

**“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”**  
**June 10, 2016**

- ✓ **2 Chronicles 24:1-25:28.** The divided heart.
- ✓ **1 John 1:5-10.** Fellowship in the Light (life of God) according to biblical realism.
- ✓ **Psalm 103:1-14.** God’s unimpeachable love and grace.

**COMMENTS:**

**2 Chronicles 24:1-25:28.** Chapter 24 covers the restoration of the Temple. Chapter 25 gives us insights into the reign of Amaziah. Note the divided hearts in each chapter and the inevitable evil that results. For example, observe Amaziah in 25:2, “*He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, but not wholeheartedly.*” On the one hand, he “*acted in accordance with what was written in the Lord*” with respect to not executing sons for the death of their fathers (25:2), but on the other hand, due to the effects of a divided heart, he ended up bringing foreign *gods of the people of Seir. He set them up as his own gods, bowed down to them and burned sacrifices to them*” (25:14). Divided hearts are the taproot of all apostasy and ill among God’s people. In our last Bible class, I illustrated the problem of the divided heart by asking if a mother *really* loved her children with an undivided heart if she was a drug addict who was told that she would lose her children if she did not stop taking drugs, yet she continued. My answer is no! At least not with an undivided heart because her heart was more attached to the drugs than her own children. As the State takes her children away from her, she may feel passion with all of her heart as she cries out to her children “I love you,” as she witnesses them crying as they take them away from her home, but that is just *flash at that moment* rather than any true change of her character. While she may have some love there, it is, at best, a divided love. Some may respond that she does not have the freedom to stop taking drugs, and this may be true on some level, but whatever freedom she no longer has is due to her decisions to set her nature by taking the drugs in the first place. Once a person’s nature is set, it is very difficult to change. However, it can be changed with one virtuous/good action at a time coupled with the complete cessation of the vice. As I have noted in our metaphysics: every act that we do sculpts our character for the good or evil as we take forms in our minds and actualize them in our lives. We are all living with the character that have molded with countless decisions we have made over our lifetime, just as it should be—it is perfectly apropos according to realism. We do have a *real* stable character at any given time, not fake one that bounces around every moment in power “circles” or “spheres.”

**1 John 1:5-10.** Given what this text *actually* says, it is very strange that some Bible movements base fellowship, more or less, on 1 John 1:9 instead of 1 John 1:7. I have spoken at length on this so I will not belabor the point at this time except to say that fellowship should not be reduced to a state that one goes in and out of. Instead of thinking “I am in fellowship with God” because I have no unconfessed sins, it is more accurate to say “I am fellowshiping with God” in that I am sharing in the life of God in this or that action (mental or physical). True fellowship is sharing in the light, the life of God, see 1 John 1:7. The activity that is emphasized through 1 John, for example, is love (mentioned 36x in this small letter). Consider 1 John 2:10, “*He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him.*” This abiding in the light is abiding in the life of God, this is what true fellowship with God is all about, it is sharing of lives. Jesus taught that the highest love for God is a best-friend kind of love (John 15:13-15). This love of friendship radically changes a believer’s perspective of God, life, and everything else. With a best-friend love, one always wants what is best for the object of love. When a believer loves God with a love of best-friendship, then the good of God becomes his good to the point that the believer experiences great joy in God’s good. The good of God becomes the good of the believer. In fact, with a best-friend kind of love for God, the believer loves what God loves, which is the only way the believer can really love himself, his neighbor, fellow believers, and even his enemies as God loves them. God loves all and commands us to do the same, but the only way we can do that is if His good, His perspective, becomes ours. When that happens we actually share in the life of God as we “partake of His nature” and share in His life, which really is what fellowship is anyway. As far as the 1 John 1:9 and confession of our sins, it takes on a whole new perspective in its *personal* nature. It is not a matter of losing power. It is a matter of violating our friendship with God and choosing evil as a good instead of choosing the Good of our Best Friend. It is a matter of our decision to walk in and fellowship in sin and evil rather than walking in God and sharing in God, the Light, and His goodness. One more thing: while many modern Christians gainsay philosophy, consider how modern philosophy, as typified by conduit spirituality, destroys their ability to understand the Bible, which they say that is all they want. Consider how unknowingly they distort and pervert the plain reading of the Bible and the fundamentals of spiritual life in the Light, which is but life in God Himself. Anti-intellectualism is no way for any Christian to approach God, His Word, or reality as such. It is not way to live life as a human being or as a Christian as such.

**Psalms 103:1-14.** Psalm 103 presents a wonderful picture of God’s love for and grace to us. The psalmist describes a God who knows us and wants us to respond to Him. He illustrates a responsive love. Because of God’s love for him, he declares, “Bless Yahweh . . . all within me, bless his holy name” (103:1). God doesn’t stop at forgiving our sins and redeeming us. He “crowns [us] with loyal love and mercies” (103:4). Although we have greatly offended Him, He doesn’t hold it against us: “He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor repaid us according to our iniquities” (103:10). As a Father, He knows where we fail, and He pities us: “For he knows our frame. He remembers that we are dust” (103:13–14). In our modern age, it is easy to forget to that God continues to give us the act of existence and seeks fellowship with us. He wants to share His life with us. Ultimately, He has shown His love through His act of reconciling us to Himself. When we forget where we stand with Him, we can look to that great testament of His love. Then, we can be like the psalmist and respond with thanksgiving out of a grateful heart filled with reciprocal love.

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

*Pastor Don*