



Sermon – April 15, 2018

**Verses Covered**

*Proverbs 3:31 – 35*

*John 14:5 – 6, 21 – 24*

*Matthew 5:45*

*Romans 8:26 – 28*

*James 1:2 – 4*

*2 Corinthians 12:*

We come today to the end of the third chapter of Proverbs. Which is the antidote for what we face in this world. Now according to the Bible there are three distinct eras of time. You have Adam and Eve in Genesis 1 and 2 where everything is great, there are no problems, everything's wonderful. They have daily communion with the Father. The world works well. Their relationship works well. Everything's great. You have a day that's coming when Jesus Christ will come back and make this even better than that was. We rule on thrones with Him. He engages us in a unique ministry in the kingdom that we can't possibly understand. But there is a whole, new, distinct new life here. The problem for us is we're in this timeframe. We live in a time where everything is broken. What Adam and Eve did is they caused several problems. They lost their relationship with the Father. We're made for Him so they lost their purpose for existence. Their relationship with each other was totally unhinged. When Adam looks at God and says, "The woman you gave me caused me to eat." And so they leave the garden with deep blame on each other. Then they have the individual guilt they wear where I guarantee you they're depressed, they're hurt, they're wounded. Much more difficult, even for them, for us because they remember what they had. And now they don't have it. So we live in a world that manifests all those. We have school shootings because we're angry and we're set apart from each other. We can't build homes because we're angry and we're set apart from each other. We don't know what to do in our life because we're removed from the Creator. Our purpose of which is to unite with Him and have a relationship with Him. And our life be evolved and directed from that relationship. So we have, and we're eaten with guilt and we don't know what to do with it. Hence we spend millions, billions, of dollars on two things. We spend it on psychotherapy and on entertainment. Because in both realms, we're desperately trying to fulfill what is breaking us apart inside and breaking everything else in our life.

But there is an antidote. I want you to listen to the last part of Proverbs 3. Look at verse 31, or 33. I'm sorry go to 31.

<sup>31</sup>Do not envy a man of violence. Do not choose any of his ways. <sup>32</sup>For the devious person is an abomination of the Lord; but the upright are in His confidence. <sup>33</sup>The Lord's curse is on the house of the wicked, but He blesses the dwelling of the righteous. <sup>34</sup>Toward the scorers He is scornful, but to the humble He gives favor. <sup>35</sup>The wise will inherit honor, but fools get disgrace.

So I'm in a world that's broken and I'm trying to get through it. So here's what I want. I want His blessing, His honor, and His favor in my life. That he says, Solomon does, that the basis of that, now I'm going to do my best to walk us through what scripture says today. You've got to throw out what everybody has told you about grace. So we understand what it is and what it is not. Now there is a contingency of God's blessing. There are two groups of people in the world: those that know Christ and those that do not. That's it. Those are the two groups. Now His blessing favor and honor based and live in the home of the righteous, they don't go to the home of those that are not righteous. Now what does it mean to be righteous? It means two things. Go to John 14. Now remember beginning in John 13 they are, they've had the Lord's Supper. Judas is gone to get the Sanhedrin to come and get Him. Jesus gets those 11 guys together, breaks the bread, remember this is My body broken for you, then He takes the cup and He takes the cup and He says, "This blood, this is the new covenant in my blood." So the first thing He says to them is, "I'm giving you a different covenant. Every year you've had to do the same covenant over and over and over because it doesn't work and it doesn't last. But my blood will be spilled one time. Because my blood works. And so I want you to understand this and drink this. This is my blood of a new covenant which is totally distinct." When Jesus' blood is applied to your life and it's applied to your life when the Holy Spirit comes to you and says to you that you're a sinner and you need his blood. And when you believe that and you respond to the Holy Spirit, God then takes the blood of Jesus, now listen, He washes away your sin, and He makes a declaration there that lasts eternity. He declares that you are righteous. He makes a declaration about you. Your sin's gone and He declares you to be as holy as He is. So there's a declaration that's made that's the first aspect of God's righteousness. Look in John 14, in chapter 14, look in verse 5:

<sup>5</sup>Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we don't know where You're going, how can we know the way?" <sup>6</sup>Jesus said, "I'm the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me."

