

## GRACE TRANSMITTERS

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Transcript

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All right, good morning. How are you? You're looking at me and I'm looking at thee and no telling what you see. I am not your pastor. Pastor Thieme, Bobby Thieme, is out of town. I'm Rick Hughes and I'm visiting, filling in for our pastor. I thank you for being here today. If you're a visitor, this is Berachah Church. We don't do visitor cards or anything like this. No one's going to call on you so you're completely anonymous. You can hang in there and relax. Nobody's going to give you a membership thing and nobody's going to ask you for an offering. We are here to study the Word of God, to learn the Word of God and to apply it into our souls.

Before we do, I have just a couple of announcements to make. This announcement says if you use the Southwest Freeway and the 610 interchange, there will be a closure there all weekend and it might affect your travel to church on Sunday, so consult a news channel for a live broadcast. That's done with. Daylight Savings Time begins next Sunday, can you believe that? Next Sunday, March 14, remember to set your clocks ahead one hour so you can arrive on time for communion next Sunday. So next Sunday will be communion and also an annual business meeting of the members of Berachah Church, Sunday, 14 March. Communion will be held at 10 a.m. and the meeting will follow shortly after the break, a quorum is necessary. I listened to Colonel Thieme talk about this very thing on an audiotape just last month about people not showing up for the quorum. They didn't stick around and he was not happy about it so he challenged them to come back next week and they better show up or he would just appoint all the deacons himself. A quorum is necessary so if you're a member, stick around. This meeting will be broadcast for the telephone hookup and life-stream groups listening next Sunday. All right.

*"This I recall to mind and therefore I have confidence. It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed because His compassions never fail. They are renewed every morning, great is His faithfulness. The Lord is my portion says my soul so therefore I have confidence in Him. The Lord is good to those who trust in Him and to those who wait for Him. For we know that all things work together for good to those who love the Lord and are called according to a predetermined plan. He who spared not His own*

*Son but delivered Him up as a substitute for us all, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be the honor and glory forever and ever," Amen.*

Thank you very much. That was *Higher Ground*, amazing. You notice I'm seated, I'm having a little trouble standing. I have a few medical issues going on. The doctor told me not too long ago I have the beginning stages of Parkinson's Disease. I didn't know really what this was except my hand was shaking some. It's affected my gait, my walking a little bit but it hasn't affected my mouth. I told Bobby and he said, "You don't expect me to feel sorry for you, do you?" And I replied "No." So I'm here. I think we have a lot of interesting things to say to you.

We're going to talk about being *Grace Transmitters*. This means going from being an ordinary individual to an extraordinary individual by grace, being a grace transmitter. Colonel Thieme one time said this. He said, "God prepares His people in obscurity, no publicity, no public relation image, no fame, no success by human standards. He just raises up extraordinary individuals week by week, night by night, class after class," and so many of you fit this today. You are extraordinary individuals because you're grace transmitters. Most of us are just ordinary people. I know I was just an ordinary nut, klutz, living an unremarkable life, transformed and changed by an encounter with Jesus Christ. To go from ordinary to an opportunity to be extraordinary is a phenomenal thing and you have the opportunity to be an extraordinary individual, a grace transmitter, if you listen to what the Lord Jesus Christ has to say. This extraordinary person is someone who goes beyond the ordinary, someone who is exceptional, someone who is remarkable, someone who understands grace orientation to the 10th power and I want to talk to you about that this week.

Have you ever heard someone say, "There's nothing special about me," you ever heard this before? "There's nothing special about me, little old me." One of my friends says, "I'm just a pothole in the road to progress." That's his way to minimize his impact in his surroundings. We're so used to seeing celebrities aren't we, on television and social media? We idolize them as somebody special, sports celebrities, movie celebrities. That's not who I'm talking about. Just because they can act and perform in an athletic arena, it doesn't mean they're extraordinary individuals because it's what's inside the soul that makes you extraordinary. That's what we're going to talk about.

