

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

December 19, 2016

**Jeremiah 35:1–36:32.** Love for God always translates to love for His Word as such.

**Romans 8:18–39.** Suffering can enhance glorification.

**Proverbs 22:17–23:18.** Obtaining the irrecusable biblical views regarding the poor and justice.

### COMMENTS.

**Jeremiah 35:1–36:32. Jeremiah 35:1-19** gives us the account of Jeremiah and the Recabites. During the reign of Jehoiakim, the Lord instructed Jeremiah to invite the Recabite family to the temple and to offer them some wine. The Recabites were the descendants of Jonadab, son of Recab (2 Kgs 10:15–23), a zealous devotee of the Lord and opponent of Baal worship. Jonadab had commanded his descendants to follow a nomadic and ascetic life-style, which included total abstinence from wine. Over two hundred years later his descendants were still observing the regulations their forefather established. When Jeremiah set the wine before them, they refused to drink it, faithful to their ancestor’s commands. The Recabites were an object lesson to Judah and Jerusalem. Their unwavering devotion to their ancestor stood in stark contrast to unfaithful Judah’s rejection of the Lord’s prophets. Judgment would fall on Judah, but the Lord would preserve Jonadab’s godly line. In **36:1-32** Jehoiakim burns the scroll. The Lord instructed Jeremiah to record all his prophetic messages on a scroll. Jeremiah dictated his messages to the scribe Baruch. Baruch took the scroll to the temple on an official day of fasting and read the prophecies to the people assembled there. When the royal officials heard the reading of the scroll, they told Baruch they must report its contents to the king. After warning Jeremiah and Baruch to go into hiding, they informed the king. As the scroll was read, Jehoiakim cut it up by columns and burned it. He then ordered the arrest of Jeremiah and Baruch, whom by this time the Lord had hidden. The Lord then instructed Jeremiah to dictate another scroll. He also announced that Jehoiakim would be punished severely for his disrespect to the Word of God.

**Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love.** Over the centuries, God’s enemies have tried to destroy the Word of God but have always failed. They forget what Jesus said about the Word: “*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away*” (Matt. 24:35). “*The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever*” (Isa. 40:8, 1 Pet. 1:25). Translators and preachers of the Word have been persecuted and martyred, but the truth of God still stands. God preserves His Word (**Jer. 36:27–32**). Any person who thinks he can silence God by burning (or ignoring) the Word of God with a knife and a fire has a very high opinion of himself and a very low view of God. The Lord simply told Jeremiah to write another scroll, to which He added more material, including a special judgment on King Jehoiakim (**Jer. 36:27–32**). The same God who gives the Word has the power to protect and preserve the Word and those who are committed to it. The king had tried to destroy the Word, but the Word destroyed him! King Jehoiakim and his officials would be punished for the disrespect they showed to the divine Word of God. If the king and his flattering, servile officers had only feared the Word and obeyed it, they would have saved their nation suffering and ruin, but they preferred to go their own way and ignore God’s voice. Lest we think that this just refers to an ancient isolated incident, note how the Book of Revelation closes: Revelation

22:18 *For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.* The believer who revises (adds to or subtracts from) the Word of God will suffer for all of eternity, not in Hell, but in loss of rewards as he will not be allowed certain privileges on the New Earth. Of course, any revision of the Word of God demonstrates a lack of respect for God. It is love for God that enables the believer to rejoice with and believe in all of God's truth (1 Cor. 13:6-7). We do not need new sensational or experiential, applicable messages to create enthusiasm for the Word of God. What we need is more love for God, which always translates to love and enthusiasm for His Word, regardless of how common the truth may be known—like John 3:16. Any believer who lives with the Lord *by proper knowledge and proper love*, will value, and respect God's Word as such and would never attempt to revise it for his own personal preferences: John 14:15 *"If you love Me, you will keep (τηρήσατε = guard) My commandments."* John 14:21 *"He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."* It is an indubitable fact that love and enthusiasm for God cannot be separated from love and enthusiasm for His Word. However, the love and enthusiasm starts with God, not His Word. It is not like we can gin up excitement for the Word so we can have love and excitement for God. No, we turn to God enthusiastic with love, which then drives us to seek Him and His wishes in the Scriptures.

