep it quiet for now anyway.

This is a man by the name of James Ryal, a so-called prophet of our day. I couldn't believe he said, "God placed a special anointing of music upon the Beatles." Despite the fact that none of them are committed to Christ, this man is speaking for God: "It was MY (the word MY refers to God) purpose to bring forth through music, a

worldwide revival that would usher in the move of My Spirit bringing men and women to Christ."

Because the Beatles use their anointing for Satan's kingdom instead, Ryal says the Lord lifted His anointing. God kept it unto Himself and is about to release it again. You know the music that the Beatles brought in, and you know good and well it was not sent by God, and yet in order for men to justify rock music in the church, God brought this on the scene. Now, I'm not going to say a whole lot once again about that, I just want to bring in a couple or three points. I've talked to a number of these people that justify their music, and rock music is a feel good music at least for a while, and then when you begin to come down off of it, you get just as depressed, and feel just as bad as you can possibly feel. I thank God I feel that bad just to hear it and walk away from the garbage, but what I want to say is this. Some people have told me now look, you can't say these things, because God uses music in order to lift people's spirits, it's in the scripture where that David went and he sang for Saul. The first thing I will say about that is this, I don't think that David played rock and roll for Saul. David was a spiritual man, and his music indeed lifted the evil spirit that was upon Saul, but I have one question for people who would depend upon music of any kind for their spirituality. Did David's spiritual song make Saul spiritual? No, it did not. The only thing that can make you and I spiritual is the word of God, and that is where the emphasis has to be, not on music of any kind. I love good music, and I've felt good music, but music don't make us spiritual. It's the word of God that makes us spiritual, and that's where the emphasis has to be.

I used a term here last year, or the year before that you can become addicted to rock music just like you can become addicted to alcohol, drugs, or anything else. It has exactly the same effect, and the steps for getting out

of an addiction to rock music is the same as it would be for alcohol, drugs, sexual addictions, and things like this, so I'm not going to spend a lot of time on this, but I just want you to read (Ecclesiastes 1:8). "The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing." Do you know why rock keeps getting harder and harder? You know, we used to hear what was known as contemporary Christian music, but what I have been hearing out of the different music stores in church music, is that Christian rock music is getting harder, and harder. You know, they used to brag about not using heavy metal and stuff like that, but they're getting to where they don't make any difference, and they don't draw any lines because the ear is not filled with hearing, and you can never satisfy the flesh. The music has to become worse and get harder and harder in order to get that high just like you do with a drug. Now, I'm going to toss out a challenge to you, and you don't have to tell me nothing. Matter of fact, I don't want you to tell me nothing. If you are honest and willing enough to take the challenge, and think that you may be in any way addicted to rock music, I'm going to offer you a challenge. I want you to go on a music fast for one month. Don't listen to music of any kind, and you just decide for yourself if you suffer any withdrawal. If you are longing for it, you wake up in the middle of the night thinking about it, you want to hear that beat, you want to tap your toe, and all of these various things, just go through the month and see. Now then, that's the first part of the challenge.

The second part of the challenge is you saturate your mind with God's word during all that thirty day period. The time that you would use to listen to rock music, you submerge yourself in the word of God. You've listened to music tapes in your car, and there's a lot of good tapes that just read scripture, not commentary. I'm talking about some wonderful voices that read the verses of the word of God which are beautiful. Now, ride down the road listening to those bible verses instead of the music, and at

the end of thirty days if you want to try it, you just listen to the rock music again and you see if it doesn't create a real adversity in you. Just see if it doesn't grate on you, and when and if it does beloved, don't fight against the grate. Remember the first time you took a cigarette? You coughed your stupid head off. Did you know that God was trying to say hey, this ain't right? So you keep doing that and you get to where you can say oh boy, I can breath in now and I don't cough at all. Now, just go look at your lungs, and that's what rock music does. You can build up an immunity to the fact that God is saying this is wrong, that's all.

I want to go over these once again and some of these are extremely hard for me to teach, but they are a part of the word of God, and something that we do have to live with. We are again talking about the sensual fool and sex. God intends for you to use the gift the way that He told you to use it, and scripture is very explicit as to how the gift of sex is to be used, and that is within the confines of marriage. Paul was confronted with this situation seen in (1Corinthians 6:13-20 paraphrased). There are seven arguments given against fornication here in this portion of scripture, and I'm not going to comment on them too much, so just tabulate them as they are in your notes.

Number one - (13) "Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord." Do you see what Paul is saying? Fornication simply appeals to the senses, or to the body. You see, our lives before the Lord are much more than the body, but God redeemed us spirit, soul, and body, and He intends that body to be used for Him just like our spirit and soul, and so the body is not for fornication, it's for the Lord.

Number 2 - (14) "God will raise that body in power as He did Jesus." I'm not just talking about God raising up this body at the end of time, God gives us His power to do

that which is right in our bodies right now. God wants to demonstrate the power of righteousness in you, and make you and me a demonstration of the life of Christ in our body. Others can't look and see my heart, but they most certainly can see the results in my body, and fornication is not a thing that God wants us to demonstrate it with.

Number 3 - (15) "Your body is the member of Christ." Your body is not to be violated with fornication, because it is to be a member of Christ, the rest of the body.

Number 4 - It's not the member of a harlot, and God does not intend it should become so. In those next two verses, you don't have them written there in your notes, but (16) tells us, "They two shall be one flesh. (17) But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." Men tend most assuredly to take care of the physical part of this one flesh and you know, that can be done through fornication. Only God can join two spirits, and that's why that when people engage in one night stands, or few month stands, it leaves them as empty as they can possibly be. Why? Because God never did join the spirits of those two people, and you will never understand the true meaning of the sexual relationship until God joins you in spirit first, and it's a lie of the devil if you've heard anything otherwise.

Number 5 - (18) "One that commits fornication sins against his own body." You know, you can feel bad at other people, but when it's self inflicted you've got nobody to blame but you, and so you sin against your own body. You did it, and so it becomes even worse.

Number 6 - (19) "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost," and we want a pure body because that belongs to the Lord. You see, that's the temple of the Holy Ghost and is a temple of worship for Him.

Number 7 - (20) "You are bought with a price:" This body that one would use for fornication, God paid the greatest and ultimate price, and that's the death of His Son. Now, it's kind of a poor example, but you know if someone just bought you the very finest of automobiles, paid the highest price for it and literally gave it to you, would you take care of it, or would you go crash it into the mountainside? It's exactly the same principle. God paid the highest price for your body, and He doesn't intend for it to be destroyed through all these other things, and so He says, (19) "You're not your own."

(Romans 12:1) "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Why present it to God? Because it is your reasonable service. Is it not reasonable after God has paid such a great price for it, that we should give it to Him? Of course it is, and so let's not be the sensual fool that would deny the sense of that statement.

As we notice, there were seven pillars of wisdom there in (Proverbs chapter nine). We are just dwelling on the last two this week, and we began the first one yesterday which is depart from evil and so on. We finished our lesson yesterday with the sensual fool, and we'll not go over those characteristics at all.

Today we see the scorning fool, or the scorner. All of these are something that we simply do not want to remain in. As you probably have noticed, there is a graduation in rebellion as we all start out as the simple fool, and if you don't do anything about that, you just graduate into the silly fool, then the sensual fool, and today we'll see the scorning fool. We will see how it becomes worse and worse in so far as the rebellion is concerned.

Once again, (Proverbs 1:22) is our reference. "How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning." As we noted yesterday, there are three different types of fools that are located in that verse. There's the simple fool, the silly fools that hate knowledge, and today we are going to discover the scorning fool. This first point we find here in this verse is that scorers delight in scorning. It is something that they love to do. They love to be a scorer, they delight in that and there's a reason for that as we're going to see. Now, the word scorer simply means to scoff. It has the significance of one trying to speak or imitate, that is to mock a language he does not understand. It would be like someone going to a foreign country such as France, Italy, Germany or something like that and not understanding the language. They don't know anything about it, so they just try to mouth the words and have no idea what they mean, or any understanding of it. That is the way that a scorer does concerning the word of God. You see, he is trying to imitate, or trying to mouth a language that he simply does not understand, and so it comes out as a mockery.

Now in (Proverbs 19:1): "Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity, than he that is perverse in his lips, and is a fool." You will find that a scorer is very, very vocal. Some of these other fools can just kind of keep it to themselves. You can be a simple fool and not say anything, but the scorer is one that will become very vocal. We'll see more of this as we go on just how vocal they are, and what they are vocal about. So, he is perverse in his lips. As I said talking about the mocker, the scorer is especially trying to mouth, or to talk a language he doesn't understand, and he has graduated to that point where he especially mocks the word of God. In other words, he is the one who is mouthing, or trying to speak a language he simply does not understand. Don't be surprised when you hear a scorer quoting scripture by the yard, but he always twists it in his own direction to

what he wants. You will find that a scorner is a very argumentative person, and if you are dealing with a scorner, never, ever try to argue with him; just shut up. If he wants to think you're a fool and don't know anything, so be it, but do not argue with a scorner. He doesn't know what he is talking about, but you're never going to convince him of that. There are people that will bring up all sorts of controversial things, especially from the scriptures, and this is where that they are real scorners. They don't know what they are talking about, and they try to get you on the defensive so they can prove you don't know what you are talking about. He is perverse in his lips, and again I say mostly around the scripture, so just don't argue with them.

(Proverbs 29:11) is another verse concerning the scorning fool. "A fool utters all his mind," but notice the contrast to that and you will find this often in the Proverbs. The Proverbs are filled with contrasts the way one thing is like the fool, but then you see the way wisdom is, and so it tells us exactly what God has placed us in. We can either choose the foolish way or the way of wisdom, it's up to us, and so the direct contrast is there. You will find that the contrast is so far as reward or consequence; that is also there. You can choose, and this is what God has given everyone of us the opportunity to do, and so here's this contrast. "A fool utters all his mind, but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards." I'll go to that in a moment, but first of all, "a fool utters all his mind." That's why I say that you will find that a scorner is real good at running his mouth. Now, he can generally tell you all that is in his mind in a about split second, but he continues after that, and you get so tired of hearing such repetition, the same old story, the same old garbage and all of that. What I want to notice here is that when he utters all his mind, his mind is not according to the word of God, and that's the great difference. We can speak one to another, and our words can be edifying when we are speaking around the

scriptures rightly divided, but the fool utters all his mind, and it is not according to God's word.

Now, "a wise man keeps it in till afterward." That means a wise man doesn't jump to conclusions, and he doesn't try to tell you everything that he knows and all of these things. A wise man simply will keep it in till afterward, he needs to ponder these things, he needs to know what he's talking about, and he needs to be assured of that for himself. It's not something that he's heard from somebody else, and he's not just repeating words, but rather he understands and keeps it in till afterwards.

(Proverbs 13:1) "A wise son heareth his father's instruction: (notice the contrast though) but a scorner heareth not rebuke." If we want to be wise, we must hear instruction. I knew a little fellow one time and that little guy could talk more than anybody that I ever heard in my life. I tried to instruct him just a little bit in language he could understand, and I thought it was real cute wisdom myself, but it didn't impress him. I said, you know God gave us two ears and one mouth so that we can hear twice as much as we say; it didn't make him any difference. But really, unless we are open to instruction, we are never going to have anything to say. People want to feel like they're important by all these wonderful words of wisdom they can lay on you, but unless we listen and take in the wisdom, you're never going to have anything to give out. See, there's nothing there.

