

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

November 21, 2016

**2 Kings 8:1–9:29.** More activities of Elisha.

**Mark 16:1–20.** The resurrection of Jesus Christ.

**Proverbs 6:28–35.** Illicit sexual temptations and the need to control our own vessels.

### COMMENTS.

**2 Kings 8:1–9:29.** Outline: Elisha helps restore the land (**8:1-6**); Elisha predicts Syria’s new king (**8:7-15**), Jehoram’s and Ahaziah’s reigns (**8:16-29**), Elisha anoints Jehu king (**9:1-13**), and Jehu kills Joram and Ahaziah (**9:14-29**).

**Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love.** The only shining light in this dark, unprecedented murderous reign of terror is the grace of God. If not for the grace of God, God would have destroyed King Jehoram and everyone in his kingdom: 2 Kings 8:19, *Yet the LORD would not destroy Judah, for the sake of his servant David, as He promised him to give a lamp to him and his sons forever.* Because of God’s covenant with David, recorded in 2 Samuel 7, God would not cut off the Davidic dynasty or destroy the Judean nation. The “lamp” of Judah would be a perpetual testimony to God’s choice of David, who was the tribe of Judah even though God would humble David’s descendants, “but not forever” (1 Kings 11:39). As far as us and our country, there is bad news and good news. The bad news is that God never made such a promise to America, and He may very well destroy this nation as it moves further and further away from basic principles of morality and divine establishment. The good news is that no matter what happens or what country we live in, we will always end up on the right side of history if we live with God *by proper knowledge and by proper love.* We have God’s word on it: Romans 8:28 *And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God.* Those who love God can have absolute confidence that no matter what happens, he will always be on the right side of history. Not only that, God promises a transcendent life, beyond what one could ask or imagine, to those who love Him: 1 Corinthians 2:9, *But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."* It is love for God that fecundates everything, bringing new life to all that is and all that will be.

**Mark 16:1–20.** The women arrive at the tomb (**1-5**), the angel’s announcement (**6-7**), the women’s response to the news of Jesus’ resurrection (**8**), three of Jesus’ post-resurrection appearances (**9-14**), Jesus’ commission to His followers (**15-18**), and Jesus’ ascension and the disciples’ ongoing mission (**19-20**).

**Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love.** Observe Jesus’ rebuke in Mark 16:14 *Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen.* The issue is not that they did not have enough empirical evidence. The issue is that they had hard hearts. If it were just a matter of evidence, Jesus

would not have scolded them. They had the opportunity throughout His ministry to walk with *God by proper knowledge and proper love*, but since many times they failed to take advantage of that privilege, they sowed hardness and skepticism in their hearts, which made it increasingly more difficult to believe. Faith, biblical faith, is absolute assurance gained supernaturally by living with God. There is no empirical evidence that could ever be the source of unshakable faith. Faith is gained and grows in the light of life with God Himself. Every person can love and grow in God's own light by living in Him or they can, instead, love the darkness and consequently reject the light: John 3:18 *"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 "For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. 21 "But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."* Note how everyone's life comes down to what he loves: darkness or God, truth or the pragmatic lie, the world or the Lord, the temporal or the eternal (Matt. 6:19-24).

**Proverbs 6:28–35.** This reading continues to warn the believer about illicit sex. The specific concern is committing adultery with a neighbor's wife (6:29). Fornication demeans a man's character, while adultery demolishes it systematically. The penalties for holding "fire," that is, a neighbor's wife, close to one's bosom and walking upon hot coals are obvious. There is a word play on the word feet here, which can also mean "sexual organs," indicating that the "burning" could be the pain caused by venereal disease. Even a thief could evoke sympathy if he stole to satisfy hunger, but the man who gratifies sexual appetite through adultery is a fool. The implication of the discourse (6:34–35) is that the husband of the immoral woman has discovered the offense and is bent upon exacting revenge

**Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love.** As we have noted in our study of vibrant biblical faith, hope, and love of the Thessalonians, one of the first warnings Paul gave to these believers was about sexual appetites. For instance, 1 Thess. 4:3, *For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, 5 not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God.* In order to overcome the temptations (the "love") of the sense appetite for illicit sex, one must have a greater love for something that forbids such activity. In other words, one must prize God more than illicit sexual pleasures. Self-discipline in and of itself simply does not have the power to overcome sexual temptations. As one walks with the Lord *by proper knowledge and proper love*, he lives a life of sanctification unto Him regardless of what the world is doing—Paul's mandate stood in opposition to the mores of the Graeco-Roman society. Sanctification demands that Christians abstain from sexual immorality. The Greek noun *porneia* means illicit sexual relations of any kind, although originally it meant primarily traffic with harlots. Sexual union within marriage was sanctified by the gospel, but outside of marriage, it was forbidden. As per the above passage, each believer must learn how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, unlike those who do not know or love God. It is expected that someone who does not know or love God would think it is OK to engage in illicit sex. However, such is not the case for the

Christian who knows, loves, and values the Lord and the spiritual life. As a representative of the Lord, he is different—he is a light in a dark and corrupt world.

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

*Pastor Don*