

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

1 Kings 13:1–34. Jeroboam would not repent.

Mark 8:11–9:1. Discipleship.

Proverbs 3:13–22. The blessedness of wisdom.

COMMENTS.

1 Kings 13:1–34. Jeroboam’s idolatrous system of worship was soon condemned by an unnamed prophet who condemns what Jeroboam is doing. He is a true prophet, and his message is confirmed by the withering of the king’s hand and the splitting of the altar. However, he is distracted and misled by a rival prophet and dies. From now on, the work of the prophets becomes increasingly important. They take their stand and declare God’s word, but they are only proved true if their message is fulfilled. There will be a constant rivalry between true and false prophets—with the added twist that God can even use false prophets to reveal his truth!

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love. Note that even after these unusual events, King Jeroboam would not repent: 1 Kings 13:33 *After this event Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but again he made priests from every class of people for the high places; whoever wished, he consecrated him, and he became one of the priests of the high places.* He would not turn from his evil ways. Unless and until God becomes a person’s greatest good, he cannot help but be drawn to some evil in this world—there are no exceptions. The type of evil may vary, but the result is the same: the pursuit of evil and rejection of God’s offer of a love relationship with Him. In a lifetime, there are millions of golden apples thrown in our paths to distract us from the Christ-centered life. These worldly apples do not have to be questionable activities, for worldliness is a matter of the heart (intellect/will). To the extent that a Christian loves the world system and the things in it, he does not love the Father. Worldliness (lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh, and pride) always affects our response to the love of God as it affects our response to His will. As I noted in Bible class last evening, it is impossible to love God apart from right ordered thinking and right ordered desires. Loving the world is always a natural consequence of disordered thinking and a disordered will. Lack of love of the things of God “cashes out” to lack of joy in the things of God, lack of joy in obeying God’s Word. For example, a person who loves the world more than the Lord will not find joy in being part of a local church family and growing in the Word. He is simply too wrapped up in his temporal life, so church becomes a burden (unless the church can encourage him to get more of the world as per the prosperity “gospel” movement). One simply cannot love the world and love God simultaneously. 1 John 2:15 *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world-- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life-- is not of the Father but is of the world.* In sum, worldliness is anything in the Christian’s life that causes him to lose his enjoyment of the Father’s love and desire to do the Father’s will. In other words, responding to God’s love (personal love for the Lord) and doing God’s will (daily conduct in response to that love) is antithetical to worldliness while everything else just is worldliness. Again, it comes down the life in

God *by proper knowledge and by love*—a life of joy and peace and life in abundance. As a pastor, it grieves me so to see so many Christians lose their way due to their *Dasein* way of thinking, where God and life are interpreted according to one's personal experiences and culture rather than the reality of the Word of God and the objective world. Without life in God *by knowledge and by love*, the challenges of life do anything but anneal one's relationship with God. The only thing that indurates is the American *Dasein*—one's experiential interpretation of the world. It is no longer about what is but what one wants reality to be. And through induction, one can always find a reason to believe what one wants/loves. What we love predestines our lives; thus, let us redouble our efforts to seek the Lord *by proper knowledge and proper love* for all else leads to great self-deception.

Mark 8:11–9:1. Outline: The Pharisees demand a sign (8:11-13); the disciples' failure to understand Jesus' words and deeds (8:14-21); the healing of the blind man at Bethsaida (8:22-26); Peter's confession that Jesus is the Christ (8:27-30); and Jesus' prediction of His death and resurrection (8:31-9:1).

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love. In 8:34 we see the cost of discipleship: "*When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, 'Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.'*" Of course, this does not resonate with American pragmatic versions of Christianity which view Christ as more of a Santa Clause than a Master to be obeyed and served. Jesus laid down three conditions for true discipleship: (1) we must surrender ourselves completely to Him; (2) we must identify with Him in suffering and death; and (3) we must follow Him obediently, wherever He leads. If we live for ourselves, we will lose ourselves, but if we lose ourselves for His sake and the Gospel's, we will find ourselves. Denying self is not the same as self-denial. We practice self-denial when, for a good purpose, we occasionally give up things or activities. But we deny self when we surrender ourselves to Christ and determine to obey His will. This once-for-all dedication is followed by a daily "dying to self" as we take up the cross and follow Him. From the human point of view, we are losing ourselves, but from the divine perspective, we are finding ourselves. When we live for Christ, we become more like Him, and this brings out our unique individuality. However, it is impossible to deny self and follow Him unless one loves Him more than self or anything else. Again, the issue is *life in God by proper knowledge and proper love*, which is the very purpose of all of Scripture (Matt. 22:40).

Proverbs 3:13–22. This reading vividly describes the blessings of wisdom for the believer and ends with God’s wisdom in creating the universe with all its unfathomable niceties. The tree of life mentioned in this reading should not be confused with the tree of life in Eden. We are to partake of this tree.

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love. If we pursue God, and His not far from anyone, we will find the path of blessedness. One of the first blessings we find is the wealth that comes from wisdom. Wisdom brings a wealth that no money can purchase. Some people know the price of everything but the value of nothing. It is good to have things money can buy provided you don’t lose the things money cannot buy. What good is it to have a successful job and a new house if the house is not filled with God’s wisdom, peace, and blessedness? Wisdom is a “tree of life” to the believer, and this is a foretaste of Heaven (Rev. 22:1-2). As a matter of fact, life with *God by proper knowledge and proper love* in this life is only to be followed by more of the same, only much fuller, when we get to Heaven. In light of all that God has in store for us—beyond all we can ask or imagine (1 Cor 2:19), it is easy to fall into reverie about our future with Him, from time to time, but only by those with true wisdom, who share in the wisdom of God by sharing in the life of God *by knowledge and by love*.

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and by proper love.

Pastor Don