We noticed a principle here a few years ago in the scriptures that was in regard to money, and people trying to get money by getting people to promise money and things like that. We learned as Paul tells us there in (Corinthians) basically, we cannot give what we do not have. So, if we are going to be able to give to anyone, we're going to have to take the time, the effort, and the energy to take in the message and the wisdom. Once

we've done that, then God can use us mightily in order to give out. So, the wise son hears his father's instruction, but what about the scorner? "A scorner heareth not rebuke." Here's where that the scorner is in deep trouble, because he won't take correction as it is with all of these different fools, the simple one, the silly one, and the sensual one.

Now, when the scorner graduates from this phase to the next, the correction or the instruction becomes harder, and it becomes harder to reach them. We'll find it reaching it's peak in the committed fool that we'll study later. So, if I'm with the scorner, he just will not listen or hear rebuke. If we will not listen to correction, we're in deep, deep trouble, and of course people say mainly that they don't need correction. I don't care who we are, everyone of us need correction at one time or another in our lives. Now, that doesn't mean always just out and out punishment. What I mean by correction is that there are times when God has to altar the direction in our lives, and He has to correct the path that we're going. We're not doing anything absolutely wrong or terrible, but if we continue in this particular area we are going to be, and so God corrects. He just gently turns us back and if we're willing to heed that, then we're going to be able to save ourselves a whole lot of misery. The person that will listen to rebuke is the person that is going to save himself a whole lot of pain and heartache.

Well, the scorner has gotten to the place where he will not hear rebuke, and I have said this down through the years, and I believe it to be absolutely true as we go into the scripture. If we do not listen to God at a certain time in our lives, then He has a way of talking louder the next time. God is very faithful to do that, and we want to be those people who listen to the "still small voice" (1 Kings 19:12), rather than have to listen to God when He shouts, because when He shouts, that also is another expression

of intense pain for us and we really don't want to go that far. So, the scorner refuses instruction, and he's always seeking his own way.

(Proverbs 14:6) "A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not:" That's not contradictory to what we have been saying because you see, the scorner is looking in the wrong place. Paul tells us why that he seeks wisdom and doesn't find it. (2 Timothy 3:7) "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." See, he wants to learn all of this wisdom, but he doesn't want it to apply to him, and so they actually resist the truth. This is true of our world today that there is so much knowledge and learning out there, but men are not coming to the knowledge of God's truth. They don't want to hear it and so yeah, they seek after knowledge, but they're certainly not seeking after truth. "They're ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth," and it's because of this ungodly attitude of rebellion that they will not be instructed.

I want to notice that the scorner has always been with us down through the ages, but scripture gives him as one of the prevailing characteristics of our time in these last days, and this is why that I believe we are seeing more of this. When I was growing up, I really don't remember the open defiance, rebellion, and scorning especially of the scripture that I see now, and I don't think it's my imagination. I don't think I'm just more aware of it now, but believe it's because man has become more open and vocal in his rebellion against God, and so this is why that we read in (Jude verse 18): "How that they told you there should be mockers (it's the same scorners you see; the scorning fool) in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts," and we are seeing that of course, fulfilled today.

Now (2 Peter 3:3-7) gives us some real insight once again into what this scorning is all about as we noted here. It is especially surrounding the word of God, and what men are especially scorning today is the righteousness of God's word. (3) "Knowing this first, that there shall come (once again) in the last days scoffers, (and once again the characteristic) walking after their own lusts," and we're going to get into it a little bit more later on but you see, this is exactly what men are doing. They're denying the truth and the standards of God's word, walking after their own sensual desires and lusts, and where God condemns it, they approve it; so notice how that this is related though to the standards of God's word. Now, they're walking after their own lusts and they are saying: (4) "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation," and we often hear that today. Oh, I've heard about the coming of the Lord for years. My grandpa talked about it and all these people talked about it. Forget it, they said it for crying out loud, but it's just foolishness.

Now, that is just one thing that they are talking about, but what I want to notice is they are in reality scoffing at the fullness of the word, and the idea is that if this part of the word is not true, then there's none of it that is true. Notice how that God makes this connection. (5) "For this they willingly are ignorant of." This is what the scripture says about the coming of the Lord, that they are willing ignorant of it, but notice how He relates it to God's word: "That by the word of God." What He is saying here is that we should believe the coming of the Lord for one reason and that's because God said so. Now we can look around at all of these different signs, and it's not hard for me to see the signs and all of this to know that Jesus is right at the door, but that's really not the major reason why we believe the coming of the Lord. The reason why we should believe it is simply because it is stated in God's

word, and so are we going to believe the word of God, or are we not? That is the question that God has put before the whole world.

(2 Peter 3:5 continued) So, "they're willing ignorant of this, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:" He is talking about the flood that came in Noah's time, and that also came by the word of God. There were the mockers and scoffers in Noah's time, and they had all of their reasoning, but it had never rained. How are you going to get the boat to the water and all of these various things that men would scoff about at that time? But you see what they were really doing is denying the word of God, and people are doing the same thing today. (6) "Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:" and He's just saying that God's word came to pass, (7) But the heavens and the earth, which are now, (and you will notice) by the same word." Just as surely as God said that the world is going to be destroyed by the flood in Noah's time, the present world is going to be destroyed by fire in our time. I'm not convinced of that because the scientists have told us if things continue with the global warming and all of these different things. I don't believe it because of that, but I believe it because God's word said so. So, the scoffer is a scoffer because he is denying the word of God and I repeat, it is not only in relation to the second coming of the Lord, it's in everything that God's word says. Now, they make light of the word, and I want to see today that if one denies the scripture, there is no hope for him. If we deny the word of God in any area of our lives, God can't do anything for us. Our attitude, our appreciation, and our acceptance of the word of God is absolutely paramount to our experience.

We read in (Isaiah 55:11) that God has sent forth His word. "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void," and what I want to

see about that is something I saw a few years ago, and I just did not realize at the time that the word of God is not neutral. He does not take the message up here and say all right, take it or leave it. God says my word shall not return unto me void, and it does not say if you believe it. If a person does not believe the word of God, His word is still not going to return void. Stated another way, it means that God's word is always, and I mean always going to have an effect. If we believe God's word, the effect will be "that we are changed from glory to glory like unto Christ" (2 Corinthians 3:18). If we choose not to believe the word of God, we become harder, and the effect is that we become harder in our attitude against God.

There in (Romans 1:21-22), they were darkened because they rejected the light. You see, when light comes, it's either going to have the effect of enlightening us or if we reject it, it is going to have the effect of darkening one. The word of God will always have an effect, and there in (1). "They became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. (22) Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." I got a first hand example, expression, and manifestation of that verse there in Isaiah where it says, (Isaiah 55:11) "My word shall not return unto me void." I was just a young boy and have an older brother who at that time was very much in rebellion big time. He was working in a body shop there in Albuquerque and a car came in that had been wrecked, and they sent him out to fix it. He removed all of the seats and took everything out of the way like he was suppose to do, and down in the corner inside the car was this little old kind of a scroll like thing that was rolled up, and you know out of curiosity he picked it up and rolled it out. It was that verse from (Isaiah 55:11). "My word, it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish the purpose in the thing whereto I sent it," and so he turned to his friend there and said, what is this, what does this mean? My brother's friend read it and he says, I

don't know, but I'm glad I didn't get it. God's word is powerful, and they knew it was something out of the ordinary for them. This is why I say that God's word is always, always going to have an effect whether we believe it or whether we don't, it's not going to return void. It is not neutral and it is not an option with men.

Isaiah describes the kind of person that we're talking about in (Romans chapter 1), (22) "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, (21) they were darkened in their imaginations." He describes the scorner and the attitude of the scorner in (Isaiah 5:20-24), and I want to go over these verses just a little bit, because they're so expressive of what is going on in our day. The word of God is so up to date and believe me, it is not outdated by its standards as we so often hear and are told today. Yeah, we're living in the nineties and all of this, but the word of God is the same as it always was. God expects, and has given the provision that we should come up to the standard that He has already laid out for us, and so notice what He says. This is especially to the scorner as He says, (20) "Woe unto them." There is a reprisal regardless of man's opinion of what God's word said, and there is still this reprisal for denouncing and denying the word of God. (20) "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter," and you look around at society today, and they've done exactly the same thing. They have changed the standards of God's word all around, and so the things that are demanded and laid down in the scripture are now wrong, and the standards of society are now right. Rather than men measuring their lives by the standards of God's word, men are measuring their lives by what is accepted by society and that's not right. See, that's not the way that God intended, and so these standards that society is setting now, are directly contrary to the standards which God has written down in His word.

We went over so many of these things in the sensual fool yesterday, so I'm not going to comment on them, but just for examples, some of the things that we are dealing with today, are things that men are trying to make just as right as rain as they say. Homosexuality, premarital sex, abortion, and rebellion on every hand is listed as something that is right. Children are taught to rebel against their parents, but that's not according to the word of God and yet according to society, this is right. The parents were wrong, so you've got to stand up for what's right. The government is wrong, so you've got to stand up for what's right, and we've seen examples of this where that men have rebelled against the government all in the name of righteousness, and they have this righteous cause. Now, what is wrong with that is not that they simply do it, but many of them will try to go back to the word of God and prove that the scripture teaches it that way; it does not do it! I have talked to more than one person just for an example on the homosexual issue, and I am so sick of the way that they twist scripture to show how that scripture teaches that homosexuality is right, and it's just as wrong, wrong, wrong as it can be, but what are they doing? They call light darkness, and darkness light; evil good, and good evil; and they've just switched it. So this is why that the scorner is going to be judged so harshly.

Once again, "woe unto them," and notice the indictment against them? (21) "Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight," and what do we read in the book of (Judges 17:6)? "But every man did that which was right in his own eyes;" not that which is right according to the scripture, and we see that in our world today. I have never seen such a world insisting on rights in all of my life, where everything has rights. I heard a few years ago, and some of you may remember these events that they have down in Oklahoma and when they do, I don't want to be within 1500 miles of it. They harvest all of these rattlesnakes and I want no

part of that, but anyway this fellow that was telling the story said they harvest all these rattlesnakes, and people come by the drove to capture the rattlesnakes. They're supposed to get the biggest one and all of that, they get a prize and so forth, and then they have a rattlesnake fry I guess you'd call it. It's supposed to be a real delicacy, but you can have my part if you want it. This fellow that was telling the story said when they got ready to kill the rattlesnakes, they pay a man to come down from Washington or wherever, because the government is so insistent on rights, they had to be down there and make sure that you kill the rattlesnake right. How do you kill a rattlesnake wrong? But that just shows you, even a rattlesnake has rights. Now, I don't need to go into all this conglomeration of everybody insisting on their rights, and some of these that are so contrary to the word of God are insisting and demanding their rights. Well, you see it is contrary to scripture, because what they are trying to do, and wanting for society to approve is not right according to God's word, so "every man is doing that which is right in his own eyes." The scorner becomes his own authority, and the day we become our own authority is the day that we are headed for deep, deep trouble, because God has established the authority over us.