**Romans 8:18–39.** This section demonstrates how suffering can enhance glorification. After Paul discusses how the Holy Spirit enables the believer to overcome sin (**8:1-17**), he shows His power in helping believers persevere in suffering (**8:18-30**). In light of God's marvelous, unfathomable grace and love, Christians who suffer for Christ can rest assured that God will never abandon them (**8:31-39**).

**Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love.** The emphasis in this final section is on the security of the believer. We do not need to fear the past, present, or future because we are secure in the love of Christ. Paul presented five arguments to prove that there could be no separation between the believer and the Lord: (1) God is for us (31), (2) Christ died for us (32), (3) God has justified us (33), (4) Christ intercedes for us (34), and (5) Christ loves us (35-39). As the believer *lives with God by proper knowledge and proper love*, he comes to experientially know the various dimensions of love that Paul outlines. The believer who lives in the love of God lives in the assurance that the difficulties of life are working for him and not against him. This is the believer who becomes a "superconqueror" (37). It always comes back to God's love (1 Cor. 13; 1 John 4). Any and all spiritual debilities in life are related in some way or another to debilities in grasping God's personal love.

**Proverbs 22:17–23:18.** This reading contains the first thirteen of what is known as the “Thirty Sayings” of Proverbs. The “Thirty Sayings” have a dual purpose. The first is to draw the reader into a deeper trust in God, and the second is to develop integrity. Craving for wealth and the favors of the wealthy, drunkenness, gluttony, disobedience to parents, going to prostitutes, and other such behaviors are certain to lead one away from God and into personal dissolution and destruction.

**Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love.** The 1st saying gives a strong warning against taking advantage of the poor (also see Prov. 14:31, “*He who oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker, But he who honors Him has mercy on the needy*”). The poor (לָרֵק “feeble, weak, helpless”) and the needy are easy prey for wicked people who can get their way in court by bribery and false accusations. But the defenseless are defended by the LORD who champions their cause and justly takes from those who unjustly take from the needy. It is unfortunate that some conservative Christians, due to the influence of American politics and reaction against the liberals, tend to have a negative attitude toward the poor. They tend to think that the reason for America’s financial crises is because of government programs to the poor. However, if you asked them about the percentages of the budget that goes to the poor, they likely would have no clue. To be sure, all fraud, waste, and abuse needs to be condemned. However, it seems like there is a lot more anger toward the poor that abuse the system than the rich who also abuse the system (corporate welfare). There needs to be equal outrage at both injustices perpetuated by the rich and the poor. As one *walks with God by proper knowledge and proper love*, the believer is more influenced by what God says about the poor than the political left or right. The believer who puts God above all else will actually take the time to examine what the Word of God says regarding government, government aid, and the poor—instead of inductivism driven by ideological penchants. He will also love truth enough to be know exactly how much his government spends on “welfare” for the rich and the poor, rather than live in hearsay and street myths. It really is all about loving God enough to love the whole truth, total truth instead of perpetuating myths that incite anger and a despising attitude toward the poor who abuse the system but not others who are also guilty of abusing the system even more. Let us be equal in outrage as well as love and concern for all. There is to be no preference for the rich or the poor. In light of the fact that our passage deals with legal injustices, consider how rich and powerful politicians get away with crimes for which the poor would be sent to prison. God absolutely despises such practice and has and will judge an entire nation for such activity (cf., Isa. 1). Only by growing in whole truth, total truth of Scripture can the believer avoid extremes and have biblical views that are absolutely irrecusable—only then can he rise above it all by God’s own light.

*Life in God by second person proper knowledge and by proper love,*

*Pastor Don*