

**“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”
November 2, 2016**

1 Kings 2:1–46. “The kingdom was now firmly established in Solomon’s hands”

Mark 1:35–2:28. Legalism = anger; grace = love and forgiveness.

Proverbs 1:8–12. Separated unto ? The wrong crowd or the Lord?

COMMENTS.

1 Kings 2:1–46. Summary: David’s deathbed instructions warned Solomon that only obedience to the LORD would secure his kingdom. He advised Solomon to execute Joab for murdering Abner and Amasa and to deal swiftly with Shimei for his treachery. David died after his forty-year rule, but the kingdom was secure in the hands of his successor (**2:1–12**). The enemies of David and Solomon received their retribution. Adonijah was executed because he asked for the hand of Abishag, a member of the royal harem. Solomon interpreted this request as tantamount to staking another claim to the throne (**2:13–25**). Zadok replaced Abiathar as chief priest because the latter had sided with Adonijah (**2:26–27**). This banishment of Abiathar fulfilled God’s judgment on his ancestor Eli’s house (as per 1 Sam 2:27–36). Benaiah executed Joab and replaced him as captain of Solomon’s armies (**2:28–35**). Shimei also was executed because he disregarded the limitations of his house arrest (**2:36–46**). The narrator aptly stated the conclusion of this struggle: “The kingdom was now firmly established in Solomon’s hands” (**2:46**).

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love. There are many distractions in life—many apples are thrown in our paths as we travel through life. Often it is not until the end of life that we “get it.” We generally spend too many wasteful years doing things our own way with hardly a thought of God’s will. Note, David’s first and primary instruction, while on his deathbed, to Solomon in verses 1-4: ‘*Put the Lord first.*’ Failure to put the Lord first always results in materialism, and materialism enslaves the heart (Matt. 6:19-24), the mind (Mat. 6:22-23), and the will (Matt. 6:24). If our aim in life is to get material gain, it will mean darkness within. But if our outlook is to serve and glorify God, there will be light within. If what should be light is really darkness, then we are controlled by darkness; and outlook determines outcome. Moreover, I will add that there is a radical difference between the Christianity we find in the New Testament and American Christianity—and it, too, is because of darkness of absorbing American culture rather than absorbing the teachings of Christ and the New Testament epistles, the latter of which enabled Christians to conquer one of the most powerful and evil empires which ever existed, the Roman Empire. Because they walked with God by *proper knowledge and proper love*, they avoided a lot of the mean spiritedness that is so common today. They loved their neighbors, they helped the poor, and pulled dying, discarded babies out of the trash heaps. As they brought the love, peace, and dignity of Jesus Christ to society, they transformed it from the inside out in a most beautiful way. Let us not forget that we do hold a dual citizenship, one in this country and one in Heaven and the latter must always take first priority. After all, what is the point of freedom in our country if our hearts, souls, and minds are enslaved by Mammon?

Mark 1:35–2:28. After Jesus teaches, heals, forgives, and calls Levi (the tax collector), He informs the critical Pharisees that the Kingdom of God is arriving and their dried-out legalism is like an old garment which will tear, or an old wineskin which will burst. His message of grace is incompatible with their legalism.

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love. There are at least three principles that Christ demonstrates: (1) He came to save sinner, not to call the religious; (2) He came to bring gladness and not sadness; and (3) He came to introduce the new, not patch up the old. The religious leaders were impressed with our Lord's teaching, and perhaps they would have been happy to make some of His ideas a *part* of their own religious tradition. They were hoping for some kind of compromise that would retain the best of pharisaic Judaism and the best of what Christ had to offer. But Jesus exposed the folly of that approach. It would be like tearing patches from a new unshrunk garment and sewing them on an old garment. You would ruin the new garment; and when the old garment was washed, the patches would shrink, rip away, and ruin that garment too. Or, it would be like putting new unfermented wine in old brittle wineskins. As soon as the wine began to ferment and the gases formed, the old skins would burst—and you would lose both the wine and the skins. Jesus came to usher in the new, not to unite with the old. The Mosaic economy was decaying, getting old, and ready to vanish away (Heb. 8:13). Jesus would establish a New Covenant in His blood (Luke 22:19–20). The Law would be written on human hearts, not on stones (2 Cor. 3:1–3; Heb. 10:15–18); and the indwelling Holy Spirit would enable God's people to fulfill the righteousness of the Law (Rom. 8:1–4). Neither salvation nor the spiritual life is about taking a few godly principles to patch up one's life. At the deepest level both salvation and the spiritual life is about seeing the glory/beauty of God and responding to in the most fundamental core of our being. There is nothing more personal than believing that God loves us (John 3:16) and the God-man died for our sins in the most personal way (Gal. 2:20). The spiritual life is about the love of God controlling us to the point that we give ourselves—bodies, souls, minds, wills—completely to Him (Rom 12:1-2). Wherever there is abiding in God by *proper knowledge and proper love*, love really does dominate the every aspect of life: 2 Corinthians 5:14, *For the love of Christ controls us*; 2 Corinthians 5:9, *Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him*. In sum, there are two ways to live: (1) in legalism, where retaliation and vengeance dominate the life as illustrated by the Pharisees or (2) in grace, where love and forgiveness dominate the life as illustrated by Jesus Christ. Romans 13:8 *Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9 For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."* 10 *Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law. 11 And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. 13 Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.*

Proverbs 1:8–12. Both parents are portrayed as instructing their children in wisdom and should be obeyed accordingly (see Exod. 20:12). The teaching given here is depicted at the most personal level. The term “my son” would also apply to daughters, who were expected to grow up to become like the virtuous woman of Proverbs 31:10–31. A special warning is given about consorting with violent criminals such as terrorists, who ambush and murder innocent victims. The mention of “Sheol” is a reference to the location of the dead. The criminals mentioned here include thieves as well as murderers, who pursue one of the commonest forms of lawlessness known to humanity. But wisdom teaches soberly that criminal activity brings its own just reward—sooner or later.

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love. In Proverbs 1:15–19, the father tells his son how to avoid yielding to temptation. First, he says, check carefully the path you’re on and don’t walk with the wrong crowd, see Ps. 1:1 and 2 Cor. 6:14–18. If you’re walking with the wrong crowd, you’ll end up doing the wrong things. The point in the doctrine of separation is not so much what one separates *from* as it is what one separates *unto by proper knowledge and proper love*. “Be ye separate” (2 Cor. 6:17) suggests devotion to God for a special purpose. Separation is not just a negative act of departure; it is also a positive act of dedication to God. We must separate from sin and unto God. God’s command of separation is found throughout Scripture. When Israel did not separate to Him, she always ended up being separated unto pagan ways and pagan gods. It is self-evident that one cannot separate himself to anything apart from *proper knowledge and proper love*. We are only and always attracted to what we truly love—what we view as our greatest good.

Life in God by proper knowledge and by proper love.

Pastor Don