Then you will notice: (22) "Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink." Another thing that we find in our society today is all types of stimulates, drugs, alcohol, and so forth. The result of all of that is that opinions, philosophies, and standards come out of these things. You heard about the one that was called into question for a political office because he had smoked marijuana, but that's all right, I didn't inhale. You see, men even realize that when you're not in your right mind, that you don't want somebody making laws that are just stupid, and yet this is what we have. So, all of these outside stimulants go into the mix too, and this is what comes out in order to justify what the

scorner is doing. God says, "woe unto them" when you mix up all of these drinks and all of this, and you then begin to establish your lifestyle as a result of that kind of thing. God says, "woe unto you," and of course He is especially speaking of these scorners and leaders that are instrumental in doing such things, and I would say that there are so many things in our country we do not approve of. There are leaders that I do not approve of that I know are against God, but rather than going on a crusade to testify how bad they are, to bad mouth them and turn them around, let us first do what Paul says. "Pray for those that are in authority over you," (1 Timothy 2:1-2) and second, let us realize the woe is not to come through us. God will take care of the woe and is going to do the judging, and so we can simply be in harmony with Him.

Notice what else they do. (23) "Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!" Now, what a description of our legal system today that justifies the wicked for reward. The one that has the most money gets away with the greatest crimes, and we've seen demonstrations of that I believe, but notice this second part. "They take away the righteousness of the righteous from him." What does that mean? Quite simply, they disregard the righteous standards of the righteous and they often do that by ridicule. "They take away the righteousness of the righteous." If you stand up on the basis of God's word, you'll be laughed right out of town. You see, it's not according to the righteousness of God, they're going according to the righteous standards of men. If a person is supposed to stand according to the righteousness of God, then he is simply ridiculed. I heard and was moved by the testimony of brother Derrick yesterday. When he was a young twelve year old boy, he chose to do that which was right, and yet here's all this society trying to take away the righteousness he displayed but thank God, God didn't forget it and he hasn't forgotten it. God's righteous

standards are still going to be rewarded even though men try to take those righteous standards away, so as we find here that "they take away the righteousness of the righteous." It is so stupid to stand up for that which is right in the eyes of the world, but are we standing for the righteousness in the eyes of the world, or are we going to stand for the righteousness of God? Ought we to please God, or ought we to please man? (1 Thessalonians 4:1) (24) "Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust:" Leave the judgment to God, and just as surely as God has written it, it's going to come to pass whether they think so or not. It may appear for awhile that men have gotten away with it. They haven't and that's God's business, but what I want to see here is why God is judging them that way. They're not just being judged for their actions, for their activities, or because these things are wrong, He's doing it because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel. The crime is not simply in the activities, and all the things they're doing, but because they have denied God's word. That's what the scorner does, and we must not be sucked into denying the standards of God's word just because certain things are accepted. They're not only accepted anymore, but all of these standards of society are actually justified and expressed as that which is right.

The next and final one that we have, thank the Lord, is the committed fool. This is the one that means exactly what it says. He has just simply committed himself to ungodliness, and to that which is wrong. (Proverbs 14:16) "A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil:" Once again notice your contrast. To repeat, you'll find it consistently and constantly throughout (Proverbs). Again, "a wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident." The attitude that is presented here by this fool, is one of commitment to the way of rebellion,

foolishness, and denying God. As we had at the beginning, "the fool has said in his heart, there is no God." (Psalms 14:1) This fellow takes that to the limit just pursuing the fact that he believes there is no God. He thinks I'm my own god, and so we find here when He says he rages and is confident, that means that he is confident in his own rebellion and rage. He is confident in what he sees, finds, and feels in himself. He becomes a god unto himself, a law unto himself, is his own authority, and no one, but no one is going to take that away from him.

(Proverbs 15:5) "A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent. The committed fool is just a further graduation of the scorning one. He is so committed to it, he not only refuses instruction, he despises instruction and of course, there again the contrast. He that regardeth reproof is prudent.

(Proverbs 17:10) "A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool," and that means this committed fool is the one who deserves and receives the absolute greatest of punishments. We see it in the penal system with their various degrees of correction, punishments, reprimands and all of these various things. I've heard of those who are sent to prison, young kids who go to certain jails, and why they start out in detention and then they just graduate on up. Those poor kids are committed fools because no amount of instruction, the hundred stripes, and all of these things make any impression on them at all. He is committed to that rebellion, and the fact of the matter is that the only way I believe a committed fool is ever reached at all is solitary confinement, by pushing him off to himself.

Now, I heard of a program that a certain organization has that follow godly biblical principles along these lines, and many of the states are giving this particular organization their rebellious and troubled youth. The

states realize when these young people get to this particular place, they can't do anything with them. They didn't understand how to work with them because they put them all in together, and then they just waxed worse and worse. Now, they do have ways of dealing with all these others in between, but what they have done with this committed fool is to realize that if you can get these scorners who become committed fools separated from everybody else where they don't have any influence on them, then sometimes you can get to them. The state is turning these particular troubled youth over to them, and they're giving them a certain amount of money which is far less than what it would be in the penal institutions. This particular organization that has such a program takes these young troubled teenage kids, and have build these cabins out in the mountains away from everything and everybody. They take them out there by themselves, and work with them one on one with a counselor. Many of those committed fool teenagers are turned around, and have given their hearts to the Lord, and then they're able to come back into society. God is saying, that if you just put them in isolation and shut them up for awhile, sometimes they do indeed learn such lessons, and that's the only way they've found that they can be penetrated. Well, God has known about that forever, and so sometimes God does exactly the same thing. He doesn't always lock people up in prison, but God has His way of isolating people to where they'll finally listen to Him. You know, when are you going to listen, when are you going to learn, when are you going to finally wake up and smell the coffee, so to speak?

(Proverbs 28:26) "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool:" When we become a law and a standard to ourselves, judging by ourselves we have a problem, "but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered." The committed fool once again is the one that is so full of himself, rejects any other counsel, and makes his own

decisions regardless of the consequences. Thank the Lord, this concludes this sixth pillar that we notice in (Proverbs 9:6). "Forsake the foolish and live."

Number 7 - (Proverbs 9:6) "**Go in the way of understanding**," is the seventh pillar. Now then, we get to start on the building program, and here's where we begin to start building in wisdom. This becomes very important in our lives because you see, God wants us to forsake the foolish, but this is what happens in the lives of many Christians, even some of these convicts and some of these children that have been committed to these places. They do get them to forsake the way of the foolish, but it's true of any one, and God always teaches that you cannot just empty something out and leave it that way; that's not God's plan. It's wonderful to forsake the way of the foolish, but if we are ever going to be the successful individual and Christian that God intends that we should be, we are going to have to build something where that void was. There's no other way, and so we're going to be concentrating on building something the rest of this week. You get rid of the negative things and emptying out all right, but now we want to build.

(1 Corinthians 1:30-31) "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: (31) That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." The only way to obtain and build wisdom is Christ. First, "of him are you in Christ." If a person has been born again, he is in Christ and that is never going to change. As we read there in (2 Corinthians 5:17), "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." So, a Christian is in Christ, but the next part of this depends on us. "But of him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us." That requires a process, and it requires time. Yes, we are in Christ, but

things don't automatically happen in our lives just because I'm a Christian, filled with the Spirit, and in a Christian home or something of that nature. What we're talking about here is that He is made unto us, and notice made unto us becomes a personal thing, not just a collective thing. He is made unto me personally as wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

(1 Corinthians 1:30) is our base scripture for building in wisdom, and we shall go from there. One of the key things that we need to understand here as I said, "in Christ" is our new position and that will never change. Christ is made unto us wisdom. That is the process of time, and it becomes a very personal thing that God wants to reveal His wisdom in us. It's very important we understand the little word "and." It is better translated "even." He is made unto us wisdom, even (and) righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, and that means that these three words; Righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption describe, or define the expressions of wisdom.

Righteousness refers to our spirit. Now, we're going to cover these in depth throughout the rest of the week, and that's a good part of what we're doing here, but righteousness refers to our spirit. Christ is revealed in our spirit.

Sanctification refers to our soul, and the soul is the seat of the affections. That's our emotions, our desires, and things of this nature, and so Christ is made wisdom in our soul.

Redemption refers to the body, and so Christ is to be seen in our body. I want to notice here that when we are talking about wisdom, we are not just talking about some characteristic with all these wonderful words, and people saying using wisdom in this, and using wisdom in that.

That's certainly an application of wisdom and we know that, but for this class I want us to think of wisdom in terms not of a thing, but of a person. When you see wisdom, think Jesus because that is exactly what Christ is. Christ is made unto us wisdom, and so if you do it in a simple way, Christ is revealed in my life spirit, soul, and body. We'll go into a little detail later on as to exactly how that fits in each one of those, who we are, and just what our spirit, and our soul, and of course what our body is.

First thing we want to notice once again is that Christ is the personification of wisdom. Now, you will notice the quote here from (Proverbs chapter eight), and I just listed the scriptures and am not going to expound on all of these things, but if you want a real bible study, and want a time to spend alone with the Lord, just spend that time in (Proverbs chapter eight). Believe God to reveal these things concerning Christ, and just see how beautifully that they fit and apply to Jesus. I am going to give you the pilot as to how that is done, and give you the direction on that, but after that God can just give you so many little nuggets of your own. When He gives them, they become yours and real to you, and they're things you can share with other people, not because someone has said this is the way it is, but because the Lord simply revealed it to you. So, let's read a few of these different things.

(Proverb 8:12-18) "I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions." (13) "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate." (14) "Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength." You see, all of these are in the first person "I," then just to substitute that, which is Jesus Himself speaking to our hearts and telling us who He is, and then they become very valuable in the practical situations that we have to deal with. You'll notice continuing here that "I am understanding; I have strength." (15) "By me kings

reign, and princes decree justice." How we wish that world leaders would take hold of that and let their reigning abilities, and all of these things come through Christ. You know that He is good for the political situations, personal situations, and all of these different ones. (16) "By me princes rule, nobles, even all the judges of the earth." (17) "I love them that love me." Now, that's a real gem and a real insight for you. Doesn't Jesus love everybody? Certainly He does, but this verse is talking about people who are willing to enter into a personal relationship with Christ, and love reciprocates love. I love them that love me, and when we show that love, it just continues as a mighty circle, and it continues as this personal bond between us and Jesus. Yes indeed, as we noted in the message Sunday morning, there is a special love between Jesus and a certain people. I want to be that person, and so I love them that love me. "Those that seek me early shall find me." This is one that's been so real to me, and I've enjoyed so much over the years. This is just a little example of the insight that you can get. What does early mean? Early in life, early in the day, early in trial, or early in difficulty; you name it. See, you can fill in any blank you want to there. The thing is to seek Him before we seek anything else. "Those that seek me early," and you can add all sorts of insights as to when this happens in your own life. (18) "Riches and honour are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness," and you can go on and on, but I said I wasn't going to expound. Okay, I won't do that.

