

**“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”**  
**May 28, 2016**

- ✓ **1 Chronicles 23:1-23:32.** David’s faithful administration in appointing Levites.
- ✓ **2 Timothy 3:1-9.** Prophecy of rise of vices in the last days of the church age.
- ✓ **Psalms 88.** A dark psalm—life in a cursed, groaning creation.

**COMMENTS:**

**1 Chronicles 23:1-23:32.** Chapters 23–27 are sometimes looked upon as an interruption in this narrative. However, they are very important for showing that David fulfilled all his duties as a good king by seeing to it that the proper worship of the Lord would continue. In other words, at the end of David’s life, after he had already effectively turned the reins of government over to Solomon (23:1), he undertook the task of organizing and ensuring the perpetuation of a religious and political structure that would best meet the nation’s needs. The total preparations for the temple included the allocation of personnel to undertake the various spiritual ministries of the temple. These were more crucial than the material structure alone—a perspective that David understood better than many today. In chapter 23, David takes up the various branches of the Levites.

**2 Timothy 3:1-9.** Having just discussed people taken captive by the devil, Paul now turns to warn Timothy, and those under the tutelage of Timothy, that things will be worse in the last days. These last days are the last days of the church age. Paul states 19 characteristics that are to be avoided. Paul is describing unbelievers and believers in society. Believers who do not heed to the warnings of Scripture, and thus do not have a robust spiritual life, will fall prey to these vices of the kosmos. These 19 characteristics fall into several groupings. The first two naturally go together. Both deal with inappropriate objects of our love: “lovers of themselves” (narcissists) and “lovers of money” (see 1 Tim 6:10). This is a selfish, greedy, looking out for me alone, type of love. This is the thinking that it is better to receive than to give. This person’s center of gravity is self and not God, such a believer is only attracted to a functional approach to God. They aim to please themselves, not God. The next three probably go together: *boasters, proud, blasphemers*. *Boasters* are tied to self-love and a lack of focus on pleasing God. They brag about themselves. The *proud* have disdain for others as inferior to them. This leads to speech that is *blasphemous*, speech which is abusive and injures others. This is an insult against people, and ultimately against God. The next six seem to go together. Those who are *disobedient to parents* reject parental authority and later all other forms of authority. Those *who are unthankful* don’t appreciate what their parents did for them. This, then, extends to what others have done for them and what God Himself has done. The result of being *unthankful* is being *unholy*. *Lack of gratitude* and *respect* produces a disregard for duty to God. When we don’t have a good attitude toward our parents and authority figures and we are unthankful and unholy, it leads to being *unloving* and *unforgiving*. Everyone is viewed an enemy, an inferior, an irritation. Those who are *slanderers* are like the devil himself, constantly accusing others of wrong doing and spreading evil reports and accusations. The next three may also go together and go down by steps. Those *without self-control* lack restraint that marks the spiritually mature. Those who are *brutal* lack self-control in the restraint of their temper. They are like wild animals that lash out at whatever is around them. Such people are or become despisers of good. They are slaves of their lusts and of

all sorts of suppressed anger and so they hate whatever is good, including people who are godly. The next three likely go together as well: *Traitors* certainly are not loyal. *Those who are headstrong* are rash and impulsive. *Haughty* people are puffed up. No one can talk them out of things. The final two clearly go together since they both refer to misguided love. Paul thus ends the list as he began, speaking of misplaced, inordinate love—*lovers of pleasure*, rather than *lovers of God*. Clearly Christians should be *lovers of God*. But these people are not. Instead, they are *lovers of pleasure*. The *form of godliness* might include things like church services, baptisms, communion services, group prayer, choral singing, burning candles and incense, last rites, liturgical calendars, and the like. The bottom line is that they may act religiously, but their telos, their end or goal in life, their philosophy of life, is all about sense appetites and this temporal life. As I noted in our last Bible class, such people are called “enemies of the cross,” Philip. 3:19—they have no eternal perspective. We are to *turn away* from people like this for they are bad influences on, and thus detrimental to, our spiritual lives. We should not waste our time listening to the kosmic prattle of those who live only for this world. God has bequeathed to us so much more, in this life: virtue, and the next: an eternity of blessedness as we behold the inner essence of God.

**Psalm 88.** The three sections of this psalm have three common features: each opens with a testimony of sustained prayer (1–2, 9, 13); each laments an experience of darkness (6, 12, 18); and each faces death (5, 10, 15). The tone in the psalm is filled with sorrow. This believer knows the Lord as indicated in “the God of my salvation” (1). He seems to have lost hope in the face of death (9–12). Someone who is committed to prayer seems to find no remedial answers to suffering. He speaks of the wrath of God (7), the alienation of friends and inescapable (8) debilitating grief (9). His look to God sees wrath and terror (16). His look at life presents threats and absent friends (17–18). His look to the future is dark (18). You will likely, in some time of your life, run into fellow believers who seem to sink deeper and deeper into depression as they go through a valley of darkness. We should remember that no one is immune to experiences of the groanings that are associated with the cursings of our groaning creation (Rom. 8:18–23). In times when we feel overwhelmed by the “thorns and thistles” of this world, let us not cower in fear and depression. Let us turn to the Lord, knowing that He will redeem us from our present curses along with the world. This world is not as it was originally created. But someday it will be and much much more! We have God’s Word on it!

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

Pastor Don