

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

June 12, 2016

- ✓ **2 Chronicles 29:1-30:27.** Hezekiah’s cleansing of the Temple (29) and Passover (30).
- ✓ **1 John 2:7-14.** The importance of love for fellowshiping with God.
- ✓ **Psalm 104:1-15.** God (Esse) as Creator and continuous sustainer and efficient mover of all things.

COMMENTS:

2 Chronicles 29:1-30:27. The neglect of the temple under Ahaz (28:24) prompted Hezekiah to order the Levites to consecrate themselves and begin repair of the sanctuary. After sixteen days the Levites completed the task and opened the temple once again. After the Levites had cleansed the articles of worship, the king led the congregation in worship through offerings. The musical guilds functioned again as David had intended and performed the psalms of David and Asaph. After the people had received atonement for their sins, they offered burnt and thank offerings so numerous that the Levites were requested to assist the overburdened priests. The sight and sounds of the temple brought great joy to the congregation. In chapter 30 we have the Passover Celebration (30:1-27) as the king planned a great convocation in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. He invited their estranged kin in the North who had survived the collapse of Samaria in 722 B.C. under Assyrian might. Because the Temple was not yet prepared and many remained ceremonially impure, the Passover was held in the second month rather than the first as the law commanded (see Exod. 12; Num. 9:10–11). Letters were dispatched throughout the land, exhorting the northern remnants to repent of their former ways and join Judah in worship. The Chronicler, always concerned for the propriety of worship, reported the unusual circumstances attending this celebration which the Lord graciously permitted. Hezekiah’s prayer of repentance on behalf of the people was accepted by God. So devoted was the worship of the people that they extended the Feast of Unleavened Bread a second week. Note how the Chronicler compares the joy of Jerusalem on that occasion to the days of King Solomon.

1 John 2:7-14. One cannot read 1 John without realizing the importance of love for a thriving spiritual life. Apparently, there was a problem among these believers. He tells them, *“The one who says he is in the light and hates his brother is in the darkness until now. The one who loves his brother resides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness, and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes”* (1 John 2:9–11). John was giving the church a way in which it could judge if believers were really fellowshiping with God. Those who created conflict and division, regardless of how much doctrine they had, were not fellowshiping with God. Those who were not walking in the light—who hated their brothers—were known by their contentious nature. As I noted in our last few Bible classes, one cannot live the spiritual life apart from love. All one has to do is examine the divine love in 1 Cor. 13 and see what beautiful qualities that true love always creates; the manifest and undeniable qualities of divine love are there for any believer to see for himself. One thing is for certain, one cannot have a complaining or carping attitude and be living in the love of God, apart from which love one cannot walk in fellowship with God—rather, he is walking in a darkness that no artificial conduit or any religious program or “victorious Christian life system” will ever resolve. Although such negative

believers make others around them not desire their company, the greatest damage they do is to their own souls by continually habituating evil and sin. They continually destroy their spiritual virtue, as they live in the darkness of bitterness, implacability, and ingratitude, taking for granted the marvelous gift of life and the marvelous matchless grace of God that they have been so blessed with as believers. Conversely, those who walk in light do *not* have stumbling blocks of vice habituated in their souls. John shows that they are walking in the light/God because of their love for other Christians. Love for other Christians is not optional, it is a requirement binding on all Christians. The nature of our interpersonal relationships is a reflection of where we are living, with God or in the vices of sin. Consider the power in the believer who does love other believers as he partakes of God's very own love. Consider the power over all mental attitude sins as reflected in 1 John 2:10: ***He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him.*** Apparently, all of those causes of stumbling that the negative believer is always having to confess are really not in other believers. They are as close as the inner recesses of one's own soul. Bad attitudes toward others *always* say more about the quality of our souls than it does about anything in the objects of our attitudes. *Quo Vadis?*

Psalm 104:1-15. Psalm 104 begins the same way Psalm 103 begins—with the words, “Praise the Lord, O my soul.” Psalm 104 is a glorious psalm in praise of God's marvelous Creation and of His sustaining of that Creation. Whereas Psalm 103 praises the Lord's compassion with His people in history, this psalm portrays the Lord's power, wisdom, and goodness to all Creation. The psalmist spoke of God's stretching out the heavens in light, His sovereign control of the deep, His adorning the earth as a dwelling place for man, His arranging night and day for life, and His preparing the sea for its life. He then praised God who gloriously reigns over Creation and renews it by His Spirit. Of course, Christians who understand metaphysics understands the beauty of how all of creation is continuously upheld and moved by God. Thus, he will not be tempted write off much of Psalm 104 as mere metaphor. He understands. Moreover, he lives and thrives in God *by knowledge and by love.*

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

Pastor Don