

**“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”**  
**June 8, 2016**

- ✓ **2 Chronicles 19:1-20:37.** More on Jehoshaphat.
- ✓ **Titus 3:12-15.** Ending on a note of good works and grace.
- ✓ **Psalm 101:1-8.** David’s reciprocal love and integrity.

**COMMENTS:**

**2 Chronicles 19:1-20:37.** This section concludes the life of Jehoshaphat, **a summary:** He starts out great. He strengthens fortifications against the northern kingdom, removes the ‘high places’ of pagan worship and commissions priests and Levites to teach the law of Moses in the towns of Judah. From the beginning, Jehoshaphat takes David as his example as his heart is ‘devoted to the ways of the Lord’. His power and wealth—and the organization of his army—are reminders of the great days of Israel’s history. But Jehoshaphat makes a mistake. He involves himself with Ahab, king of Israel. Perhaps he feels that the time is ripe for the two kingdoms to work together again. When the battle begins, the Arameans prepare to attack Jehoshaphat, because he is the only visible king. He cries out to God for help. An arrow fired finds a chink in Ahab’s armor, and gives him a fatal wound. He dies in his chariot at sunset. When Jehoshaphat returns to Judah, he is rebuked by the prophet Jehu for his unholy alliance with the king of Israel. Back in Jerusalem, Jehoshaphat continues to put in place good structures of government. He appoints judges in each of the fortified cities, giving them a careful and solemn briefing that they are to do the Lord’s work. In Jerusalem, he appoints priests and senior people to administer the law of Moses. He warns them that the Lord will punish them if they don’t tell people not to sin. A severe military threat now arises. Moabites, Ammonites and Meunites (from Edom) are advancing on Judah. Jehoshaphat calls all the people to fast, and to come together to seek God’s help. Standing in the great assembly, Jehoshaphat leads his nation in prayer. Jehoshaphat praises God as the only God, the God of their ancestors and the ruler of all nations. He recalls how God conquered their enemies in the past, and promised the land to the descendants of Abraham forever. God also promised that the temple in which they now stand would be the place where he would hear and help in times of need. Now, in this crisis, Jehoshaphat acknowledges their helplessness and appeals to God to save them. The Lord’s answer comes through Jahaziel, who is one of the Levites. He tells Jehoshaphat and all the people not to be afraid. The battle is the Lord’s. Jahaziel describes where the army is to take its stand the following day, but assures them they will not have to fight. In the morning, they march out with the praises of God on their lips. While the people of Judah praise God, their enemies are overtaken by ambushes and infighting. By the time Jehoshaphat and his army arrive at their vantage point, there is nothing to be seen of their enemies but dead bodies. It takes them three days to collect the plunder. Jehoshaphat reigns for twenty-five years, and the Chronicler rates him as a fine king. His only fault (apart from getting too close to Ahab) has been that he fails to remove all the sites of pagan worship. They spring up as fast as they are suppressed. Their cupidity, attraction to fertility rites and the influence of superstition run very deep in the person without virtue, a person who does not have the right thinking, the right the right willing, and the right passions.

**Titus 3:12-15.** Note in Paul's final messages to his friends and co-workers the emphasis in verse 14, which I have been pointing out is the key to instantiating virtue in the believer—doing, living out the Word of God. Consider how one would be greeted today among certain conservative churches if in closing the pastor said, “let our people learn to maintain good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be fruitful.” Something to think about. Of course, by Paul giving that advice he was not minimizing teaching or nullifying the importance grace with this emphasis on works. As a matter of fact, he closes this letter with “grace be with you all” as an expression of affection, motivation, and the very foundation of our faith.

**Psalm 101:1-8.** In the first verse we see David's reciprocal love for the Lord in the word “mercy” (חֶסֶד). This term, *chesed*, refers to God's “loyal love.” David is living in the reality of God's love for him. Anyone who loves with a strong consciousness of God's unmerited love for him, will naturally respond, reciprocate, with love for God. Note the virtue that follows in the following verses. Note David's right thinking, right wishing, and right passions in these virtues. The point I want to make is that it is love for God that is the efficient and sufficient cause of all of these virtues. Do we not find the same idea in 1 Cor. 13, which lists virtue after virtue that love creates—after it points out that without love no spiritual gift or sacrifice counts for anything? It seems to me that based on these passages and the entire Word of God that what needs to replace the conduit system is a development of this love. If indeed love for God is the root, hinge, and fruit of all virtue, and the one thing that God looks for in a believer more than anything else, it seems to me that it should be the focus instead of the multitudinous spiritual systems out there. All of those spiritual systems that are designed to create lead the believer into the love of God must fail since the Bible teaches that all that is done without love is a waste of time. In other words, if the Bible teaches that anything and everything that we do that is not out of love is a waste, then how can any spiritual system that is designed to cultivate love in us be anything but a waste, not matter how spectacular or sacrificial? as Paul points out in 1 Cor. 13:1-4.

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

Pastor Don