

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

December 30, 2016

Lamentations 3:1–66. From the depths of the 3rd funeral dirge to becoming a supraconqueror.

Romans 15:22–33. Paul’s plan to visit Rome and his love for the brethren.

Proverbs 31:1–19. God speaks of the great abilities of a godly woman; but the Dasein for most of human history brainwashed mankind into thinking women had neither the temperament nor the intellect to vote, let alone hold public office.

COMMENTS.

Lamentations 3:1–66. This chapter is the heart of Lamentations. **Verses 1-18** describe Jeremiah’s afflictions. Note the misery experienced by a true man of God. Yes, even the greatest of believers can suffer from depression in times of great adversity, especially with regard to failing health. **Verses 19-40** depicts Jeremiah’s hope that enabled him to recover from his depression (“my soul is downcast”) as he recalls the loyal love of God that is renewed new every morning: “Great is Your faithfulness.” **Verses 41-66** give us Jeremiah’s prayer that included confession and plea for divine deliverance.

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love. Orientation to God *by second person proper knowledge and proper love* pervades this section of Scripture. Take note of Jeremiah’s proper knowledge of the character of God in verses 21-26, which is widely recognized as the theological high point of the book: *This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. 22 Through the LORD'S mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. 23 They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. 24 "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!" 25 The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, To the soul who seeks Him. 26 It is good that one should hope and wait quietly For the salvation of the LORD.* This personal knowledge of God forms the foundation of a cognitive connection with God and provides fuel for the will, the latter of which is the affective connection with God. The mind does not directly love God, it can only know Him. It is the will that does the loving *with the mind*. A mind can be filled with Bible doctrine and even apply it by taking it from the speculative level to the practical level (I will develop this rich area of insight in the future), but still not love God because of a defective will. For example, a person can learn the importance of confession of sin, taking in Bible doctrine, providing for one’s own family, but still not love God. Love is formally a matter of the will. While a will cannot love what it does not know (e.g., we would all be worshipping false gods if God had not given us the Word of God, Jesus Christ as the Revealer of God, and the lights of the Holy Spirit), a will also cannot love against its acquired disposition. If a will has a bad disposition to something, it cannot love it. It is impossible! Moreover, a bad disposition in the will toward one thing can sour its appetite or disposition to other things. It is manifestly true that when one has a bad attitude, it adversely affects other things. There are many believers who destroy their capacity to love God, the things of God, by allowing an ill-disposition to settle and develop in their will regard their temporal circumstances, like work. An ill-will is just that, it is sick, it has lost appetite for the good, and in so doing loses its appetite for God and the things of God. God the Holy Spirit resides in every believer to bring His lights for

the intellect and to the will an appetite for God and the things of God. The last thing we can afford to do is to grieve or quench His Spirit and by doing so destroy those marvelous lights and supradesire for God and the things of God. We were created for so much more than the temporal issues of life. Only by rising above them in the eternal perspective can we become supraconquerors (ὑπερνικῶμεν): Romans 8:37, *Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors (ὑπερνικῶμεν) through Him who loved us.*

Romans 15:22–33. In verses 22-29 we have a sketch of Paul's immediate travel plans. Then, he makes a request for prayer concerning the collection for the Jerusalem Christians (30-32), and prays for peace (33).

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love. Paul and his associates had received a special offering from the Gentile churches in Greece for the suffering Jewish saints in Jerusalem. Details about this collection are recorded in 2 Corinthians 8–9. There were several purposes behind this special offering. To begin with, it was an expression of love on the part of the Gentiles toward their Jewish brethren. Second, it meant practical relief at a time when the poor Jewish believers needed it the most. Third, it helped to unite Jews and Gentiles in the church. It was a bond that brought them closer together. Recall that the Lord taught that the point of Scripture was so that we would love God and others as we love ourselves (Matt. 22:37-40)—*life in God by proper knowledge and proper love.* So, God inspired this section so we could reflect on His attitude of love, helping others, and unity. As we walk with God *by proper knowledge and proper love*, we can come to appreciate the beauty of the Christ-likeness of Paul. And by making adjustments, we can avoid the ugliness of a life that shuts itself off from partaking of the love of God by such acts as suppressing love for others: 1 John 3:17 *But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his feelings from him, how does the love of God abide in him?* And without life in the love of God, by partaking of God's own love by partaking of His divine nature (2 Pet 1.4), everything else is meaningless (1 Cor 13:1-3) and ugly—ugly because it lacks the glorification of God, which is just another way of saying it lacks the display of God's beauty (the True, Good, Beautiful).

Proverbs 31:1–19. After we have King Lemuel's mother's words to him regarding how special he was (2), and the dangers of adultery (3), alcoholism (4-7), we have the close of Proverbs with an acrostic poem exalting the beauty of a noble wife (10-31).

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love. What a awesome (true, good, and beautiful) depiction of a godly woman in this section. She is not only industrious, she is very smart. It is unfortunately that it was only until relatively recently that women were given the respect they deserve. Until about 100 years ago, women were not considered to have the proper temperament or sense to even vote, let alone be elected to public office. This demonstrates tremendous power of Dasein, which people absorb through their historical "situatedness." The idea of the Dasein as developed by Heidegger, is that each person is thrown into his historical situatedness, which along with the influence of his temperament, determines his way of interpreting reality—and for us the way we interpret the very Word of God. The pernicious power of the Dasein can be

seen in that countless Christians (who faithfully read their Bibles daily) over many centuries continued to possess unbiblical views of women, and many other things, that they absorbed from their culture without even realizing it. I am afraid the problem continues, and it is not just with respect to politics on the right and the left. It extends to the entire spiritual life as their Dasein dictates what they believe is the most important truth of Scripture, all the while not realizing that the reason they think it is the most important is grounded in their Dasein developed over their lifetime—their history, experience, and dispositions—and again, without even realizing it. They can no more see their Dasein (horizon of perspective) than the lenses of their eyes. The only way to break the curse of the Dasein that drives us to cherry-pick our passages is by living above our historical situatedness and personal desires. The only way to break the curse is through the suprahuman (suprarational and supradesire) life. And the God of Christianity is the only One who even offers us such a life, but only by living in Him by *2nd person proper knowledge and proper love*. He is the only place and power above it all. And apart from that life in Him, the believer will continue to be tempted worship other things like work, hobbies, entertainment, and politics rather than God, as he reads his Bible (focused on his favorite verses and blind to others) and sees God and all of life through his Dasein (history, experience, desires). In fact, his very understanding is constituted by his Dasein. Only life in God gives us the supradesire for Him and all of His truth: Psalm 119:127 *Therefore I love Your commandments More than gold, yes, than fine gold!* It is the life that does not live with Him that prefers and is obsessed with the earthly gold and other human treasures. It is the believer who truly lives with God who escapes the Dasein and as a result supratreasures the total truth, whole truth, the supreme treasures of the universe located in His Word. He loves all of the Word of God supremely because of His love for God; loving God is his primary agenda, and he knows that all of Scripture reveals Him in some way or another. In sum, God and His Word become the controlling hermeneutic in his views and interpretive lens, not culture, and not even other well-meaning and well-respected Christians.

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