

“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”
April 24, 2016

- ✓ **Joshua 12:1-13:32.** The conquered land evidence God’s faithfulness.
- ✓ **2 Corinthians 11:7-15.** False apostles and prophets.
- ✓ **Psalms 52:1-53:6.** The fool.

COMMENTS:

Joshua 12:1-13:32. This last section is a fitting conclusion to the book of Joshua. The Book began with God’s promise to the Israelites that God would give them victory, enabling them to take the land that God had promised them. In this section we have the list of the 31 kings and various territories taken that gives evidence of its historicity—this really happened in space-time. On these victories, Henry Sell writes, “There has never been a greater war for a greater cause. The battle of Waterloo decided the fate of Europe, but this series of contests in far-off Canaan decided the fate of the world.” The details of the geographical descriptions here are usually of little interest to modern-day readers and, in truth, they are not as theologically laden as other portions of the book. However, their importance lies in confirming the veracity of the claims elsewhere that these lands were indeed conquered, in confirming the tribes’ claims to the lands mentioned here, and in confirming that God was faithful to His promises to give these lands to His people. He would fulfill His promises, right down to every last village or town and every last border, passing atop this hill over here and descending through that valley over there. While the New Testament does not promise the church age believer land, let alone financial blessings, what God does promise is an abundant life beyond what we could ask or imagine—a life of love for the Lord empowered by God the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:9-10). I would add that this Christian way of life is absolutely impossible apart from the eternal perspective, as we have been studying.

2 Corinthians 11:7-15. Note how Paul, once again, feels the need to defend himself in verses 7-11. While there are times when a pastor might need to defend himself, the longer I am in the ministry the more I become convinced that it is a waste of time to try to explain one’s good motives to fault-finders. All pastors would do well to focus on those who are interested, and ignore the complainers rather than waste time on those whose “ministry” in a local church is to point out the flaws of the pastor or other believers. Observe the false apostles in verses 12-15 and how Paul ties them to the nefarious designs of the serpent. Given that Satan transforms himself into an angel of light, it should not be surprising how easily he can infiltrate the church among the weak and ignorant—even if they are well-meaning. Apart from making Total Truth the issue, the believer does not stand a chance at being able to discern Truth from counterfeit as all counterfeits contain some true aspects of the original. By the way, it is a myth that money handlers are trained to spot counterfeits mainly of studying the original.

Psalm 52:1-53:6. Psalm 52 describes the end of the wicked and the peace of the godly as David's faith is contrasted with the treacherous man (Doeg) who followed a course of iniquity. Psalm 53 is another version of Psalm 14, which covers the folly of the godless. This is one of the favorite passages of Calvinists in teaching that no man can seek God. Of course, all Christians (except Pelagians) do not believe that man has the *inherent* power to seek God. The solution is understanding the human will. Rather than viewing free will as only having positive and negative poles, if one recognizes a third option, namely a quiescent will, then one can see how a person who merely stops suppressing God would provide an opportunity for the grace of God to draw him to Himself. A quiescent will is not a will that is doing anything, like a good work of seeking God; for example, if I stop walking, I am not doing anything, let alone a work. It is a will that stops suppressing God that invites God to infuse the grace in him that is needed to understand and accept the gospel of Jesus Christ. Of course those who will not refuse to stop suppressing God are totally unable to seek God even if their lives make no sense and have no real value without God—nothing from above, nothing from below, and nothing from within—nothing but nihilism. As far as the nihilists, at least they are consistent with their nothingness and do not spend time trying to spin values and meaning out of thin air, let alone trying to convince everyone else that futility is the way to go. That is a hell of high price to pay for desire for autonomy over correspondence truth as such.

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

Pastor Don