

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

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**Jeremiah 4:19–5:31.** God condemns the wicked society of Judah.

**Colossians 2:6–23.** The divinity of Christ.

**Proverbs 11:13–31.** The selfish hoarder vs. the generous giver.

### COMMENTS.

**Jeremiah 4:19–5:31.** Chapter 5 reiterates why judgment was impending. Without exception, the residents of Jerusalem had resisted the Lord’s discipline and rebelled against His commandments. Idolatry and sexual immorality were prevalent throughout the land. The people believed the false prophets’ message of security. Rich, powerful men exploited others and neglected the cause of the weak, poor, and oppressed. Instead of repenting and recognizing God as the source of their blessings, the people stubbornly continued in their sinful ways. Judgment was inevitable for such a nation. The fearsome Babylonians would devour their crops and herds, kill their children, and destroy their cities. Since God’s people insisted on acting like pagans, they would serve pagans in a pagan land.

**Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love.** Note the last verse: Jeremiah 5:31 *The prophets prophesy falsely, And the priests rule by their own power; And My people love to have it so. But what will you do in the end?* In short, they loved evil rather than their Maker. They have disordered thinking and disordered love, which precludes any ability to *walk with God by proper knowledge and proper love*. One reason is because of habitual activation of evil in their lives as noted throughout chapter 5. They were ungrateful and continually actualized evil potentials in their souls. Jeremiah 5:7 *"How shall I pardon you for this? Your children have forsaken Me And sworn by those that are not gods. When I had fed them to the full, Then they committed adultery And assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses. 8 They were like well-fed lusty stallions; Every one neighed after his neighbor's wife.* They did not believe God’s Word, they turned their backs on God and went their own way. ‘They have lied about the Lord; they said, ‘He will do nothing! No harm will come to us; we will never see sword or famine.’ Boy, were they about to be surprised. It is no surprise that the people did not care for Jeremiah’s message as he told them that they were foolish, senseless, blind, and deaf, and that they had no respect for God. Instead of encouraging one another to fear God, they exploited one another like hunters snaring birds. Thus, the rich grew richer as the poor languished. Note God’s concern for the exploited poor. The courts were corrupt, the prophets were liars, and the priests went right along with them; and the people approved what was done and enjoyed it! “My people love to have it so” (**Jer. 5:31**). When a nation is filled with people who love such evil, there is no hope.

**Colossians 2:6–23.** Paul wanted to make sure the Colossians did not follow those who set forth Christ as merely an important visionary or religious leader. Christ is uniquely divine and preeminent. This is the foundation of Christianity and true spirituality. The exhortation to live in Christ is surrounded by themes that are clearly a response to the false teaching that threatened them (2:6–7). The context emphasizes “as you received Christ Jesus” and “as you were taught.” Paul obviously considered the false teachers a real threat to the church. He warned, “See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy” (2:8)—a philosophy that rejects the deity of Jesus Christ. In Christ, believers have received all they have and all they need (2:10–15). Christians are not to be subject to any forms of legalism. Jesus Christ alone is sufficient for our every spiritual need, for all of God’s fullness is in Him. The believers’ covenant relation (2:11), their life (2:12–13), their freedom (2:14), and their victory (2:15) are all in Him. Paul warned the church against those who would make the Christian life just a set of rules. The basis for resisting legalism (2:16–23) involves focusing on the believer’s relationship with Christ—the Christ-centered life.

**Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love.** In verse 6, the believer is exhorted ‘to walk in Christ in the same way we originally received Christ—by faith.’ The gnostic teachers wanted to introduce some “new truths” for Christian maturity, but Paul denounced them. ‘You started with Christ and you must continue with Christ. You started with faith and you must continue with faith. This is the only way to make spiritual progress.’ To continue *walking in Christ as one received Christ* is both one of the simplest and well as the most profound concepts in Scripture. It begins very simply by accepting Jesus Christ by faith alone in grace alone. However, the waters are very deep when one moves into growing in depth of this faith in Christ. Metaphysically, one can speak of four elements of faith: (1) the light of faith (supernatural conviction, faith=knowing), (2) the transcendent experience of faith (that involves one’s whole being resonating with ultimate reality of God), (3) the objective form of faith (the content of faith), and (4) the central form of faith, namely Jesus Christ who is the effulgence of God’s essence and glory (Heb. 1:1-3; John 1:14-18). As one walks with God *by proper knowledge and proper love*, he continues to plumb the depths of Christ as the central form of faith and highest manifestation of the life of God (John 14:9). To grow in Christ is to live a life of exploring the depth of God and ultimate reality as such. We will be exploring Christ as the central form of faith in the next couple of Bible classes and see just how it is that Christ is the treasure trove of the wisdom of God so we can advance in *attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge* (Col 2:2-3)—treasures of life and love.

**Proverbs 11:13–31.** This reading continues contrasting the nature and destiny of the righteous and the wicked: The righteous follow a clear path in life, are delivered from troubles, are generous (11:25), and strengthen their communities (11:11). The wicked hoard money but are not saved by it (11:24, 26), are a curse to their families and communities (11:9–13, 29), and face certain divine punishment (11:4, 7, 23, 31).

**Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love.** Note the principles in this reading regarding finances as the selfish are contrasted with the generous. It is axiomatic that greedy and selfish people, epitomized in Western literature as Mr. Scrooge, are hated by the populace at large while generous people gain love and respect. What the hoarder fails to realize, however, is that in the economy of God the greedy ultimately lose even the material things they try so hard to keep while the benevolent only prosper more and more. Those who hoard by refusal either to give (24) or to sell (26) finally face not only widespread hatred (26) but the poverty they dread as well (24). In contrast, the generous only have greater and greater prosperity (25). This section teaches that life and health for both individual and family is obtained by virtue and submission to God. Violent or selfish activity is sure to be punished; wealth affords no security. Heavy emphasis here is upon the favor or disfavor of God. Of course, the only way one can be included among those in verse 30, “*The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who wins souls is wise,*” is to have rightly ordered thinking and rightly ordered desires, in two words, spiritual virtue, which is only gained from walking in God *by proper knowledge and proper love.*

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

*Pastor Don*