

**“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”
November 6, 2016**

1 Kings 8:1–53. The glory of God fills the Temple.

Mark 5:21–6:6. Power to restore life.

Proverbs 2:1–15. The evil of flattery.

COMMENTS.

1 Kings 8:1–53. This event was the highlight of Solomon’s career just as the bringing of the ark into Jerusalem was David’s. Solomon was accomplishing what the LORD promised to David’s descendants. After the ark was set under the cherubim in the holy of holies, the whole house was filled with a cloud. The glory of the LORD was so great that it prohibited entry into the temple. This meant that a visible presence of the LORD was in the Temple. The ark was moved in the wilderness from place to place, but the temple provided a permanent dwelling for the Ark (**8:1–21**). Solomon showed in his prayer that he did not conceive of the LORD as bound to a sacred place like the deities of the Canaanites (**8:22–53**). The Temple could not house the God of heaven. The “Name” of the LORD transcends a mere physical structure (**8:22–30**). Solomon anticipated Israel’s captivity. He prayed that God would hear the repentant prayers of His people and bring them back to their inheritance (**8:31–53**).

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and by proper love. The presence of God’s glory was the distinguishing mark of the nation of Israel (Ex. 33:12–23; Rom. 9:4). The sins of the people caused God’s glory to depart from the tabernacle (1 Sam. 4:19–22), but now the glory had returned. But the nation would sin again and be taken to Babylon, and there Ezekiel the prophet would have a vision of the glory of God leaving the temple (Ezek. 8:1–4; 9:3; 10:4, 18–19; 11:22–23). However, God would also allow Ezekiel to see the glory return to the kingdom temple (43:1–5). The glory came to earth in the person of Jesus Christ (John 1:14; Matt. 17:1–7), but sinners crucified “the Lord of glory” (1 Cor. 2:8). When Jesus returned to heaven, the cloud of glory accompanied Him (Acts 1:9) and the temple was left “desolate” (Matt. 23:38–24:2). As we will note in our upcoming Bible classes at FBC, glory is another name for beauty as the third transcendental, the first two being true and good. It is one thing to see something as true; it is another to see deeper into the true and recognize good. But to see it as beautiful is to go even deeper in the third act of the mind that encompasses and unites beautifully with the true and good. There is no beauty unless it is united with the true and good. It is unfortunate that much of modernity has lost its capacity for beauty as transcendental, given that loss of beauty is always loss of both true and good on some level. We, as human beings, are naturally drawn to the true, good, and beautiful on a transcendental level that goes beyond any aesthetics. For example, when we see an elderly couple on a park bench sitting close to each other and holding hands, we see true beauty after our minds see the true and good. To not see that beauty just means not seeing the true and good for whatever reason. As we walk with the Lord Jesus Christ *by knowledge and by love*, we see Him as true, then good, and then beautiful. It is the beauty of the Lord that draws us like nothing else—for everyone is drawn to what he sees as beautiful and the more beauty there is, the more one is irresistibly drawn to it. As we walk in the Lord by

an appreciation of His beauty in giving us life, we live in deeper understanding of Him as true and good. What a beautiful thing for God to love us! What a beautiful thing for God to become a man and die for our sins! What a beautiful thing that God would so desire to have a second person relationship with us! What a beautiful Christ we have who loves us so much and is preparing a place for us to be with Him forever, regardless of our failures. Grace is indeed beautiful, but it is more beautiful when seen as a reflection of God's beautiful attitude toward us. In sum, beauty considered as a transcendental just is what glory is. So, when the Bible tells us that we see the glory of Christ, it is telling us that we see His beauty. And what a beautiful thing it is that we have the opportunity to receive His beauty in our lives as we reflect on His beauty: 2 Corinthians 3:18, *But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.* To live in the beauty of Christ is to live in a deeper reality of His truth and goodness. This cannot be done apart from the Christ-centered life *by proper knowledge and proper love*, as our knowledge and love always determine what we view as beautiful.

Mark 5:21–6:6. Summary: This section begins Christ's healings and the various responses of faith and ends with the polar opposite: others who rejected Christ and thus did not receive miracles (6:6). As far as the healings, it is important to understand that Christ did not come just to alleviate personal health problems. These healings are vivid illustrations of God reversing the curse of the Fall in the coming kingdom. As far as those who rejected Him at the end of this reading, note that Jesus was amazed at those who lacked faith (6:6). Jesus' miracles were God's response to human need and faith, not magic tricks performed to impress the crowds. As far as the latter group, all of these people had every reason to trust Jesus Christ, yet all of them failed to do so.

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love. In Mark 6:3 we are told that those who rejected Him were "offended" (ἐσκανδαλίζοντο) by Him, which literally means "they stumbled over Him." They were scandalized by Him. So, what is the problem? The context indicates that they were familiar with Him—they viewed Him as just a commoner. They thought they knew Him. Since they knew Him as a neighbor, they did not think He was all that special, as per the maxim, "familiarity breeds contempt"—to which I would reply with "familiarity breeds contempt, only with contemptible things or among contemptible people." The contempt shown by the Nazarenes said nothing about Jesus Christ, but it said a great deal about them. No doubt they were aware of His miracles in the various regions. Their wills just did not like Him. They could not explain Him or His reputation for doing the works of God, so they rejected Him and in doing so they sealed their fate. It really is all about the will. Of course, if they loved God properly they would have loved their Neighbor, and their wills would have been more receptive to considering His claims. Only life in God *by knowledge and by love* do we cultivate a good will that can resonate with the good that God brings in our lives.

Proverbs 2:1–15. We have two different walks are described in this section: Walking with God by loving and seeking His Word (**1-9**), walking with the wicked (**10-19**). With respect to Word of God, we have eight imperatives in this chapter (receive, hide/store, incline, apply, cry after, lift up the voice [for understanding]), seek [for wisdom], and search after). As far as the wicked, we have the evil man and strange woman who lead God's children away from the path of life. The evil man is known for his perverse words and attitude of disobedience. The strange woman is the adulteress, the wayward wife. The evil man uses perverse words to snare the unwary, the adulteress uses flattering words. The strange woman knows how to use flattery successfully. She has no respect for God because she has no respect for her husband because she violates the promises she made to him when she married him

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love. Flattery is not the same thing as commending someone for good character or some achievement. Believers who are trying to live for the Lord should be commended and encouraged. We see Paul often commending believers for advancing in faith, hope, and love. Flattery, on the other hand, is telling people what they want to hear (and often what they wish were true) for the purpose of manipulating them in some way. In the text above, the adulteress tells her victim what he wants to hear to snare him. Beware of anyone who seeks to manipulate you through flattery. It is one of Satan's oldest and most favorite weapons. He likely used it with the fallen angels as they sided with him against God, and Satan used it through the Judaizers who were always flattering the believers under Paul's ministry. We protect ourselves from Satan's influences by making our ambition (φιλοτιμούμεθα) to please Christ (2 Cor. 5:9), which is just another way of saying to live for Christ *by knowledge and by love*. Because we have the Word of God, we do not have to guess as to what pleases God. He tells us in His Word: God is well-pleased when His children separate themselves from the evil around them (Eph. 5:10), as well as when they bring their offerings to Him (Phil. 4:18). He is pleased with children who submit to their parents (Col. 3:20), as well as with saints who permit Jesus Christ to work out His perfect will in their lives (Heb. 13:20–21). In sum, it is love for God, not the empty, faint praise of man that we need more than anything else. We cannot live for man and God simultaneously: Galatians 1:10, *For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.* Matthew 6:24 *"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.* 2 Corinthians 5:9 *Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.*

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

Pastor Don