(Proverbs 8:20) "I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment:" Who but Jesus does that? He's the expression and example of righteousness, and you see it in Him. When you think of these things, think of (1Corinthians 1:30) where "Christ is made unto me." These things can become practical in my life when Jesus is made practical in my life. This is when wisdom is expressed in me.

(Proverbs 8:22-36) "The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old," and what I want to do is just visualize and see that this is Christ. This is who He was and who He is in eternity. (23) "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." (24) "When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water." (25) "Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:" (26) "While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world." (27) "When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth." (28) "When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:" (29) "When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:" Christ going back before creation and He was there. This is the eternity of Christ as the wisdom of God. (35) "For whoso findeth me findeth life, (that's not hard to interpret, that's Christ) He that hath the Son hath life." That's it, and so in all of this just keep in mind that anytime you see wisdom, you see Christ. Again, "For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD." (36) "But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death," and that's true. If you hate Christ, you just simply love death. All of these wonderful expressions concerning Jesus speak to us of His eternal deity, and this who we want to be revealed in our lives.

The next segment here is wisdom and the fear of the Lord, and I have listed a number of scriptures, and again I'm not going to just simply dwell on all of these various things, because I want to be sure we are able to finish this week. There are a number of verses that are listed there as to what the fear of the Lord is, and I think there's such a misunderstanding today in so many circles of what the fear of the Lord is. I want to expound on that just a little

bit, because some people are literally taught that you should be terrified of God, and so terrified of God that you don't dare do anything wrong or evil. That is not the teaching of the fear of the Lord, and is a very unhealthy relationship. You will never grow in your love, relationship, and fellowship with God if you have that kind of a conception of the Lord, it's just not going to happen. So, we want to find out what is the fear of the Lord? It is mentioned specifically in (Proverbs 1:7). "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge and wisdom." That means that if you don't really understand what the fear of the Lord is, then you're not going to get the knowledge of Him that you seek, and the wisdom that is available. We must understand what the fear of the Lord actually is if we're going to get the benefit of it.

(Proverbs 1:29) "For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD." Once again God has set before us a choice, and we can choose to fear the Lord. So again, we need to know what it is so we know what to choose.

(Proverbs 8:13) "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate," So, one expression here of the fear of the Lord is simply being in perfect sympathy with Christ. You see, we want to have the same attitudes in our hearts and lives that Jesus had. We want to feel about things the way that Jesus feels about them, and when Christ is revealed in our lives in a practical way, it's not something you have to conjure up, it's something that is there and we just feel that way about it. So, the fear of the Lord is to hate evil and so on.

(Proverbs 10:27) "The fear of the LORD prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened."

(Proverbs 14:26) "In the fear of the LORD is strong confidence." This gives a little more insight into what the fear of the Lord is. When we have the fear of the Lord, its confidence in Him. Another way of saying it is that we are confident in the Lord when we have that fear of the Lord.

(Proverbs 14:27) "The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life." If you are terrified of God, that is not a fountain of life. When we have the actual fear of the Lord in our lives, it becomes life to us, and it is not something that is dreaded in our lives.

(Proverbs 15:16) "Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith." Now, here's some more insight into what the fear of the Lord actually is because you see, the fear of the Lord is in reality holding God and holding the Lord with such awe, respect, and submission unto Him that when we understand that, then "better is a little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith." If I have the fear of the Lord, it means that I have that confidence that He's going to take care of it, and so if I have just a little, that's enough. If I'm going after all of the treasure with my own strength and leaving the Lord out, then there is trouble and uncertainty in all of these things.

(Proverbs 15:33) "The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility." Of course they are mentioned in the same verse, because the fear of the Lord brings out true humility. True humility is not standing up and telling everyone how bad you are, and supposing that now I'm humble, and I'm telling you how awful that I am. Humility is simply another way of saying I am dependent upon the Lord. You see, "God resists the proud." (James 4:6) It means the independent and self sufficient one, the one that is so strong in himself. God resists that, but what happens? "He gives grace to the humble," and the humble is the one that is willing to

receive of the power, grace, love, and protection of God. Humility is just another way of saying I am ready to receive everything that God has for me. "The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom; and then before the honor, humility." Humility is the same pattern and experience of the fear of the Lord.

(Proverbs 16:6) "By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil" We know very well if we've been around for any length of time and tried anything, that you don't depart from evil by yourself. I've heard more people make more resolutions such as I'm not going to do that anymore, and it didn't last till they hit the front door, but by the fear of the Lord is when I am subject to Him, when I'm submissive to Him, and when I bow unto His authority, then I can depart from evil.

(Proverbs 19:23) "The fear of the LORD tendeth to life: and he that hath it shall abide satisfied." There's one thing that I'm seeing in the world today, and that is so much dissatisfaction. People think things are going to bring them satisfaction, and they think all of this great possession, material wealth, honor, fame, and all of that is going to bring them happiness. It doesn't and scripture tells us here that "The fear of the LORD tendeth to life," and he that hath that; (the fear of the Lord) He shall abide satisfied. We read in (1 Timothy 6:6) that "godliness with contentment is great gain." It is such an accomplishment in our lives when we are satisfied with what God gives us. There is no greater joy and blessing than that. I had a young girl that was talking to me a while back, and she had all of this purpose to be a great opera singer, and she had the ability to do it. I think God sidetracked that for His own reasons. That story's not over yet, but as she sat in my office telling me about all of her aspirations, and things like that. She set that up, that if she could just reach that, she would be satisfied, and I just asked her the question. I

said, would you be willing for God to give you satisfaction without doing that? I mean, if you have satisfaction, what difference does it make how you get it if you're satisfied? This seems to be one thing that we all have had in our lives and minds at one time, and that would be attaining our earthly goals is the only thing that would satisfy us. Well, it won't when we go our own way, but haven't we achieved the goal if we get the satisfaction God's way? Isn't that the desired goal? If you get it from the things of the Lord, why worry about anything else as to whether you achieve it through your own dreams? And so, as we find here, he that has the fear of the Lord is the one that's going to abide satisfied.

(Proverbs 22:4) "By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honour, and life."

(Proverbs 23:17) "Let not thine heart envy sinners: (which is done today) but be thou in the fear of the LORD." Now, I have given you somewhat of an overview of what the fear of the Lord actually is, and it simply means that it is a matter of being subject and submissive. Having the fear of the Lord is that awesome respect that you give to God because He is God. Now, I want to try to illustrate that because we are told the same thing regarding our parents, and wives regarding their husbands especially. A wife is supposed to fear her husband, but the wife that is afraid and terrified of her husband is in a very, very bad situation. I mean, they're going to have a horrible relationship, and of course I know some wives that are terrified of their husbands, and that's not fearing your husband according to the scripture. Fearing your husband according to the scripture is the same way we fear the Lord by having that awesome respect and reverence. We realize that Sarah called Abraham lord, but it don't mean she worshipped him. It means she gave him the place in her life that God gave, and the same thing is true with us and the Lord. We give

Him that place of responsibility, authority, and leadership. It is protection as we found in some of these verses that God is going to take care of us, and He is the one that's going to have this shield and wonderful umbrella over us.

How about children? I learned very early after my young daughter was born, that I do not want this little girl to bow to me because she's terrified of me, and the Lord gave me a real insight one day that reduced me to absolute tears. I've never forgotten the look in that little girl's eyes when no, she didn't have the fear of daddy, she had the terrified of daddy. I did not want that and I remember looking down at her, and she thought I was going to strike her; I did too. That's not the fear you want, but do you realize some people have that same attitude toward God just waiting to whack them one; that's not God. That's why I say we must understand what the fear of the Lord is, and what the fear of the Lord is not. If you have children, you do not want them obeying and bowing down to you because they are terrified of the consequences. You want them to obey and respect you, and do what you say because they love you, and this is the way with God. If people are doing things so called for the Lord, and in the name of the Lord because they are terrified of the consequences, they have an extremely shallow comprehension of God. We must come to that place where that we do things simply because we love God. I can think back in my own life, and there were many things that I was encouraged to do perhaps that others were doing, and they seemed to be getting by with it. I refused to do it, not because of the consequences, but because I loved and respected my mom and dad so much, that I absolutely refused to bring that kind of hurt on them. That is the fear of your parents, and when we develop that fear of the Lord in our lives that we want to do right, because we do not want to literally hurt the heart of Jesus, then we've discovered a little bit more about the fear of the Lord.

We read in another negative part that "fear hath torment" (1 John 4:18), and if you are afraid of God, you have torment. I don't care who we are, we must understand the fear of the Lord in our own lives. There was a time you may remember when David was going to bring up the Ark, and they didn't do it the right way. They didn't follow God's instructions and did it like the Philistines did, and you know nothing happened when the Philistines moved the ark on the cart, but when David and Israel tried to do it, a man lost his life. (2 Samuel 6:7-8) He reached out to touch the ark, and God smote him immediately dead, but God didn't do anything to the Philistines. You know why? Israel knew better and the Philistines didn't. God is just, but the scripture says David was afraid of God, (2 Samuel 6:9) and we don't read that David worshipped the Lord that day. Instead, evidently David went back to his house and found out how to move the ark, then the next day when the ark had gone so many paces, and I forget how many, but I've always figured David was just standing there and watching to see if God was going to do it again, and by the time they walked this many paces, he figured we're all right, so then David danced before the ark and worshipped God. (2 Samuel 6:13-14) What I am saying is that if you are afraid of God, you cannot worship God, and so we must worship Him according to divine love. Alright, so that's a little bit about wisdom and the fear of the Lord. When we have the fear of the Lord, then we can be open to all of this wisdom and insight that God would give us.

So many of the things that we have considered, and are continuing to consider are in the Proverbs. Just what is a proverb and the purpose of them? Again, we'll go over this briefly. (Proverbs 1:1-6) "The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;" There are twelve things listed below that the proverbs do, or twelve purposes of the proverbs.

- Number 1 - To know wisdom.
- Number 2 - To know instruction.
- Number 3 - To perceive the words of understanding.
- Number 4 - To receive the instruction of wisdom.
- Number 5 - To receive the instruction of justice.
- Number 6 - To receive the instruction of judgment.
- Number 7 - To receive the instruction of equity.
- Number 8 - To give subtilty to the simple.
- Number 9 - To give the young man knowledge.
- Number 10 - To give the young man discretion. A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels.
- Number 11 - To understand a proverb.
- Number 12 - To understand the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

All of these cover a spectrum really of life, and again I'm not going into the individuals of these different things, but if you look down through these twelve things, you can find things that we need in our everyday lives. If we can receive the wisdom that is given forth by the Proverbs, then we are certainly well ahead. A proverb, just the meaning of the word is a short concise saying expressing much truth in a few words. You will find many natural illustrations used throughout Proverbs. We see spiritual truth illustrated by these natural things, and so a proverb is very close to a parable. In fact, Jesus uses the word proverb in some places when He told His disciples, "I'm not going to speak to you in proverbs anymore, I'm going to speak to you plainly." (John 16:25)

A parable as you read here in the last part of (Proverbs 1:6), is "To understand the words of the wise, and their dark sayings." What I want to notice, is that some of the things that God gives us in the scriptures are dark sayings. That simply means that they are obscure, you don't readily understand them, and a parable is

exactly the same thing. Some years ago when I was growing up and reading the scriptures, and of course most people start out exactly that way, and I think that's where it should be. You start out in the gospels and reading the parables, and I thought that Jesus used parables to make it so simple that anybody could understand, and I found out as I began to study that, that's not the truth.

