

## “Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”

November 19, 2016

**2 Kings 4:18–5:27.** Elisha and the magnificent grace and love of God.

**Mark 14:51–15:15.** Demonstration of God’s love.

**Proverbs 6:12–19.** The *peccatum* of causing strife.

### COMMENTS.

**2 Kings 4:18–5:27.** This reading can be divided into four parts: (1) Elisha raises the dead (**4:18-34**), (2) Elisha purifies poisonous stew (**4:38-41**), (3) Elisha feeds 100 people (**4:42-44**), and (4) Elisha heals Naaman (**5:1-27**).

**Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love.** All of the miracles wrought through Elisha demonstrate the grace of God. It was grace that imparted life to the dead boy. It was grace that removed the poison from the pot of stew. It was grace that satisfied the hungry. And it was grace that made it possible for Elisha to heal Naaman. Elisha was not able to do these miraculous feats because he was more moral, more talented, or a better person than anyone else. It was all due to the grace of God. Likewise, it is grace that imparts to us new life, feeds us, and heals us from the capital sin of rebellion against God. As Church Age believers, we are saved by grace and are to live by God’s grace, not by our own works. God’s purpose in our redemption is not simply to rescue us from Hell, as great work as that is. His ultimate purpose in our salvation is that for all eternity the Church Age believer might glorify God’s grace (Eph. 1:6, 12, 14). So, if God has an eternal purpose for us to fulfill, He will keep us for all eternity. Since we have not been saved by our good works, we cannot be lost by our bad works. Grace means salvation completely apart from any merit or works on our part. Grace means that God does it all for Jesus’ sake! Our salvation is the gift of God. Without grace, there would be no hope for us. Without grace, we could not walk with God *by proper knowledge or by proper love* because by nature we are enemies of God and dead in sin, a death that only grace can conquer. We were spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1), disobedient (2:2), depraved (2:3), and doomed (2:3) when God wrought His magnificent work of grace in us (2:4-9). Only because He first loved us was it ever possible for us to love Him: 1 John 4:10, *In this, is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.* We can only truly walk in God *by proper knowledge and proper love* in response to His antecedent love and grace. Loving God is always a response to His love and grace. As far as loving others, we cannot give what we do not have. Only by grasping the love and grace of God can we possess it and share it with others and by sharing it fellowship with God more deeply, 1 John 3:18 *Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth;* 1 John 4:12 *No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us;* 1 John 4:16, *And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.* I would add that any attempt to downplay love for God and others, for example, by clever word studies, is not only anti-biblical, it is anti-Christian in its basic ontological orientation. Christian realism is based on the reality of love and not meanings of words. Words for

the Realist, are only formal signs that point to a reality that must be investigated as such. For the Realist, truth is correspondence between the thing in reality and the mind—not the mind with the meaning of words (like etymology) as per idealism.

**Mark 14:51–15:15.** This section contains Jesus’ trials before the Sanhedrin and Peter’s threefold denial (14:53-15:1) and His trial before Pilate (15:1-15).

**Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love.** We see man doing His worst to incarnate God. The very God who created the universe and holds all things together by the Word of His power (Heb. 1:3) is treated with ridicule and contempt. Why would God put Himself through such shame? He was rejected in the High Priest’s Palace and denied by Peter three times (Mark 14:53-72). He was condemned in Pilate’s Hall (15:1-20) to die a painful, disgraceful, death. But why? to demonstrate the quality of His love: Romans 5:8 *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us*; to provide for our righteousness: 2 Corinthians 5:21 *For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him*. But what is the point of demonstrating His love? Was it merely for the point of demonstration? Or is there another goal? Of course, there is: 2 Corinthians 5:14 *For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; 15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again*—which just is another way of telling us that God demonstrates His love for us so that we would respond to Him *by proper knowledge and proper love*.

**Proverbs 6:12–19.** In this reading, we have the seven deadly *peccatorum* (6:16-19). This numerical saying is arranged for easy memorization. The first five things the Lord hates are mentioned in body parts set in a sequence that generally moves from the head to the feet (eyes, tongue, hands, heart, feet), and the last two are specific types of persons (the false witness and the troublemaker). Also, note that the first five items concern general moral characteristics (pride, deceitfulness, a violent or conniving character, etc.), whereas the last two (19) specifically relate to persons and other groups of people.

**Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love.** In the Hebrew parallelism, the last sin mentioned is the one that God hates the most: *“the one who sows discord among brethren.”* “Brethren” need not be restricted in sense to literal brothers but may be taken to refer to people who have a close association, such as friends or family members. This 7<sup>th</sup> sin is the thing that Yahweh hates the most. This “strife” characterizes both unregenerate (Rom 1:29) as well as carnal believers (Rom 13:13; 1 Cor. 3:3; 2 Cor 12:20; Gal 5:20; Phil 1:15; 1 Tim. 6:4; Titus 3:9). The Bible is filled with strife—political strife, family strife, and even strife in churches, like the Corinthian church. What is the source of strife? Selfishness! people demanding that things go their way! What is the solution to strife, both inner strife and outer strife (like spreading gossip)? love of God and others! As one walks with the Lord *by proper knowledge and proper love* he no longer lives in antagonism of not getting his way, and circumstances not going the way they want them. Moreover, when one loves others, the last thing that one would do is gossip or say anything negative about them that would cause trouble. We only talk bad

about those we no longer really respect. The truth is that one cannot live a Christ-centered life, he cannot develop his second person love relationship with the Lord and think of himself more than others. It is the selfish people who are always complaining about their turmoil as they continue to fight with divine providence about the way things are going in their lives. The more belligerent they become, the more hatred they sow in their hearts. Instead of sowing more of God's grace and love in their lives, they fill their hearts with bitterness, meanness, and hatred—a hatred that is all too ready to come out and bring discord to others at the slightest provocation. Gossip and evil speaking are acts of hate for other human beings. We need to turn from hate to Jesus Christ, who shows us the way of humility and love: *Philippians 2:3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.* As we have noted in our studies at FBC, love for God is inextricably connected to right thinking about a vast array of issues. One cannot live in God *by proper knowledge and proper love* if he does not share the attitude of Jesus Christ. Find humility and love, and you will find wisdom. And only with such wisdom will all the human conflicts and antinomies be overcome and resolved because God and life as such are perceived in their fullest dimensions (wisdom). It is the narrow and small minds that get locked in so many human petty conflicts and antinomies.

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

*Pastor Don*