

## “Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”

April 14, 2016

- ✓ **Deuteronomy 28:1-68—Blessings and cursings.**
- ✓ **2 Corinthians 7:2-7— Paul defends himself.**
- ✓ **Psalm 41—Suffering under divine discipline.**

### COMMENTARY:

**Deuteronomy 28:1-68.** Moses calls on the people of God to obey the commandments of God. He sets forth God’s promised blessings for obedience and His curses for disobedience. Note that the blessings are briefer and come first. The curses are, in many cases, the exact reverse of the blessings, and they continue with great force, climaxing in warnings of doom. Observe how long the list of curses is relative to the list of blessings. I am trying to imagine what kind of response one would expect in the modern church to a sermon that spent more time warning of divine discipline than the blessings of obedience. I am trying to imagine some of the conversations among believers after such a class, complaints about not being lifted up and encouraged. I wonder how many would realize their own culpability in suppressing the truth of God and God Himself. Some might say, ‘yes, but all of that obedience and disobedience focus is for the Old Testament, we live in the age of grace, where the emphasis is on being in a spiritual zone where the Holy Spirit does it all as long as we do x, y, and z.’ But what did Christ say in John 14:15-24 about obedience before introducing the ministry of the Holy Spirit in verse 26? By the way, the New Testament is also filled with many curses promised to those who disobey the Word of God, including believers (cf., Gal. 1:8; 1 Cor. 16:22; Rev. 3:3). Disobedience and spiritual apathy is a serious issue in the Old Testament and New Testament. Let us redouble our efforts in pursuing a life of obedience before the Lord with respect to the local church, our family, our work, and our neighbors. Disobedience is not only pernicious to the spiritual life, it damages the intellect. Recall it is the intellect that makes judgment about what is good, and every time one picks on evil rather than the good, it damages one’s ability to see and appreciate the Good as such.

**2 Corinthians 7:2-7.** In verse 2 Paul finds himself having to defend himself against those who have attacked him. He appeals to his blameless record in the ministry. Anyone in the ministry will be attacked by others. I know of no exceptions. It is part of the ministry. It has been my experience that those who have attacked my former pastors, as well as me, are not involved in any ministry to the body of Christ. In fact, they are generally people who are miserable and expect the pastor to entertain them or “meet their needs,” even if that means distorting the Word of God, the spiritual life, and God Himself. They are generally not happy with life and stand on the sidelines and take pot shots at those who are, at least, in the “game.” Is this not what we find with the Corinthians? Consider their deplorable spiritual state and its fruit of bitterness and animosity to one of the greatest men in the Bible, the Apostle Paul. Imagine how Paul must have felt as he loved them so deeply (7:3) and watched them destroy their spirit lives, and with it love for the Lord and fellow believers.

**Psalm 41.** In this psalm David recounts his suffering due to sin (41:4). Note how divine discipline manifests itself in this case in suffering at the hands of one's enemies. Although there is expected conflict and suffering from the hands of our enemies as we live for the Lord, there is a fair amount of suffering believers bring on themselves when they are not walking in the Lord and as a result stir up trouble with unbelievers and believers. Anytime we find ourselves in conflict with others, we should look at ourselves and see if the problem is because we are standing up for the Lord or it just because we are just being carnal jerks (even if in the latter state we throw around the name Jesus and how we are suffering for Him). A lot of suffering is due to the fact that we do not treat others with the love and grace that has been bestowed upon us. In other words, is our enemy angry with us because of some negative comment we made to them, or is it because they do not like our identification with Christ and the things of Christ?

**Romans 11:36** For of Him and through Him and to Him *are* all things, to whom *be* glory forever. Amen.

Pastor Don