Let's turn to (Matthew chapter 13) and we will see why that Jesus spoke in parables, and what He's going to do is to tell us the same thing in our lives today. It gives those seven beautiful parables, and if you listen to some people expound on them today, you find out real quick that if Jesus did it to illustrate the simplicity, then somebody missed the boat, and so I want to notice why that He gave the parable. We have often spoken over the years of how God separates His people unto Himself, and the way He does that is to determine who wants to listen to Him, and who does not. You'll find that over and over again in our experience, that there is the separation of those who want to listen to what the Lord says, and indeed those who do not.

(Matthew 13:9-14) (9) "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. (10) And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? (11) He answered and said unto them, because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. (12) For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. (13) Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. (14) And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias" that he gave along that very line. Simply stated, a parable is not given so simple that anyone could understand. The parable is a secret code, or a secret language that God uses to determine who has

ears to hear. (9) "Who has ears to hear, let him hear." God is going to find out who is willing to have these spiritual ears to understand His message. He speaks the same message to everybody, but only those that have ears to hear are going to understand it. An unbeliever was overheard telling a believer one time, that he just couldn't understand the bible, and the believer answered by saying, that's what you get for reading someone else's mail, but you'll find this same thing in the book of Revelation. "He that hath an ear (to hear), let him hear." (Revelations chapters 2 & 3) God will discover whether we have ears to hear, and so Jesus said, it's given unto you to understand the mysteries of the kingdom, and you as the people of God who have ears to hear can understand these parables; they cannot.

(Matthew 13:12) "Whosoever hath, (The one that hath an ear to hear) to him shall be given. He shall have more abundance, but whosoever hath not; (If you don't have the ear to hear, then you're not going to be able to understand what God says) from him shall be taken away even that he hath," and people have twisted that all around for years and years, as trying to apply it to salvation, and so forth. What it means is that if a person doesn't have the ear to hear, God will take away even that which he has. God will take away even the opportunity that he has to hear, and you'll find that to be true. God will let people reject truth so long, and then He withdraws the opportunity. We do not want to be in that situation. Let us be those who indeed have ears to hear, and be able to understand what God is talking about.

I want to go into a little bit of what we have here concerning man's spirit and wisdom. We have seen the fear of the Lord, and how that we must have that attitude in our heart. Remember that the fear of the Lord is not terrified of God, but the fear of the Lord is an attitude that we have of love,

respect or awe before God, and willing to receive from Him. Then of course, if we have the ear to hear these different proverbs and parables, then we can understand what He is saying to us.

"Christ is made unto us wisdom; even righteousness." (1 Cor. 1:30) Where it all begins is in our spirit, and God wants to reveal His wisdom in our spirit. Now, when I speak of the spirit of man, I am talking about the part of man that knows and has knowledge. (1 Corinthians 2:11) says it this way, "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." Now, don't confuse the spirit of man with his intellect, or with his mind. The spirit of man is simply the part of man that knows. Now, for example in (Romans 1:21), it refers to the spirit of man. Notice that "when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but they became vain (empty) in their foolish imaginations and reasoning.

I'm going to say something which may shock you just a little bit and it often does with people. Some have wanted to argue about it a little bit, but so says the scripture. They want to put this way back in some time as to who they were, like that they were so far removed from our day or anybody in our time, but (Romans 1:21), as well as the rest of these verses are true of all men. This is what is in the heart of man. "When they knew God," and people are shocked when I tell them that when a person says I was a born atheist, that is not right. Every person born into the world knows, and not by his mind, but in his spirit that there is God, and people have said well now, what about all these people in foreign countries with all these idols and so forth? That's just the proof of it for crying out loud; they simply substituted God. They knew there was God and here He is. Man has to have God, because God created him that way and so God created

men with that knowledge in their spirit that God is. Then some goes well, I do know there's a higher power, and a supreme being, and all of this. Why don't we just say it like the scripture says, "when they knew God?" That's what the bible says. Alright, what happened? (21) "They glorified Him not as God" and even though they knew it, they didn't glorify Him, they didn't worship Him, and they didn't accept Him, so what happened? "They became vain," or they became empty. What does it mean? A person has to learn not to believe God, it's as simple as that, and men do that with their intellect even today. They became vain or empty in their foolish imaginations, and that word imagination simply means reasoning, or internal considerations.

So, the spirit of man is the part of man that knows, and that's why that God doesn't have to have a man with a real intelligent brain to reveal truth to them. He reveals truth to our spirit, and so when God reveals truth to our spirit, He doesn't have to go through the intellect and the reasoning. That really becomes a detriment to us when men try to reason out the things of God. He reveals truth to our spirit and now notice how important that is, because this is where God begins.

(Proverbs 2:2) "So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding;" The heart is just simply another word for the spirit, it means exactly the same thing, it refers to the same thing, and it begins in the heart. What do we say, receive Christ into your mind, or receive Christ into your heart? Of course, it's your heart and your spirit where the new birth takes place, and that happens immediately in a moment of time, and God does it without the intellect. That's what He has to get around so many times. You incline your ear to wisdom, and your heart to understanding.

(Proverb 2:10) "When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul." There you find the soul and the spirit that are divided. The heart referring to the spirit and the soul to the soul. We'll see that tomorrow.

(Proverbs 3:1) "My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:" Now, the reason I want to notice this is because that anything that is shown outwardly in our lives of value, and anything right must begin in the heart. This is where legality comes in when people try to patch it up on the outside, but there's never a change in the heart. That becomes legality and law keeping, but when God begins to change our hearts, it is reflected on the outside. That is not legality, but that is real sanctification, and that is walking in righteousness. We must get the beginning right, because our life with the Lord, our relationship, and our conduct has to begin with the heart, on the inside.

(Proverbs 3:5) "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart." See, your heart has to be given over to the Lord, and what? "And lean not unto thine own understanding." Your own understanding is your own intellect, and the way that we would reason things out. I've had a lot of things in my life, and I would reason them out quite differently than what God intended. That's why God says, (Isaiah 55:8-9) "My thoughts are not your thoughts, (and your thoughts are not mine). For as the heavens are above the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and (so are) my thoughts higher than your thoughts." We have to learn that, and so God begins in our spirit revealing these things to our heart, so (Proverbs 3:5-7) says, "lean not unto thy own understanding." Notice: (6) "In all thy ways," and that's where we run into a problem. Some things we're willing to trust the Lord with, but other things seem just a little bit too important. I don't think He can handle that, so I'll take care of that. That's the idea we have, but in all thy

ways, and we discover then over a period of time that all thy ways means, all thy ways. (6) "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." (7) "Be not wise in thine own eyes: (Once again) fear the Lord." You see, to fear the Lord is to acknowledge and submit to Him, to bow before Him, and to let Him control and direct our lives.

(Proverbs 4:4) "He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words:"

(Proverbs 4:23) "Keep thy heart with all diligence; (why?) Because out of it are the issues of life." You see how that the truth must start in our spirit and if there's ever going to be anything done on the outside, it must begin in our spirit. (Matthew 12:34) Jesus said, "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart." You see, in our spirit is where the issues of life come from.

(Luke 6:45) "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart (his spirit) bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh." You see, it all starts on the inside and here's what I want to notice. The fact of the matter is that what we believe in our hearts is what will ultimately be produced in our lives, be it good or be it bad. Whatever is in our heart will be translated into the rest of our lives, and that's why God says our thinking, our process, and our knowledge has to be transformed, because when we're first born again; no, we don't think right, because we think of the old creation the way we always have done, and that's why God has to begin in our spirit. He has to reveal truth to our spirit and when He reveals truth to our spirit, then it will be translated into the outward situation that we are so interested in.

Now we're going to close with this thought. I'm giving you just a little bit of time so you can meditate on this before we come back, and then hopefully I will be able to expound on it a little bit more tomorrow. (Romans chapters 6, 7 & 8) are such a wonderful expression of what we are talking about here. (Romans chapter 6) gives us the truth of our death, burial, and resurrection with Christ, and so God says to us in (Romans 6:11), "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin." You see the word "likewise" is used there." Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin." What the word "likewise" means here is that you are to reckon like God does. God says this is true and your responsibility is just to believe it. You may not feel it, and you may not understand it yet, but reckon like God does that you have died unto sin. That's a fact as far as God is concerned, so accept God's fact.

Then you go to (Romans chapter 7) and you ask, what in the world did I do wrong? Here is Paul and He reckoned with God in (Romans chapter 6), then in (Romans chapter 7), oh my word, the good that I would, I do not. Whatever I didn't want to do, that's exactly what I do. We have this awful battle, and we think we are going backwards. No, you see God is simply processing that in our lives.

Then in (Romans chapter 8) we read how that (1) "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." (2) The law of the spirit of life has made me free from the law of sin and death." What Paul believed in (Romans chapter 6), and had a battle with experimentally in (Romans chapter 7) became a reality in (Romans chapter 8), and that's the pattern that God uses throughout our lives. Don't be surprised whenever you accept the truth of God's word, if the next experience you're going to go through is what I refer to as a battle royal. I've known some that have accepted the truth of

rock music, and some of these other things that we have noticed, and the next step was they had one tremendous battle on the inside, but the next step is like Paul says in the last part of (Romans chapter 7). "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord," and I believe I'll try to expound a little bit more tomorrow in (Romans chapters 6, 7, & 8), but you have that little outline (included here as you read through this booklet), so hopefully we can go forth rejoicing in the wisdom of the Lord.

We are just finishing up man's spirit and wisdom, as the key there is (1 Corinthians 1:30). "Christ, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and (even) righteousness (which applies to the spirit), and sanctification (the soul), and redemption (the body). God must work directly in our spirit because that's where everything begins. I said what we believe will ultimately be translated into our lives, and so God wants us to believe that which is right.

(Romans 12:2) is the reference: "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed (How?) by the renewing of your mind," and of course our mind before we are born again, before we yield to the Lord, and before we learn the word of God simply runs in the channels of the world. That's the reasoning, and so if God is going to change us, He doesn't just reach down and zap. Sometimes people like to think that you know, just zap me, but God's changing is a process. (Ephesians 2:10) We read that we are "created in Christ Jesus," and so God took seven days to create the world. Well, you see He also takes a process of time to create us spiritually, and so He is doing that throughout this church age. He's making this spiritual creation, and it begins by renewing your mind.