Now they're sharing back and forth as they're walking from the upper room across the valley up to the Garden of Gethsemane. They're walking and sharing and Jesus is pouring all this out. So He reminds them, "Look I'm the only shot you have. The only way to the Father is through what I will do in a few moments." So right after He tells them about the blood, now He says, I'm way, the truth, and the life. Nobody gets to heaven except through me. So in other words, My righteousness declared and given to you and the forgiveness of your sin based on my blood is the basis of being righteous. Now the problem we have today is there are a number of people that take that and that's grace. I don't do anything to earn it. You can go to church all day long. You're not going to get it. You can pray all day long. You're not going to get it. You can read your Bible all day long. You can help people across the street. You can do anything you want to; that does not give it to you. The Holy Spirit speaks to you. You accept that. You believe that. And then it is given to you. You do nothing to earn that forgiveness and that declaration of holiness. There's

the grace of God. But now that that's happened, the purpose of the grace of God is to hold you, remember you're walking this way, away from God. Blood of Jesus cleanses you. He forgives you. The Holy Spirit indwells you. And now you're walking toward the Father. The grace of God starts this. But now I have a responsibility to continue to choose that. Look in verse 21 of chapter 14. He doesn't want them to misunderstand grace.

<sup>21</sup>Whoever has My commandments and keeps them

In other words, you go to a Bible study and it doesn't change your life, you don't take the truth of God and incorporate it in your life, then this doesn't apply to you. So I have a responsibility, right. Been declared righteous, I'm walking toward the Father, so now I have a responsibility to know what's true and to keep it. I keep it in the power of the Holy Spirit who has come into my life permanently because I've been forgiven. Now look at this. These are not my words, these are His.

<sup>21</sup>Whoever has My commandments and keeps them; he it is who loves me.

So love, according to Jesus, is not how you feel about Jesus. I don't know anybody that can read the gospel story about Jesus dying for us and not feel good about Him. Your love for Him is not based on what you feel. It is based on what you do with what He says. Now listen to this.

He it is who loves me, He who loves me, will be loved by my Father. I will love him, look at this, I will manifest myself to him.

Adam and Eve lost that manifestation of the Father to them, but the antidote in the blood of Jesus is that now I walk toward Jesus in obedience to the change He's brought in my life. The Father restores and manifests Himself in my life. The relationship is restored at my rebirth. But the manifestation of that relationship is based on whether or not I walk toward Jesus Christ.

Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us and not to the world?" <sup>23</sup>Jesus answered Him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; My Father will love him, We will come to him and make Our home with him. <sup>24</sup>Whoever does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word that you hear isn't Mine, but the Father's who sent Me.

So righteousness is two things. There is a declaration of righteousness that's made when I put my faith in what the Holy Spirit tells me about Jesus. But then there's an applied righteousness in my life where because of my forgiveness, I look at Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit I walk toward Him and when I step aside, I don't grieve the Holy Spirit, I don't quench Him, He pulls me back in, and I continue to walk toward Jesus Christ and as I do that, then the Father shows up in my life and that righteousness then, according to Proverbs 3, gives me His favor, His blessing, and His holiness. So I'm good then. So if that happens then I won't face what people that don't know Jesus face. Matthew 5:45 says, here it is, so let me walk you through this. It says:

<sup>45</sup>the rain falls on the just and the unjust,

So here's what it means. If you live in Copperfield and it hails in Copperfield, your house is getting hail. Don't sit in the living room and think, "Not hailing on us, baby, we love Jesus." No. No. You're going to get hail. If you have cattle and the price goes down, then if it goes down on everybody else, it's going down on you. Do not think, "Well we love Jesus, we're going to have expensive cattle." No. Your price is going to be just like everybody else's. If it rains and floods out your corn crop, your corn crop will go just like everybody else's goes. It doesn't make us any different than people that do not know Jesus. We all live inside the same world with the same problems with the same difficulties. All of us. You say, "Well then, what's the point of following Jesus?" Is it only so that when I die, I'm good and nobody else is? Well that is a good reason. But there's more to it.

I want to show you a couple things. I want you to go to the book of Romans. So you get the same hail damage, you get the same corn crop loss, you will as all of us, bury someone you love. You live long enough you're going to bury people you don't want to bury. You're going to watch people struggle through things you don't want to watch them struggle. You're going to watch people lose their ability to walk. You're going to watch people lose their ability to think. You're going to see dementia. You're going to see all these things. And these things happen to all of us; saved or not. So what does Christ do for me that makes it any better? Here's number one. Listen to Romans 8:26.

*<sup>26</sup>Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; we don't know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; <sup>27</sup>and He who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. <sup>28</sup>And we know*

Here's the old Baptist verse.