I was studying the life and ministry of Paul and I realized one of the most extraordinary people in the world was Paul. Paul was a grace transmitter. Listen to his last recorded words before he was put to death. He said, “*Grace be with you,*” *charis*, he was a grace transmitter. This is a grace that he taught that makes us such extraordinary individuals. This epistle, 2 Timothy, was written while he was under arrest in Roman prison for sedition. Emperor Nero had used Christians as a scapegoat. He gaslighted Christians for his mishandling of the great fire that burned half of Rome down and Paul was a target of Nero's vindictive attitude. Here's a couple of principles to start with as we get into this study.

1. If you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ and you operate by the principles of grace, extraordinary Christian individuals are targets of opportunity for satanic forces. You are a target of opportunity for satanic forces. By using your sin nature weaknesses, these forces seek to impugn the name of God and shut down your grace transmitter - to knock you off the air. I don't know if you know about our radio program that we play across America but currently, thanks to the help of a lot of great individuals, we have 98 stations that we played on this morning, 98 radio markets across America that heard *The FLOT Line* this morning. We don't want all these stations to be knocked off the air, we're trying to transmit grace through the Lord Jesus Christ. The first principle is extraordinary Christian individuals are targets of opportunity for satanic forces.

2. Extraordinary believers, mature believers, have the ability to motivate and the responsibility to encourage, but you also have the opportunity to fail on a grand scale causing massive casualties of discouragement among other believers that don't have maturity levels. That's what Satan would like to do, he would like to cause you to fail so that people that look up to you or people that think you're a unique individual will be discouraged and disillusioned. You know as well as I know, if anybody could really see what you're like, they would be disillusioned because nobody knows what you're really like except God. He's the only one that can see behind the curtain isn't He? We may put up this image like we're okay, we're really neat people, and we don't have any sin nature trends but you know you do. You hide them so no one else can see them and if we had to stand and put all of our sins on the overhead projector, we would all be embarrassed. We could sell popcorn and Cokes back there and make a lot of money watching this. We don't want you to be the cause of massive discouragement.

3. Although Paul was facing death, he wasn't preoccupied with his own circumstances and this is a trait of the personality profile of an extraordinary individual. He wasn't preoccupied with self and never complained, this was Paul. Never complained about his situation. He enjoyed his grace provisions. He was a grace transmitter.

4. This extraordinary grace-oriented person does not think like ordinary people think. There's much more doctrine circulating in his stream of consciousness. He knows those 10 problem-solving devices and he's very much aware of them and he uses them in his life every day. It's all about what he or she thinks, that's what it's about.

5. The last principle brings us to the study of how ordinary believers like you and I are turned into extraordinary weapons for God called grace transmitters in the angelic conflict. It's all about what you think. It's all about the motivation in your soul and the inspiration in your soul that sets you apart. Do you have personal love for God? This is the greatest virtue you can possess, it's your motivational virtue. *"If you love Me, you will obey Me,"* 1 John 5:3, *"and My mandates are not hard."* This is virtue, personal love for God and this is what happens when the mature believer begins to understand the plan. He develops personal love for God and this motivates him to be obedient.

This is what God is looking for in your life, this positive volition sets you apart so that you can be extraordinary, not satisfied with who you are, but extraordinary way above and beyond what you ever could have been because our Lord took a group of ordinary individuals and changed the history of the world with these people. They went from ordinary to extraordinary and how did He do it? What did the Lord do that transformed and changed these individuals? Here's where we're going to go to the Scriptures.

If we look at John 13, John 15 and John 16 you will find the first steps to this transformation. You'll find them all right there and I'll read some of them to you. The keys on this are right here, *"These things."* Now listen to what the Lord Jesus Christ said in John 15:11, *"These things I spoke unto you so that My joy might remain in you and your joy might be full."* *These things* is an antecedent from John 15:11. What does *these things* refer to? It refers all the way back to John chapter 13 going from John 13 to John 15:11 and I'm about to show you what *these things* represent. It is amazing, it is unbelievable. It is the most massive amount of Bible doctrine you could pack in a one night Bible conference. In John 16:1 He said, *"These things I spoke unto you so that you won't be offended."* In John 13:17, *"If you know these things you will be happy doing them."* What exactly is He referring to, *these things*?