I want to stop here just a moment, and speak a little bit to those who feel like that God has called them into the ministry, and I constantly tell our people at home that

there are no useless members in the body of Christ. God has a ministry for every one of you, and so what I'm saying here is actually going to apply to everybody, though all may not minister officially, so to speak in a pulpit or something like that. There are three things that you need to remember. God calls to the ministry, God prepares for the ministry, and then God sends to the ministry. Now, the great problem that people overlook, is they want to jump over from the call part to the sent part, and the part that we're talking about today is the prepared part. You are going to be transformed by the renewing of your mind. This is the preparation and there is no substitute for any of us, there is no substitute for learning God's word. This is the way God renews our minds, and I do not care who we are talking about. Whether we are talking about personal lives, or whether we are talking about ministries or what, we are only renewed, changed, and transformed as God renews our minds. I want to give just a few examples here of those that were called, but we see specifically that God prepared them before He sent them out. In other words, God transformed them by the renewing of their minds.

Moses had a desire to deliver the children of Israel the day he killed the Egyptian, but that wasn't God's way. God took him to the backside of the desert for forty years to prepare him, and then He sent him back. You see the call, the prepared, and the sent.

David was anointed to be the king of Israel at sixteen or seventeen years old, but you see he suffered many years in the wilderness before he was finally exalted to the throne. Called, then prepared in the wilderness, and then sent to the throne.

Saul of Tarsus, who became the apostle Paul. We read his testimony in the book of Galatians. He was saved, he was called and God told him that, but then he

went three years into the wilderness into Arabia, and learned a new message before God sent him to the ministry to the Gentiles.

Peter was called of course, but God had much work to do in him as he walked with Jesus. He had some personal things that had to be worked out, and then he was sent.

And then there was Joshua. I want to bring out a couple of points here, because they tell us of the tremendous things that God wants to do, and how He wants to do it in our lives. (Joshua 1:5-8) We're not going to cover all of that, but I just want to notice a couple of specifics. (Joshua 1:7) This is God speaking to Joshua after Moses is gone, and God is saying to him, (Joshua has already been called, and prepared in great measure) "only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee," and I want to notice how personal God got with that. He doesn't say the law according to what Moses, my servant commanded Israel, but what Moses, my servant commanded thee. Joshua had the benefit of a one on one experience with Moses down through these times, but now God speaks directly to Joshua. Yes, Moses had given the law to all of Israel, but we are speaking just specifically of Joshua. What I'm talking about here is that when God prepares for the ministry, he speaks to the individual and it's not just a general thing. It is a personal thing where that if I'm going to be used of God, I'm going to have to set up as though the only ones around were me and God, and He is instructing me. Again I say, there is absolutely no substitute for that structured disciplined study of the scripture.

God uses many things in many people for this preparation. I shall ever eternally be grateful for my

mentors, as I'm speaking of brother and sister Smith who were so faithful to their calling. They were teaching when they didn't even know they were teaching. God was transforming me through their lives, when they didn't even know it, and the eternal reward for that belongs in the hands and the mind of God, but I personally feel such an appreciation. I know others have had people that they have that kind of a tie to, and you'll find here that Moses was Joshua's personal mentor, and he learned those lessons well. There are others that God has used in my life. I had teachers who were faithful to teach the word of God without charge the way we continue to do today, and they rejoiced in what they were doing, and then I had a family, and I shall ever be grateful for that family.

I received the call of God when I was seventeen years old. I knew that God had given me a gift of preaching, and other people knew exactly the same thing. Some had the idea that well now, with a gift like that you don't even need anything else. Don't ever fall for that foolishness and I began to preach the gospel, and back in that day the more nervous I became, the faster I talked. You can check this out with former synthesis students and you'll find that to be true. When I began and nervous as I was, I could probably give you a fifteen minute sermon in two and one half to three minutes. Well, at that time, I didn't have fifteen minutes worth of material, and so I would give my message and then realize, neither the preacher nor the congregation wants to go home after this, so I'd say the same thing in a different way. I'd build these people up to make the point, and the point was always the same, and I was feeling a little insignificant, inefficient and so forth. When you do that, then you try to seek compliments, or reinforcement from someone else, and so I went to my little brother and asked him, what do you think of these messages? Gene, all you do is preach around in circles, and that isn't what I wanted to hear, and so I decided to go to a higher authority. My brother don't

know anything anyway, so I went to my dad and said, Jerry tells me that I just preach around in circles almost in tears. Well, you sure do repeat yourself a lot! Now, I say that because that is exactly what God used to prepare and tell me young man, if you're going to preach the word of God, you're going to have to know the word of God. There was the commitment to go to bible school and to learn God's word, and once again there is no substitute for that.

And so, we find that Joshua received this one on one experience with Moses, then you will notice in (Joshua 1:8). "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night," and there is no substitute for that kind of meditation if we are going to be prepared for what God wants to do, both in us and through us. Take it seriously when God says that (Romans 12:2) "we must be transformed by the renewing of our minds." What He does is reveal that message and truth to our spirit, translates that into our everyday lives and experience, then "we can prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." That simply means that we graduate as we learn this message and He reveals it to our spirits, then we prove outwardly, we prove in experience, and we prove by actual putting it to the test, "the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." It's a matter of growth, and no one is just going to go from the very base to the absolute perfect. We learn as we go along, and we prove it by experience.

The next portion is man's soul and wisdom. Again, in (1 Corinthians 1:30) "Christ is made unto us wisdom, and (even) righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:" Sanctification is the key one here, because it applies to man's soul. When we are born again, we are born in our spirit in a moment of time. When God speaks life, there is eternal life in our spirit and it will never ever, ever, be lost. Now, don't be confused by this term that I'm going to use,

that the soul is being saved. Now, I don't mean there's a possibility that it's going to be separated from the spirit and lost in eternity. What I'm talking about here is there's an immediate change in our spirit from death to life, but our soul comes in a process of time. It's a gradual change because you see, the soul of man is the seat of his affections. It's our desires and our longings as I'll show from the scriptures in just a moment. We know that the moment we're born again, we don't lose all of those habits, and all of those desires just immediately. Now, sometimes God delivers people from the world just like that and praise God for that, but there is still work that must be done in our emotions, or in our desires. God is changing us to like the things that He wants us to like, as we'll get into in a moment.

(Proverbs 13:4) "The soul of the sluggard (notice) desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat." You see, it's the soul that desires, it's the soul that longs, and it's the soul that has that appetite.

(Proverbs 13:19) "The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul:" We are controlled and motivated, and we do so many things because of desire; God made us that way. I want to say at this point that God did not make us as robots, just programmed and we just bing, bing, bing, bing right down the line. God made us creatures of desire and affection, and God doesn't want us to serve Him because we just have to and there's no other way, but God wants us to serve Him because we want to, because we love Him, and because we desire to do it. It is these desires that has to be changed, and God works in our lives to do just exactly that, and what we must remember is our desires can be changed. You may have something in your life right now that just seems like you can't do without, such as I know it's not of God, but I just can't do without it. Well, God can change that desire to where that you don't want that any more, and we'll see just how in a moment.

(Proverbs 3:9-10) are a couple of good verses to tie in here. (9) "Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:" This just has reference to the tithe, so what's it doing here? (10) "So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." This wine speaks of this joy which is an emotion, and what people just do not realize today, is that they think if I just take everything to myself, this is what makes you happy and joyful. No, it's what you give away that gives you joy. That's the new desire that God wants to put in us, and so it starts with the tenth, the tithe or the firstfruit. You give that, and believe it or not, it will produce joy. That's what God says here. (10) "So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine," with new joy. Now, if it's that way in money, it's that way in everything else. If you become so encased and encompassed in yourself, you're going to be a very miserable person, but if we open up ourselves and give, we become the joyful person, and so God has worked in our soul. He has worked in our desire to where it's not just selfish me anymore who wrapped up becomes a very small package, but we open ourselves up and we give out to others, and the result of that is the wine, or the joy that is manifested.

(Proverbs 3:21-26) Notice another one: Here's another emotion we're going to see that God works in. (21) "My son, let not them," and the "them" He is talking about is wisdom, understanding, and knowledge that we have been talking about all this week. (21) "Let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion: (The result?) (22) So shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck." You're going to feel that life and vibrancy inside, in your desire, in your emotion, and grace to thy neck. (23) "Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble. (24) When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet. (25) Be not afraid of sudden

fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh. (26) For the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken." You notice the emotion here He is talking about is fear? And so, when we follow God's program, then this emotion of destructive, destroying fear is removed from us, and God has changed us. I know people today that seemingly have everything, and yet they're terrified. That's not a good situation in life, and so if we can go God's way, then He changes our very desires, our emotions, and the fear is wiped out. We're then able to lie down, and oh what wonderful peaceful sleep that we're able to have resting in the Lord. God is taking care of the soul and the emotions, and believe me, emotions are powerful, so never underestimate them. They can make people do things that can be very good or very bad, but God made us as emotional people, and He wants those emotions. He wants to have them in His hand, and so He will change them to His desires.

(1 Peter 2:11) "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts." That word "lusts" means longings or desires especially for that which is forbidden, and what do these fleshly lusts do? "They war against the soul." Again, Peter is talking about those innermost desires and I say it this way to the folks at home. We are going to do what we want to; its that simple, and so the only thing that makes sense is to have the right want to. When God works in our heart to where that we want to do that which is right, oh what a joy and a glory that is, and we will accomplish what we want to do. You know, if a person wants to yield to the flesh, believe me, they'll yield to the flesh. Now, let us want to yield to the spirit.

(Revelation 18:14) "And the fruits that thy soul; (what do they do?) They "lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all." So, it's the things that thy soul lusted after, wanted, and longed

for. These are those things that were of the flesh, and now they are no more. So, it is imperative that our wants be exactly right.

(Colossians 3:1-2) "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. (2) Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." This gives us a little insight into how these things are done, and how that our desires are changed.

I want to recall just a little bit from what we had yesterday about (Romans chapters 6, 7, and 8) and as I said, the first thing is that truth be revealed to our spirit, and we simply believe what God says. Whether we feel it, understand it, or see any results of it, the important thing is that we believe it.

You can write down this scripture. (Romans 4:3) "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness," and what I want to notice by that is that Abraham was not counted righteous because he received the Son, or because he received the promises or anything like that. Abraham was counted righteous because he believed. When you believe God whether you see the results or not, God counts it to your account for righteousness. It's the believing that is important, and so that's why I say that we must believe what God says whether we see any results right away or not. When you believe, you never lose because it's already been counted for righteousness. God has already counted that to your account in heaven whether you ever see it or not. I could give many examples of that, but for the sake of time I won't. What I want to realize is that at first you simply believe what God says.

(Romans 6:11) "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God." Just simply believe yes, I believe it.

Then as we noted, there comes the battle that Paul had in (Romans chapter 7). (19) "The good that I would, I do not." That which I would not; that's exactly what I do. That's the word of two creations, and that's when God is changing our desires literally from inside out. He desperately wanted to do good, but oh what a battle the man had. Then I've heard people say well yeah, if you really take the victory and believe God, and you take the message here, then you're just not going to have any problem, and you're never going to feel bad. Try to tell that to the apostle Paul when he wrote (24) "Oh wretched man that I am." Now, that wasn't a backward step, and I want to impress that upon us this morning. When Paul believed God, then he went into the next phase of the battle between the flesh and the spirit that is applying to the soul, which are his feelings and emotions. He felt terrible and didn't feel victorious at all, but he had to get to that place for God to work in him and show him what? (25) "I thank God through Jesus Christ, our Lord," and so God turned his emotions, or his affections from himself to Jesus.