*that for those who love God all things work together for good for those who are called according to His purpose.*

So here's what I know. All the junk, I lose the corn, I have hail damage, I bury someone I love, I watch my parents go through senility, whatever horrible thing we face; something in my life, now listen, in my life as a Christian, something beneficial will occur. Why? Because the Holy Spirit in me, when I can't pray, prays on my behalf and when He prays, the Father goes to work and makes sure that whatever horrible thing I face, He's going to do something good out of that because of the prayer of the Holy Spirit from my soul. If you don't have Jesus, you don't possess the Holy Spirit, so when you go through these hard things, all they do is leave you beaten up. You don't have any guarantee of a benefit of something good coming out. Because you don't have the Holy Spirit praying for you. He prays in the lives of His children. So, number one, yeah, I'm going to have the same corn crop loss, the same mother/father going through the difficulty of dementia and senility and Alzheimer's. I'm going to have the same thing other lost people face, other people without Christ fact. But no matter how hard that is, something good will come out because the Holy Spirit prays for me when I can't.

Number two. Look at James chapter 1. Listen to this. James 1:2.

<sup>2</sup>Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, <sup>3</sup>you know the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. <sup>4</sup>And let steadfastness have its full effect so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

Now here's the second thing. When I go through these trials, they deepen me in Jesus Christ. Now listen because this is not a pleasant thought, it's just true. You can go to all the Bible studies you want. They'll give you instruction, they'll give you knowledge, but they will not deepen you in Christ. It is the difficulties you face, that other people face, that will make you mature in Jesus Christ. There is a depth in difficulty that changes who you are. And then lastly. Look at 2 Corinthians chapter 12. Now I want you to listen to what Paul writes. 2 Corinthians 12, verse 9. He has this physical malady that God won't take from him. In verse 8 he says:

<sup>8</sup>Three times I've pleaded with the Lord about this that it should leave me. <sup>9</sup>But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly in my weakness, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. <sup>10</sup>For the sake of Christ, then I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, calamities, for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Your purpose is to reflect the glory of God in your life. And the greatest way you can do that is when the Holy Spirit empowers you and He empowers you in depth when you are weak and you go through a trial and it forces you into a dependence on Christ and suddenly His power manifests itself in your life. We're going to face the same things they face with two differences. When I die, He's coming to get me. I'm not just falling into His hands. That's a distinction in the scripture. Number two, until He comes to get me He prays for me, He deepens me, and He empowers me to reflect His glory. So what we have is massively distinct from what people without Christ have. We have, according to Proverbs 3, the ability, if I have a declared righteousness and I walk toward Jesus Christ in that. God's favor and blessing pour into my home. That's the promise.

Now I want you to listen to me carefully and then I'm done. I've had to think about this so hang with me here. I always struggle when we dedicate a building. Because I don't want us to get so caught up in the building we miss Jesus. Now you're going to go in a building in a minute. It's amazing. I mean it's, it's an amazing building. It will blow you away. Children's building. Birth through fifth grade. Now I want us to go in there and you're going to see some really cool stuff. You're going to be blown away. But I want us to be sure that we're blown away, not by how cool the building is, but how cool the purpose of the building is. When we first started this, I did a deal in here, won't do it today, but I did a thing in here and I said, everybody raise their hand that were saved 65, 55, we went all the way down. Those that were saved 18 and below, if you remember 96% of this room was saved 18 and below. Because the vast majority are saved from 18 down. So this building was designed so we can reach kids at the optimum moment when they have a chance to come to Christ. Now there are different groups of children to reach. There are those of you that are in this room, you're in this room every Sunday, you have kids, we want to help you raise them and disciple them in Christ. That's one group. Second group, there's a group of children whose parents are out there, they think they ought to go to church, they've kind of given up, they have a child, they think, "You know I really need to get back in church." And we want them to have a place where their kid goes, "Man that's the coolest place I've ever seen. I want to go there." So we can offer them the gospel we talked about this morning. There are kids whose

parents are never going to darken the door of a church. They've made that decision. They're done. But they don't care if their kids go to Central Sports and they don't care if their kids go on Sunday. We want a shot at those kids. There's a fourth group of children who have no parents. There are a number of children in this town. The only food they get is when they go to school. When they come home, mom's gone, dad's not in the house, and they live by themselves for the weekend scavenging as best they can for food. We want to reach every single one of those children. So the goal in this building is not for us to be cool; have a really neat building. The goal in this building is to attract kids so that those of us that love Jesus can share with them the only hope the world has.

Let's pray.

Father, You gave us Your Son so that we have a chance to be forgiven, to be declared righteous, and to live for you. Thank You for the antidote when we die. Thank You for the antidote while we live here. Father You make the difference this morning. In Jesus Christ name.