

**“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”
November 7, 2016**

1 Kings 8:54–9:28. Solomon’s prayer, sacrifices, and building projects.

Mark 6:7–44. The danger of preaching repentance.

Proverbs 2:16–22. Warning against sexual immorality.

COMMENTS.

1 Kings 8:54–9:28. This reading can be divided into four parts. **First**, Solomon’s prayer (**8:54-56**). Solomon also asked God to help him and His people to have hearts that were inclined (לְהִטָּוֶה) to the Lord and eager to obey His commandments (**58**). He knew the Book of Deuteronomy and must have had 5:29 in mind—“Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever!” Solomon admonished the people to have sincere hearts and to follow the Lord wholeheartedly (**61**). **Second**, Solomon’s sacrifices (**8:62-66**). **Third**, God’s warning to Solomon (**9:1-9**). The LORD exhorted Solomon to be obedient and warned that disobedience would result in exile and a rejection of the temple. Second Kings describes how this happened to the two kingdoms of the divided monarchy. **Fourth**, his achievements (**9:10-28**). Solomon’s acquisition of wealth further demonstrated the fulfillment of God’s promise to David. He acquired gold from King Hiram in exchange for twenty cities. Solomon’s extensive building projects, including fortifying Jerusalem and other royal cities, required him to conscript slave labor and to install Israelites as overseers.

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love. As noted above, Solomon asked God to help him and his people to have hearts that were inclined to the Lord and eager to obey His commandments: 1 Kings 8:57 *“May the LORD our God be with us, as He was with our fathers. May He not leave us nor forsake us, 58 “that He may incline our hearts to Himself, to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, which He commanded our fathers.* To be “eager to obey His commandments” requires two things: a new heart (regeneration) sanctification (love), both of which are offered as grace gifts from the Lord for those who seek Him. True obedience is always a matter of the heart, and if we love the Lord, we will keep His commandments (John 14:15, 21–24). There’s no conflict between obedience, love, and fear/respect of God (Psa. 2:10–12; 34:8–9). The fear of the Lord is a major theme in Deuteronomy (6:2, 13, 24; 10:20; 14:23; 17:19; 31:12), but so is the love of God for us (7:7; 10:15; 23:5) as well as our love for Him (6:5; 10:12; 11:1, 13, 22; 19:9; 30:6, 16, 20). The immature believer with a shallow view of God will see a contradiction here, but the mature believer rejoices in the balance revealed in the Word: “God is love” and “God is light” (1 John 4:8; 1:5). It really is all about life in God *by proper knowledge and by love.* Without proper knowledge with see conflict. Without proper love, we see His commands as burdensome. A proper view of love always sees obedience in the right light. 1 John 5:2-3: *By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.* In fact, the one who loves

God considers it the highest privilege to obey God because he sees God as his highest and greatest good.

Mark 6:7–44. Outline: Jesus sends out the Twelve (6:7-13); the death of John the Baptist (6:14-29); Jesus feeds 5,000 people (6:30-44).

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love. Let us reflect on John the Baptist. Note what Jesus said about him in Matthew 11:11 *"Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist.* Yet, consider how the world rejected him and finally decapitated. He was anything but pragmatic as he demanded complete repentance in his preaching. American "Christian" pragmatism would something like, 'what is the point of suffering or dying for your faith if it ends in the world persecuting and killing you?' Consider the shame John experienced before a wicked king, a vindictive woman, and a shameless girl. Before it all, John was fearless even in his lonely death. I am sure that, at the time, all of those in power thought they were on the right side of history and that John the Baptist was a loser and a fool for following Christ for no apparent earthly benefit. The lesson to learn from this is that we need to make it our ambition to please the Lord both in this life and the next (2 Cor. 5:9)—to live to please and follow Christ rather than follow what we think is the pragmatic thing to do because of some transient advantage. All that we do will be evaluated on the basis of our motivation to please the Lord rather than self or man. Yes, this includes voting. What happens here is temporary. How we are evaluated at the Judgment Seat of Jesus Christ for our decisions unto the Lord will count for all of eternity. Only when we live for the Lord *by proper knowledge and proper love* will we not be a reed swayed by the opinion of others: Matthew 11:7, *As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? 8 "But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. 9 "But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. 10 "For this is he of whom it is written: 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.'* 11 *"Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist. Pragmatism or greatness is the choice we all face and upon which we will all be evaluated.*

Proverbs 2:16–22. This reading is a warning against the adulterous woman. The Hebrew speaks of her as a “strange woman” and a “foreign woman.” At one time, she had been a faithful adherent to the Sinai covenant, but has now forsaken her husband and rejected the ethic of Sinai in favor of immorality. She has thus sinned on two counts, and she leads her victims to destruction along the same slippery slope. She encourages a direct violation of the prohibition regarding adultery (Exod. 20:14), which was intended to ensure fidelity to the marriage vows made before God and to deter the nation from indulging in the immoral sexual practices of neighboring peoples. A priestly kingdom and a holy nation were required to live in a specified ethical and moral manner so that God would be glorified in and among His people.

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love. God moral standards for His people in the Old Testament were high, but they are even higher in the New Testament: 1 Corinthians 6:16 *Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh."* 17 *But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.* 18 *Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.* 19 *Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?* 20 *For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.* When a Christian man has illicit sex with a woman, he becomes one body with her (1 Cor. 6:16), having in effect married her by his act. He has chosen her instead of the Lord. The only dual power to properly motivate a believer to dedicate his body as unto the Lord rather than sexual immorality is life in God *by proper knowledge and proper love* and by doing so avoids corrupting, enslaving, and fragmenting his soul, which alienates him from himself and the Lord. Sexual immorality is both one of the most pervasive sins in our permissive culture, which is why it does not seem so bad to many, and it is also one of the most destructive to the souls as it fragments the soul, making it all but impossible to obtain a wholehearted 2nd person love relationship with God.

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

Pastor Don