And then in (Romans chapter 8), we get to the freedom. (1) "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," and then the practical, which is the law of the spirit of life. That's the power of the Holy Ghost, and He comes in with literal dynamic power. It's not a figment of your imagination that God will give you the power to leave the flesh and the world alone. God gives you that power, and it is because of the new affection and new desire that you have. The longer that you go, the better it gets and the more these old affections loose their power.

I heard about the illustration of these two creations like two dogs fighting, one battling against the other. Fellow says, which one wins? The other man says, the one I feed and that's true. You feed the new man and the new man's going to win every time. God changes our desires and our affections.

(Colossians 3:1-2) "If ye then be risen with Christ," here's where you get the opportunity. Do you believe you've been risen with Christ or is it just a cliché, is it just a figment of my imagination or do I really believe it's happened? God says it's true, but do I really believe I've been risen with Christ? If you do, "seek." And that means exactly what it says. You must become active, and you must do those things like picking up the word of God when you don't want to perhaps. You see, we have an active will that we can do these things and expect the results later, so seek these things if you have a choice to seek God and His word, or go out into the world. Which one do you think you ought to do? Seek, make an educated choice and seek the things of God. Now, every one of you who have gone to college, or studied in some other field know exactly what I'm talking about. You had the choice whether to go out and party with the friends, or whether to study for the final exam. You have that same choice in high school or anywhere you go. God says you also have that same choice in life and you can either actively seek the things of God which may require some effort, or you can just float along with the tide and let things go as they will.

So God says, (1) "seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth," and this is what I want to notice here: "Seek those things." What are those things? Well, you can name all sorts of things that people might like to have and so forth, but the bottom line is seeking Christ. Paul focuses in on where Christ sits, He is the object. We have been talking all this week that Christ is the wisdom,

so seek this wisdom which is in Christ. Seek this person that we have been talking about this week, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God, and here's just a little sidelight for us. This is not in here for accident, because when you begin to seek Christ above, it specifically says that "He sitteth on the right hand of God." What's He doing at the right hand of God? Making intercession for you and for me. When we seek Him, He is right there making intercession for us that all of this is going to work for our good and benefit. If you want a real good example of that, think about Peter. Peter was a man that was real full of himself, and he had told Jesus, though everybody go away from you, I won't walk away. I'll even give my life and I'm sure Peter meant that, but Peter didn't know the weakness of his own flesh, but Jesus was already interceding for him and says Peter (Simon), (Luke 22:31-32) "Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat, but Jesus says, "I've prayed for you that your faith fail not." So Peter, Satan has desired to have you, and what he was telling him in essence was that God has let Satan have you to sift you as wheat, but I've prayed for you. Now, if we can all put ourselves in that same place with Peter and say yes, Satan is going to sift me, but Jesus has prayed for me that my faith fail not too. Personal intercession from Jesus, and if that doesn't make you feel important, I don't know how to do it. Personal intercession from Jesus Himself for me, and so the next time you get into a real battle between the good and the evil, between the right and the wrong, or between the right affection and the wrong affection, just remember that Jesus is interceding for me.

Next, set your affection. (Colossians 3:2) This tells us that we do have a certain power, a certain control, and a certain resolve. Set your affections, your mind, and your interest on things above. We have that power of choice and we can make it, and so let us remember these things can be developed in our lives and experience. Alright, it is

a process of time, but remember that it can be developed.

Now, we go to the body because all of this is translated into our outward practical lives. That's what God wants, and that's what we want to see. A couple of years ago I think we had (***the rest of this sentence was inserted by context, as the tape was blank for several seconds***) a study concerning the Gibeonites who under the sentence of death becoming servants to Israel in (Joshua chapter 9), but there is a little catch here. The Gibeonites were to become hewers of wood and drawers of water. The same thing is true of our body due to the fact that we were born under the sentence of death. By all rights this body ought to die, but because God has put that new treasure which is the new man within this body, then the body is spared. However, it becomes servant to the new man. It becomes a hewer of wood and a drawer of water, and so we want to think of our bodies as being servants of the new creation. I've said this often and it's absolutely true, that this body is neutral as it can be. Your body will do the wicked acts of the flesh just as quickly as it will do the righteous acts of God. It depends on which leader is moving as to which way the body goes. If the new man is in control, then the body commits all of these wonderful acts of righteousness. If the flesh is in control, the body is capable of doing all of those deeds of the flesh. You can name any horrible deed that you want to and I'm not going to mention them, but let your imagination run wild; the body of a Christian can commit all of those unrighteous acts. God doesn't intend that should happen, but intends that our bodies should be hewers of wood, and drawers of water for the temple of God, meaning simply that our bodies are to be for God.

There are three words that we want to consider this morning in this last segment. The body is made for service, sanctification, and sacrifice, and God intends that our bodies should be submitted to all of them. Now,

before I go into those specifics, let us notice (Proverbs 3:7-8). "Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil. (8) It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones." When a person yields to God, it has a definite impact and influence on the natural body. Contrariwise, a wayward life will have a negative impact on the body. If you yield to God, it will be health to your navel, and marrow to the bones, and of course we know now that's where the life springs from. It's in the marrow, and so God begins in there and gives us that healthy marrow for our bones, and so it is vitally important that we consider this in our bodies, and that we indeed yield to God.

Sanctification and sacrifice, and so God wants a service out of every one of our bodies. (Romans 12:1-6) (1) "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice." Now, you will notice that God says you have to present it, He's not going to take it. He's not going to come down and just demand it, coerce, and all of these things. He may do many things in order to try and persuade us to do the right thing, but God is not just going to forcibly come down and make us do it, so present your bodies. You'll notice it is a living sacrifice, and we'll get into that a little bit later, because sometimes it does become a sacrifice when we present our bodies to God. It is to be holy, which simply means that it is done in things regarding holiness, the activities, the things of God and those things that are going to bring glory and honor to Him. Then we read that it is your reasonable service, and why would it be a reasonable service? We already noticed this a little bit earlier, and that is because that our bodies as well as all of us, but our bodies are bought with a price, and that price was the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. We know of the tremendous sacrifice that Jesus wrought when He offered Himself there at the cross, so if He has paid that kind of a price for our bodies, is it not reasonable that we

should render them back to him? Of course it is, and so the body is for such service as God has need of it. It is important we realize that we let God choose the service, rather than us trying to choose that service that we think would be so beneficial and good for this body.

There are many things we could say about such service, but just speak of service in this manner, and that is serving God in whatever manner He sees fit. God may have that service in you pushing a broom. Well, if it's done in the Lord, that's serving the Lord. It may be helping an old lady across the street and if that's God's service, fine. It may be bearing other's heavy burdens, and I have seen people ministering to those. It seems to be a thankless job, and a job that people just do not notice such as ministering to those that simply cannot drive themselves different places. We have some in our meeting that are getting to where they can't drive to the doctors and things like that. We have a lady that has stepped in and nobody knows about it perhaps but me, and we don't broadcast it and all of that, but here she uses her car, gas, time, and her energy and lets things go that she may need to do, and yet she's ministering to them. You see, that's service and it's what we are doing ministering with our hands in order to meet the needs that may be there. Believe me, there are many needs to be met, and to repeat sometimes rather thankless jobs, but just remember that the Lord knows. So, you can either pick up your reward here, or you can wait until God passes it out in heaven.

The next one is sanctification. The body is to be sanctified, or to be separated unto the Lord, and that's all we're wanting to get out here. Some people have great ideas about sanctification, but the only thing I want to concentrate on this morning and have us to remember, is that the sanctification we are talking about is a body that is separated to the Lord. A body that is separated to His glory and just for Him. (Proverbs 5:1-11) (1) "My son,

attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding: (3) For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil. (I'm leaving out part of those verses as you can see) (6) Lest thou shouldst ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable, that thou canst not know them. (7) Hear me now therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth. (8) Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house: (9) Lest thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel: (and notice) And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed." People give their bodies to those things that are not right. You sort of hear about the false church with their false and bad influences. Some have given into those and God says it will consume your body, so I say a body that is a victim of a wayward life is going to suffer some severe consequences. That's why that we need our bodies consecrated unto the Lord, and it is very important we do consecrate our bodies to God. Scripture is very plain that "If you live after the flesh, ye shall die," (Romans 8:13) and "If you sow to the flesh, you shall of the flesh reap corruption." (Galatians 6:8)

(Romans 6:12) "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." Again, (Romans 8:13) "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (that word "mortify" means to make to die). That's exactly what we were talking about awhile ago. It's the power of the Holy Ghost that gives us that practical victory in our bodies over these evil activities and conduct of the flesh, and so "if you live after the flesh, you will die," but just like the Gibeonites were when they made this league with Israel, there were some enemies that came up, not to fight against Israel, but to fight against Gibeon. When you yield your body to the Lord, the devil is going to attack the body, but whose body is it? It's God's, and so God takes good care of His things. You see

that down through the years, and so it is God who will protect that body when the enemy and others try to attack it with either the flesh, the devil, or whatever. We're in good keeping, and the body is God's responsibility. The body then is to be protected, and it's to be kept from the evil. You see, it is preserved as a vessel to be used by God. We had these verses the other day, so I'm not going to enlarge on them, but let us just read them.

(1 Corinthians 6:13-20) "Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body." (16) "What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh." (17) "But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." (18) "Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body." As we pointed out, this is the tremendous devastation that is done to a person inwardly because of fornication, and so the body is to be protected and preserved unto the Lord. (19) "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost," and that is what we must consider. It belongs to Him and is to be treated as such, "which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" (20) "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Then we come to this next one where there must be discipline established for the body, and sometimes people do not understand that. You see, if it is for God, it is to be treated as God's property, and He has really given us the responsibility to take care of this body. We're not to abuse it through lack of sleep, with substantives of alcohol and drugs, with excessive food, and all sorts of violence and different things of that nature. Now, the body must not just simply be left on its own. (1 Corinthians 9:27) is another verse that we want to consider along this line. "But I keep

under my body." The first time I read that, I thought I'm hiding under His body to get away from something else, but what He's meaning there is that I take control of my body. See, I keep under my body. I'm the one that has to bring it into submission and into control. I have that power because of the new man and through the power of the Holy Ghost, and so Paul says I keep under, or I take my body under control. I put it under submission and I bring it into subjection, and of course that is in subjection to this new man (Why?) "lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

Here is something that every gospel minister had better realize, and of course it's true of every one of us. Sometimes people think just because they serve the Lord by giving out the word of God, and they do all of these various things, then their own personal lives doesn't make any difference. Well, I'm here to tell you that is not right. Our personal lives most certainly do make a difference, and here Paul tells us why. He says, what if I were to preach to all these other people and they win the prize, and because I have not lived by it, I don't. It can happen and we must realize it can happen, and so we take these things to ourselves first. Now, when Paul says I myself should be a castaway, he doesn't mean I'll go to hell after I preach to others. Paul knew what eternal life was, and the word castaway simply means disapproved. He's saying I will be disapproved of making the first place of having the crown that I'm telling you about, and so how can I do that? Well, I'm going to have to keep under my own body. I'm going to have to discipline my own body in order to as we would say, practice what we preach and that is exactly true. Of course, we probably preach more by our actions than we do by our words, but nevertheless a person can do all of these wonderful things, and then never get the reward for it. I don't want that to happen in my own life, and I'm sure you do not either. So, I keep under my body and bring my own body into this kind of

discipline. Alright, as you may of course guess, that brings us to the place of choices also in our lives. We can choose whether to control our body, or let our body control us, so I keep under my body.

