

“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”
June 15, 2016

2 Chronicles 35:1–36:23. Josiah’s remarkable transition.

1 John 2:28–3:4. Fellowshiping with God. Is it real or is it conduit?

Psalms 105:23–45. Remembering God’s faithfulness.

COMMENTS:

2 Chronicles 35:1–36:23. Josiah’s actions mark a remarkable transition from being unfamiliar with God’s Word to actualizing it in his life and thus his character (34:8–33)—a move from rote religiosity to compassion. Josiah could have coldly observed the Passover out of ritual, but instead he encourages the religious leaders and encourages them to do God’s work. His encouragement changes the outcome: The religious leaders embrace their task. Josiah also provides for them, allowing them to make the necessary changes. He frees them up from their usual obligations so that they may help others (35:3); he takes care of their fiscal needs (35:7). His example inspires others to give as well (35:8–9). As a result of Josiah’s actions, we see God’s work being done: *“So all the service of Yahweh was prepared on that day to keep the Passover and to sacrifice burnt offerings on the altar of Yahweh, according to the command of King Josiah”* (35:16). Our actions can either inspire others or discourage them in the spiritual life. Are you an encouragement to other Christians, especially your wife, husband, parents, or children, or are you a hindrance by always focusing on how screwed up everything is in this broken, cursed world? Are you obsessed with fixing what cannot be fixed, like our society, or are you focusing on living with the Lord *by knowledge and by love* and thus providing hope to a hopeless generation? It comes down to what penchant you develop within the interplay of your will and your intellect as your will is shaped by your intellect and vice versa, all the while God continuously actualizes their first acts of goodness and truth on a natural level as per concurrence. Let us not suppress the better part of our natures. Let us move forward in spiritual virtue regardless of what the world or other Christians do with their lives. We have but one life to give for our Lord; let us make it count for all of eternity. Let us live out the Word of God on a daily basis in response to God’s matchless love and grace. Let us move into the realm of friendship with God, the highest level of love *with* God, a love that thinks more about what one can do to please God (Ephesians 5:10, *trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord*) than what one can get from God as per the functional view of Christianity. Let us not let the incidental things of this life, like American politics, distract us from the very purpose of life: God Himself as our greatest good. It is the only way to have success at life as such.

1 John 2:28–3:4. The words “continue in Him” involve the Greek verb *menō* (μένετε ἐν αὐτῷ) which has already occurred 10 times in verses 6–27. In accord with his basic theme about fellowship (1 John 1:3), John once more enjoined the “abiding” life. But now he introduced the new thought of being confident before Christ at His coming. The Greek words rendered “be confident” are literally “have confidence” (σχωμεν παρησῖαν), which have the idea of “bold freedom of speech.” If the readers would maintain their fellowshiping with God, they would enjoy a genuine boldness of speech when they would meet their Lord. How this can be so is the subject of 2:29–4:19. Should a believer fail to abide in Him, however, there is the possibility of shame when Christ comes. This intimates divine disapproval at the judgment seat of Christ,

referred to in 4:17–19. As I have noted many times, fellowshiping with God is not a state as much as it is an action. It is more about walking in, with, and by the Lord by actualizing the commands of God rather than a passive state of being confessed up. Of course no one has to take my word on this, all one has to do is read 1 John several times and see if abiding/fellowshipping is related to being confessed up in some conduit state, or is presented in terms of various actions of living out the mandates of God with God. For example, the Bible teaches that “*if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin*” (1 Jn. 1:7) It does not say ‘if we are confessed up and cleanse ourselves from sin, *then* we have fellowship with one another (in some conduit state).’ Of course, if one is a Bible-only-eschewer-of-philosophical-realism, it would never dawn on him that he is not even following the Bible. Rather, he is using a system of the kosmos that can be traced back to Francis Bacon. Everyone uses philosophy, man is a philosophical animal; the only difference is that some use it well because they are philosophical realists as per the tradition of the Christian church until the rise of modernity with its “mechanical formulas,” which is then imposed upon God and the spiritual life. I am so blessed to be the pastor-teacher of believers at FBC who are willing to do the hard work of whatever it takes to move forward in Total Truth, Whole Truth—truth as such, truth that corresponds to reality instead of coherence truth filled with power constructs of the mind and other superstitious views of truth.

Psalm 105:23–45. In this psalm the psalmist traces the history of Israel in which the Lord fulfilled His promise to make Israel a great nation. First, the writer stated that the Lord protected them while they sojourned in other lands (12–15)—a reference to Abraham’s journey from Ur in Chaldea to Haran (Gen. 11:31), Canaan (Gen. 12:4–5), Egypt (Gen. 12:10–20), and his living in the Negev (Gen. 20:1). Second, the LORD sovereignly led Israelites into Egypt and exalted Joseph (Ps. 105:16–22; cf. Gen. 37; 39–41). Third, in Egypt the LORD made His people very fruitful even though they were oppressed (Ps. 105:23–25; cf. Ex. 1:6–14). Fourth, through Moses and Aaron the Lord worked wonders in Egypt (the land of Ham; cf. Ps. 105:23). These wonders were the plagues on Egypt (26–36) that oppressed the Egyptians (cf., Ex. 7–11; Ps. 78:44–51). God rescued His people with great booty (105:37). In fact, Egypt was relieved when they left (105:38). Fifth, the Lord led the Israelites through the wilderness and provided quail, manna (bread of heaven), and water from the rock (105:39–41). So even during Israel’s wanderings He was faithful to them. God is faithful! The believer who understands the simplicity of God fully appreciates the fact that the faithfulness of God is not a separate attribute. Rather, God just is faithful in all of His being as He is love, justice, and the rest of the classical attributes of God. God can no more deny His faithfulness than He can deny His own being. Every believer should regularly take a look at his past and reflect on how the Lord has provided for him every step of the way, through thick and thin, through evil and sin, and in any and every circumstance. God is always there providing—and He is not silent! His nature, Godhead, and power saturate creation: Romans 1:20, *For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse*—a passage that is devastating for any Christian who thinks that he cannot know the true nature of God apart from the Bible; a *Bible* passage that destroys the Bible-only philosophy.

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

Pastor Don