These disciples had the potential to become extraordinary individuals if they listened and if they applied what they heard. You know, listening and remembering is hard. Next month I'll be speaking in a school in Greenwood, Mississippi called Pillow Academy. We will do two assemblies a day. There are 500 kids there, we'll have 250 with the junior high and 250 with the senior high. I can talk for 45 minutes to those kids and I guarantee you, they're not going to remember what I said, maybe 20% of what I said. I don't know about you here in this auditorium whether or not you listen to everything

that's said. If you go out of here and you retain 50%, that's amazing. That's why we encourage you to take notes so that you can review your notes and can go over your notes. Each one of these disciples had the potential to become extraordinary if he listened and applied what he heard.

1. *These things* are the instructions the Lord Jesus Christ gave to His disciples after the Last Supper. We're going to look at some of them.

2. *These things* refers to massive amounts of Biblical information He taught them in a one night Bible conference.

3. This information was given in a short period of time and I assume there were no tape recorders and nobody is taking shorthand. How did they remember this stuff? It's unbelievable, how in the world could they remember all of *these things* He's talking about? Well here it is.

Jesus Christ our Lord said this, "*When the Comforter who is the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, when He comes, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance what I said to you.*" This is the recall ministry of the Holy Spirit. This is how John was able to record this information. He didn't take notes, he didn't write it down, he didn't have a tablet, a pen or an iPad. He didn't have any of this but the Holy Spirit reminded him, refreshed his memory, recalled for him and this is exactly the same thing He does for you. If you come to Bible class, if you pay attention, if you take notes, when you get into a situation in your life where you need to apply the doctrine, if you have any spiritual autonomy in your life you can stand on your own two feet and not have to call the church and say, "What should I do preacher? My neighbor called me a dirty word, what should I do?" *These things*, you know what to do. You know how to handle it. We're going to see, we're going to look at some of *these things*. This was all given in a short amount of time, no one took notes. The Lord promised the disciples and you that when the Holy Spirit comes, once you're indwelt with the Holy Spirit and filled with the Holy Spirit, He will help you recall *these things*.

4. These words indicate there is a distinct recall ministry that the Holy Spirit performs when we take in doctrine. That's why Colonel Thieme used to always say, I can still hear it echo in my ears, "repetition, repetition, repetition." Yep, he said it so many times we didn't forget it. That's why you can say, "*The Word of God is alive and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword,*" you can say it is as good as I can because the Holy Spirit helps you to recall this.

5. We call it LAG. You've heard me use this term before, learn it, apply it and glorify God. Absorb the Word of God, metabolize the Word of God, and utilize the Word of God, this is your mission today. If you ever hope to move beyond being an ordinary mundane individual, if you ever hope to be an extraordinary grace transmitter of God, you must absorb, metabolize and utilize His Word. All right, here are some other principles.

1. The Lord Jesus Christ is about to teach them essential doctrines that they will need to maintain their efforts once He leaves them. If they don't understand these, they won't be able to carry out the mission.

2. I'm going to give you two terms here you may not have heard before - objective optimism and an outlook of expectancy. Without objective optimism which is an outlook of expectancy, a believer under maximum pressure can fold into a little pity party. Now what is objective optimism? It's the faith-rest drill to the 10th power. You know the faith-rest drill, it's basic Bible doctrine, problem-solving device #3. The faith-rest drill is objective optimism, not subjective pessimism, objective optimism to the 10th power. It is an outlook of expectancy from having a personal sense of destiny. If a believer doesn't have this, he can fold into a little or a big pity party.

3. The objective of what the Lord was teaching these individuals, these disciples, was to have the mindset of Christ. What is this? Occupation with Christ to the 10th power, that's problem-solving device #10. God wants you to be occupied with Christ, "*Christ in you the hope of glory.*" I don't know if you remember this or not, maybe we need to remind you, Jesus Christ lives in you. He lives inside of you. He indwells you. "*Christ in you the hope of glory,*" we'll talk about this. He's teaching them His mindset, teaching them to think like He thinks. If they get this, it guarantees internal focus on God's plan and not an external focus on the circumstances. That's what you and I have to do, we have to have an internal focus on God's plan and not an external focus on circumstances or distractions in our life.

4. What the Lord is teaching them are the very doctrines that sustained Him during His earthly trials. He's passing these doctrines on to the disciples under the concept of *these things*, John 15:11, referring back to the antecedent to, John 13.