The last phase or expression of this is sacrifice. (Romans 12:1) "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Present your bodies a living sacrifice? The Old Testament records sacrifices and you know they killed those animals and laid them on the altar, but this is a living sacrifice that God wants. I remember a young man in bible school that tried to take his life, and he got very pious and all of this foolishness and said well, I'm just trying to present my body a sacrifice to God. Sister Smith said, God wants a living sacrifice and then she punched him out. Maybe he forgot the lesson, but I never did.

Alright, a living sacrifice and the body may be used in that way, but here's what I want to notice. It's not a matter of our being hard on ourselves and making a sacrifice, and making it known how we are so deprived in all of these various things. Jesus, and Paul, and these other ministers and martyrs became living sacrifices because they yielded to the perfect will of God in their lives, and what I want to notice is that the sacrifice in our life comes as a result of our total commitment to the will of God. I've known people down through the years that have endured certain sacrifices because they chose to go God's way, and so the body is made indeed for that kind of sacrifice. Paul says it this way in (2 Corinthians 4:10-14): "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." You see, God doesn't do it this way because He thinks how delightful it would be to sacrifice the body, God does it because He wants the life of Christ to be manifest in our body when we come to the end of our own

strength, and sometimes he has to do certain things even physically to bring us there. God wants to manifest the life of the Lord Jesus in our bodies, and so He may have to weaken them at times. I've seen that happen over the years and various things of that nature, but when God raised people back up, it was Christ that was seen and not such a person. What God wants to do is to make the life of Jesus manifest in our body.

(2 Corinthians 4:11-13) Paul says, "We which live are always delivered." See, a living sacrifice and "we which live are always delivered unto death." That simply means that the body can be in danger of death at the hands of the enemy, but God will sustain it, take care of it, and preserve it, so we are delivered unto death for Jesus' sake. Once again, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. (12) "So then, death works in us," and it's the death that Satan would bring if he were given the opportunity; "but life in you." Because of our efforts, then it works life in you. See, my sacrifice contributes to the life in you, because the reason that Paul sacrificed the way he did is to preach the gospel. The preaching of that gospel brought forth life in these people, and so that sacrifice became life or beneficial to these people.

(13) "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak; (14) Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you." As I said the other day, the power of God in our bodies is not just when He says raising them up, it's not just raising them up at the last day. He raises them up right now in order to accomplish His purpose, and His power, and more than once we have known, and I know of others that have experienced operating on power and energy that was beyond the natural energy that we have. Well, that's God

and so this is when the life and power of Christ is so manifest in our bodies.

We're going to close out this session with the reward for the body and strange as it may seem, I got somewhat of a sentimental streak concerning my body a few years ago. I came into this truth, and realizing I'm a person composed of three parts; spirit, soul, and body, and so I began to wonder concerning this revelation and realization. Well, here's this body and it seems like it's just here to serve and minister, but what does the poor body get in return? I really began to feel sorry for the body, and you know here it is, you get through, you lay it down, and you forget it. Well, that doesn't feel quite right to me after all this faithful service, and so the Lord does have a place, and he does have a purpose in this body. I cannot tell you that it's going to look like it does now, but I do believe that God has that place when He's going to glorify the body. I've heard it said, now no way is it ever going to be the same body. Well, I have difficulty with that because when Jesus was raised from the grave, He had all the battle scars of that body that been crucified there on the cross, and so our bodies may not be in the present form or whatever. Who can say what the glorified body means, but I believe that the body is going to get the reward for this faithful service and sacrifice that they have made, and that there is a reward for the one who brings his body into subjection and serves the Lord.

By the same token, there is a consequence to the one who doesn't. Scripture tells us, (2 Corinthians 5:10) "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body." The only thing I want to notice about that is you and I are appearing before the judgment seat of Christ right now. This is when we're doing the things in the body. Now, we're going to receive the reward later on, but we're being judged or evaluated of the things that we do in the body

right now, be they good or bad. This is why we want to commit our lives and our bodies unto the Lord, and then God will take care of those rewards later on.

This brings us to a very important point in regard to our bodies. It is vitally important that you and I accept the body He has given us as a gift from God. Most of us at one time or another in our lives have reached that place where, especially as teenagers growing up we don't have such a fondness for our body. That may be the time that oh boy, would I ever like to trade this thing in on a new one. I want to impress on us this morning that God has given us a very precious gift in giving us this body, and it means that we must accept the body as He has given it to us. Every person is going to find some flaw in his body and don't tell me that they don't, because I know they do. It's important that we accept the body as being made by God, and the reason for that is because if you and I do not, then because we know God created the body, who's to blame for the imperfections that I see? Well, God is, and if we blame God for anything we're in trouble, and so the only thing we can do is to accept the body as God has made it.

Now, we have found out that God made this body for service, for sanctification, and for sacrifice, and those are the points we must concentrate on, but of course we really focus on the looks of our bodies. I think that they should be made as presentable as they possibly can be, but not to create any vain egos for ourselves, but to present Christ. We should present a brightness and a joy as a representative of Him, but there are certain things that we may not like about our bodies, and we may be reminded of that from time to time. For example, if that one sat on a dime, she's so short her feet would dangle. Hair, you know the dippy blond and we hear about carrot top. I've seen more hair than that on a billiard ball, and just what size shoe do you wear? You know all of these things, and

the enemy can use them to great disadvantage. I'm glad we can laugh about these things, because I can tell you of a truth, there's going to come a time you're going to need to; you really will, but the only way you're going to be able to do that is if you accept yourself as God made you.

In my own case there were two things that just bothered me terribly, and I was exactly like so many of the young people as I have testified before. You believe, and it is true to a very great degree that appearance is so important to the opposite sex, and that of course is the way God made us, but when we learn God's ways, we learn to look beyond the body to the person, and it's very important. Well, if you want others to do that for you, we need to do that for others also. What we want to see is that inner person that a person has, but I remember looking in the mirror very discouraged, very dissatisfied and just honestly saying, what girl in their right mind would want to go out with that? I was very honest about the matter, and of course what I saw was a nose that was splattered all over my face, and western teeth with wide open spaces in between you know. Then of course, I met my wife who never did give any indication that any of those things even mattered to her, and what a joy and a wonder that was. A number of years after I'd learned this truth, I had accepted what God had made and was very glad for it, and I thank God for this body because it's the only one that I've got after all, and I'm able to get around in it. So, I was talking about my nose and my teeth, and she says well honey, on you they're darling, but I'm glad the kids didn't get them.

It is imperative that we especially accept those things that we do not like, and if you're trapped in that this morning, then you really do need to go before the Lord and specifically thank God for the thing that you don't like. If you don't, you're going to zero in on it and others are going to zero in on it, or you will think they are anyway.

Satan is just going to make you obsessed with that and I've seen that happen with people, so we really all need to just specifically thank God. In addition to that if it really is bothersome, I don't think it is too far out of line to ask God why was I made in this way? Not blaming Him, but really wanting to know why. You see, God had a purpose in the way that He made every one of us. Well, I don't think it's too unreasonable to ask God what His purpose was, and He may not always answer us in a way that we think, but I believe that God certainly had a purpose in the way He did things in my own life. You might consider some of these things in your own experience, and God can show you things that are totally foreign to me, but one particular thing I believe everyone might be able to identify and share, is that most people feel like they are a misfit because of their appearance, and that's the way I felt. You know, where in the world do I fit in with these wonderful characteristics that I display, and they were not things that the "in-crowd" went for. They seemed to be so perfect and let you know it, and so I really believe in my own case that God gave me these characteristics, as well as others to make me a misfit in the wrong crowd. If people fit in where they shouldn't, then they may be led astray and go down a path that God doesn't want them to go down. So, if God makes you a misfit in this particular crowd, maybe He is telling us loud and clear to change your crowd! When I began to accept what God had given to me, I found out that I felt accepted by others who had the right values. So, consider that the next time you feel so inferior, it may be that you're trying to be accepted by the wrong crowd. God did it on purpose so that He can separate you unto Himself. That is just one expression and one reason that you might consider, but I'm sure there are many others.

We are going to go on after this life, and we are hoping and wanting to get reward. God has purposed and provided that reward for the deeds that are done in the

body, and so He has given us hope for the body beyond this life, and we read in (Romans 8:23): "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit." That means that we have been filled with the power of the Holy Ghost. Paul says that "even we ourselves groan within ourselves," and we really do. He's talking again about the body, because the further we go, and the older we get, the more that we really do groan. So much of our groaning today is because of the things that we see around us, and the way that the world is going, and we're so dissatisfied, and disenchanting so to speak with the world. Well, we groan within ourselves, but you'll notice that "we are waiting for the redemption (of what?) our body." You see, God is going to change the body like unto His body of glory, and we look for that. Of course, we know from other scriptures the more that we appropriate Christ and yield our bodies to the Lord, the more of the glory that is going to be revealed in them throughout all eternity.

And then, that wonderful message in 1 Corinthians 15:51-52, "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, (52) In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Now, just by way of contrast here, we know that our spirit was changed from death to life in a moment of time, and our soul is in the process of change, but here God tells us the body, like the spirit is going to be changed in the twinkling of an eye. It's not going to be a metamorphous or a process of change. We've seen it changing down through our lives, but I'm talking about change going the other way now, and that's going to be in a moment of time. At that time God will be able to show forth through the body, all of this wonderful glory that He has worked in it throughout our lives here on earth, and that's going to be shown forth throughout eternity. I really don't think there's going to be anyone in

heaven that is going to be looking in a mirror and saying, why did God make me this? They're going to be looking, and oh how wonderful that God made this. Well, before we get there, let's develop that attitude right now. Thank God that He has made this, because He had a purpose in it, and He may be revealing those purposes again, and again as to why that He made them.

When I was in my junior and senior years in high school, I loved to play basketball. If a person had made the team by desire, I would have been the first one. Instead, I was the one that collected all the splinters sitting on the bench. When I went to bible school after I'd graduated my senior year I was five foot, eight inches tall and I weighed one hundred and twenty-five pounds. After I finished my first year of bible school, I was somewhere around six foot, one inch and weighed one hundred and fifty-five pounds. I met sister Smith after the camp meeting that year, and she didn't say hello Gene, how are you, good to see you. She asked what happened to all that weight I put on you? What I mean is, why didn't God give me those extra inches when I was in high school? I could've used them on the basketball court, I'll guarantee you. I wasn't fast, but you know if I were taller I could have certainly done a little bit better. I've often wondered about that, but I think there again it is because God wanted to put me in His crowd, rather than another crowd. So, I rejoice today in what God has done, and so let us be thankful.

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