

**“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”  
November 16, 2016**

**1 Kings 22:1–53.** Ahab’s legacy: material prosperity and moral/spiritual decadence.

**Mark 12:35–13:23.** Hated because of identification with Christ.

**Proverbs 5:11–23.** The polluted waters of adultery.

**COMMENTS.**

**1 Kings 22:1–53.** The last chapter of 1 Kings provides us with the account of the death of Ahab. King Ahab dies in the battle of Ramoth Gilead (29–40). Ahab went out to battle determined to cheat death by disguising himself. But he could not escape his prophesied end, and a random arrow found a space in his armor, wounding him fatally. Even when he tried to defy the words of Micaiah, he ended by fulfilling them, because the events announced by Yahweh’s prophets were in the hands of Yahweh himself. The earlier words of Elijah were also fulfilled by the dogs licking up Ahab’s blood outside Samaria, as dogs had licked up the blood of Naboth outside Jezreel. However, note the prosperity that evil Ahab brought to his country: 1 Kings 22:39, *Now the rest of the acts of Ahab and all that he did and the ivory house which he built and all the cities which he built...* These building activities are attested to by archaeology. Ahab’s son Ahaziah followed his father by worshipping Baal. His two-year reign was shortened by the judgment of God. The mention of Jehoshaphat is to show what was occurring in the southern kingdom. Jehoshaphat was the king of Judah and he reigned 25 years, continuing the religious reforms of his father Asa. In sum, First Kings gives us a summary of the history of Israel and Judah as failures before God. Even though the nations prospered from time to time under evil kings, they were doomed to collapse just as our nation is unless virtue is returned to the nation. There is not enough free enterprise and capitalism in the world to save any nation when the people have lost the principles of basic morality. Capitalism demands a certain amount of integrity, both in politics and among the people, to work effectively. True prosperity, be it material or spiritual, requires a basic orientation to goodness beyond Mammon and the building of bigger and bigger barns. If it is just all about the mullah, there will always be class warfare and a million other evils within and without.

**Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love.** First Kings, like Deuteronomy, warns against forgetting God in times of economic prosperity. Having known material abundance, many today have left God out of their lives as the ancient Israelites did. Having abandoned faith, many have compromised their values to those of pagan society. The collapse of Israelite society warns of the consequences of sin among God’s people and the people of any nation. First Kings also reveals the power of the word of God in shaping history. The courage of those, like Elijah, whose hearts were captive to the word of God challenges today’s Christians to let their presence be felt—to be salt and light to a decaying and dark world. We must not put our trust in political leaders; they will come and go. By putting our trust in the Lord, we can rise above the political frays and share the grace and love of Christ to those in our society who know neither. As we walk in the Lord *by proper knowledge and by proper love*, we become the salt and light that our nation so desperately needs with a message that actually provides reasons for God’s sparing and blessings our nation besides the wallet and freedom in unbridled

immorality. God repeatedly has demonstrated that He is very patient, but eventually He will destroy any nation that continues to violate basic moral principles for any nation as outlined in the Word of God.

**Mark 12:35–13:23.** In **12:35-37**, Jesus asks a question to His interrogators: ‘If the Christ (Messiah) is said to be the son of David, how is it that in Psalm 110 David describes him as his Lord?’ Both Peter and Paul in their letters describe Jesus as the ‘Son of David’. The Jews hope that the Messiah will be a king who is directly descended from David and able to restore the kingdom of Israel. But the kingdom of Jesus is very different from that of David. It is not based on race or political power. It is universal and eternal. In **12:38-40**, Jesus warns people about the teachers of the law. They love to show off in the way they dress, the people they know and their position in society. But Jesus says that they are ‘devouring widows’ houses’. They are charging too much for helping poor people. They only serve for money, and they only pray to impress. In **12:41-44**, Jesus notices a poor widow. She gives only two tiny coins, but it is the greatest gift of the day—because it is all she has. She has given her whole self to God. The poor widow’s coins are ‘lepta’—sometimes called ‘mites’. They are the smallest coins in everyday use. Two of them together pay a farmworker’s wage for about ten minutes’ work. In **13:1-2**, Jesus stuns His friends with the news that the temple is soon to be destroyed as the disciples admire the magnificent temple in Jerusalem with its huge stones, dazzling marble, and radiant gold, designed to point to the presence of God among his people. In **13:3-31**, the disciples ask Jesus when the crisis will come. Jesus answers that there will be many trials and disasters, both natural and as a result of human activity. His followers will be arrested and tried for their faith, and families will be divided. Something abominable will be placed in the temple, and the people of Judea will have to flee for safety. Jesus describes these times of stress as ‘birth pains’—the anguish of an old world dying and a new age being born.

**Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love.** In this reading, we see the many persecutions promised by Jesus Christ. The real cause for persecution is stated in Mark 13:13, “*And you will be hated by all for My name's sake.*” Walking with the Lord *by proper knowledge and proper love* guarantees that we will always be identified with Him as He becomes a natural part of our lives in the way we engage and respond to others. If we identify with Jesus, however, we can expect the world to treat us the way it treated Him. We can belong to all sorts of weird religious groups today and not suffer much opposition from family and friends, but the minute you bring the name of Jesus into the picture and share the Gospel, somebody will start to oppose you. His name is still hated by the worldly-minded precisely because He challenges every man on a very fundamental level to put Him above and before all else.

**Proverbs 5:11–23.** Solomon compares enjoying married love to drinking pure water from a fresh well, and committing sexual sin to drinking polluted water from the gutter or sewer. Sex within marriage is a beautiful river that brings life and refreshment, but sex outside marriage is a sewer that defiles everything it touches. To commit sexual sin is to pour this beautiful river into the streets and the public squares. What waste! If you “drink deep” of the wrong kind of love, it will destroy you. The commitment of marriage is like the banks of the river that keep the river from becoming a swamp. Extramarital and premarital affairs don’t satisfy because they’re shallow, and it doesn’t take much to stir up shallow water. A man and woman pledged to each

other in marriage can experience the growing satisfaction that comes with love, commitment, depth, and purity. But there's something else involved here. Solomon admonishes the husband to be "ravished" with his wife's love (5:19–20); the word translated "ravished" also means "intoxicated" or "infatuated." The adulterer watches the river turn into a sewer, but the faithful husband sees the water become wine!

**Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love.** The emphasis on marriage and the marriage bed in the New Testament is that the husband and wife are faithful to the Lord and to each other. The sexual relationship in marriage is be honorable: Hebrews 13:4, *Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.* If a couple decides to go without sex, it is only because they have *both* decided to focus on the Lord in prayer and fasting as per 1 Corinthians 7:1–5—a dedication that most modern believers would find absolutely ridiculous. Note the beautiful analogy of the husband and wife used of the Lord and the church in Ephesians 5:22–33. As a husband or a wife, you are either a spiritual hindrance or help to your spouse. You are either dragging him or her down or encouraging him or her in the Lord. As a husband, you are either a spiritual leader or a drag on your wife's spiritual life. As a wife, you are either shutting down your husband's spiritual leadership, or you are encouraging him to lead you in the Lord. Of course, the Lord must come first before one can truly be a blessing to any mate. There is nothing more attractive than a man of God or woman of God who lives in the life of God *by knowledge and by love.* Every husband and wife has the unique opportunity to make a positive impact on at least one person. The last thing a husband or wife should be is a spiritual stumbling block or a source of constant angst. Each of us should be a delight to our partner in the Lord. What a privilege each husband and wife has!

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

*Pastor Don*