

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

December 4, 2016

**Jeremiah 6:1–7:29.** The coming siege and fall of Jerusalem.

**Colossians 3:1–17.** Heaven on Earth and love.

**Proverbs 12:1–28.** The way of the fool seems right to him.

### COMMENTS.

**Jeremiah 6:1–7:29.** Chapter 6 deals with the impending siege and fall of Jerusalem. Nowhere does Jeremiah describe more vividly the coming siege of Jerusalem than in this chapter. His words should have struck terror in the hearts of the people; but their ears were closed, and they would not hear. They showed no more fear than those today who ignore the warnings of Jesus Christ to His own people regarding mammonism, secularism, and spiritual apathy, or His warnings to the unsaved about eternal punishment. Note how the mammonism in **6:13** extends to even the preachers of the Word of God as they preach happy messages of peace and prosperity. In **7:1-29** we see the false confidence of God’s people in that they thought they were safe because of the Temple, the Lord’s dwelling place, was in their midst. The same could be said of modern apostate Christians who believe that they have nothing to fear because Christ died for their sins and loves them—a truth sure enough, but not the whole truth, total truth (cf., Christ’s warnings to His churches in Revelation 2-3 regarding mammonism, secularism, and apathy). Apostasy is always characterized by false views of God’s grace. The Lord denounced this false confidence, pointing out that only genuine repentance could save such unjust, violent, and idolatrous people. He reminded them of the example of Shiloh, a former dwelling place of the Lord which had not been spared destruction when God judged His wicked people. Though the people brought Him sacrifices, the Lord rejected them as meaningless and hypocritical. He demanded loyalty, not empty ritual. While the people gave the Lord lip service, they also prepared offerings for the “Queen of Heaven” (the Babylonian goddess Ishtar).

**Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love.** One sure way we can examine the quality of our love for God is in our response to sufferings, either for refinement or for discipline. Jeremiah lamented the fact that at this critical time of divine discipline, *nobody was listening* (**6:10**). They refused to hear God’s Word. Jeremiah told them that God’s anger will be poured out on young and old, men and women, and even the children. Rulers and priests won’t escape; in fact, they were the most guilty because they had given the people false confidence and had refused to repent of their own sins (**6:13–15**). Sometimes suffering brings out the best in people, but that wouldn’t happen in the siege of Jerusalem. When God turned on the furnace, it would reveal the people as rejected silver, nothing but dross to be thrown away. He wasn’t purifying them; He was punishing them. They weren’t being refined; they were being rejected (temporally, not eternally). The idea that all Christians love God is a fiction. Even our Lord felt it necessary to exhort His inner circle of eleven disciples on this point (cf. John 14:21-24). In no circumstances more than in the trials of life does the presence or absence of love for God in a believer become more apparent. Those who joyfully accept God’s will demonstrate love for Him. Those who do not love the Lord will grip, complain, and become increasingly frustrated and bitter. In sum, if a Christian does not love God, a

wrong attitude toward difficulties will always manifest itself. However, those who walk in God *by proper knowledge and by love* are only too quick to make adjustments in life and grow closer to God through the sufferings of life whether they are for refinement or discipline. The believer who loves the Lord will be blessed in and through the difficulties (James 1:12), which enables him to glory in tribulations (Rom 5:3-4) and increase in love for the Lord in the fiery trials of life (1 Pet. 1:6-8).

**Colossians 3:1–17.** There are at least three parts to this reading. First, the new relationship with Christ (**3:1-4**). Believers are, therefore, to “Set your minds on things above” in Jesus Christ as the foundation and center of our lives. Second, believers are to put sin to death (**3:5-11**). Paul exhorted the Colossians to put to death whatever belonged to their “earthly nature” (**3:5**). This suggests that they had not been living consistently with the principle of a spiritual death and resurrection in their conversion. Third, believers are to put on love (**3:12-17**). This section completes Paul’s exhortation to the Colossians to maintain a holy life-style. Paul admonished them “to clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience” (**3:12**). Over all these they should “put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity” (**3:14**).

**Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love.** *Only by walking in the Lord by proper knowledge and proper love* can the believer “above all else” (ἐπὶ πάντων) love other believers as he should. A believer cannot give what he does not have. In other words, it is impossible to properly love fellow believers if we ourselves do not experience God’s love for us. John 13:34 *“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.”* 1 John 3:16, *By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 17 But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?* Again, love for God and others is only possible by *first* grasping the love of God: 1 John 4:19 *We love because He first loved us.*

**Proverbs 12:1–28.** This reading contains several proverbs urging discernment in dealings with others. The wise know how to recognize and what to expect of various kinds of people. A good woman will help rather than weaken her husband (**4**), and a good man is kind even to his animals (**10**). The fool is always sure of himself, speaks without thinking (**15–16, 18, 23**), and is destroyed by his own lies (**19**). But the wise both listen and speak well (**6, 8, 14–16, 19**).

**Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love.** In verse 15 we are told that *“the way of a fool seems right to him, but a wise man listens to advice.”* It always amazes me how people, even believers, can be so confident of their views even though they have not examined all the scriptures on the subject. We have recently noted this at FBC with regard to prayers to Jesus (which the Bible supports) and the role of government in the economy (ordo-capitalism) and in helping the poor. Yet, many Bible believers have a Darwinian view of capitalism (from Herbert Spencer) and think that it is unbiblical to pray to Jesus. To be sure, socialism and communism is an evil that is not supported in the Word of God, but the same thing could be said about Darwinian capitalism (“survival of the fittest,” a term coined by Spencer). The issue is never economic equality in the Word of God; it is always about equality of justice. The great

danger in all the foolish confident ideas in the minds of believers is that they retard development of love for the Lord (e.g., lack of 2<sup>nd</sup> person communication with Christ and hinder appreciation of God's compassion for the poor—I say this as a person who for decades did not believe it was proper to pray to Jesus and was more of a Spencerian capitalist than an ordo or biblical capitalist). However, the greatest damage is that the believer loses out on what it even means that in Christ is “hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge”—something that I am just now beginning to grasp, and all made possible by living in Christ *by proper knowledge and proper love* (cf., Gal 2:20; Philip 3).

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

*Pastor Don*