5. He's passing on His objective outlook, the faith-rest drill to the 10th power and His confidence in the Father's plan.

Here are a few of the character traits of an extraordinary believer:

He understands essential doctrines. Let's go back to number one, rebound. I was talking to a fellow this week, last week actually, who's doing some home repairs for me, redoing my bathroom shower, and he's a Christian. He said, "I just love getting close to Jesus." I said, "You do?" "Yes brother, I love being close to Jesus." I said, "Well, could you tell me exactly the mechanics of that? How do I get close to Jesus?" So he rambled around, "Well, if you read your Bible and pray, spend time alone with God in the morning, I don't read very good but I read Obadiah." He didn't understand this. When I showed him this it changed his life. The same thing you and I learned right here from this pulpit when Colonel Thieme taught us, top circle relationship, bottom circle fellowship. I showed him how you get out of fellowship by committing personal sin, getting under control of your sin nature, and how you rebound using 1 John 1:9 to get back in fellowship when you have sinned. He took this and ran with it. It lit him up like a Christmas tree. He didn't understand the mechanics of the Christian life. He had all the zeal, all the 'want to,' but not the mechanics. Now he calls me every day and says, "What does this mean?" And his son has now gotten into listening to Bobby every day and he's growing like crazy and this is the objective, great.

You have to understand essential Bible doctrines if you're going to be an extraordinary believer, rebound, the filling of the Holy Spirit and the faith-rest drill are three of them. If you don't understand this, you're not going to go anywhere in your Christian life. That's why we have ten problem-solving devices, not just three. You need to know them. You need to write them down on a piece of paper and be able to quote them and you need to know what they mean. Understanding essential doctrine is a character trait of an extraordinary grace transmitter.

Objective optimism, that's the faith-rest drill to the 10th power. No self-pity, not allowed, you're not allowed to feel sorry for yourself because you went through some kind of winter disaster out here. I kept talking to Bobby, "Do you have any heat yet?" "No." "Have any water yet?" "No." Eighty hours and you know what, this is true, I never heard my pastor complain, not one time. He never grieved, combination of two words, not one time. He had objective optimism the whole time about it and there are people here today, some of my dear friends, that still don't have water in their house. I never heard them complain. This is objective optimism, no self-pity.

A grace transmitter must have an outlook of expectancy. That's a personal sense of destiny to the 10th power. He must have the mind of Christ, Philippians 2:5, "*Let this mind be in you that was also in Christ Jesus.*" Romans 12:3, "*Stop thinking of yourself in terms of arrogance beyond what you should think. Think in terms of humility as God*

*has assigned to each one of us a standard of thinking from His Word.*” The mind of Christ, divine viewpoint. He must have confidence in the Father's plan, that's personal love for God.

The amount of Bible doctrine given between John 13 and John 16 is staggering. If our pastor took this on as a project, I assure you it would be a three or four year project, just going through *these things*. We're going to run through them today, or some of them today, so do you have your Bible with you? Pull it out, John 13, it's in the New Testament. I've got a Bible up here that says, *Fisher of Men* on it and John 13 is on page 1145 in my Bible. John 13:2-17. You don't have to read them all but here's what we're going to talk about.

In verses 2-17 Jesus Christ teaches rebound in the terms of foot washing. *“After they had the Last Supper, the Lord disrobed, wrapped the towel around Him, poured water in the basin, knelt down and started washing the disciples' feet.”* Peter was highly offended. ‘You are never going to wash my feet. I'm not going to let the Son of God wash my feet.’ He probably had bunions, corns and all that sort of stuff you know. *“And the Lord said, ‘If I don't wash your feet, you'll have nothing to do with Me.’”* Peter misunderstood this entirely because he took it the wrong way. The Lord said, “Look, you already had a bath, you've already been saved. You just need to have your feet washed.” Washing feet was an illustration of rebound, that's what it is. He taught them rebound right off the bat in John 13:2-17. When you get home tonight, read it, study it, look it over, that's rebound. When you sin and you go to the Lord Jesus Christ and you rebound, He's washing your feet, He's cleansing you of your sin. This is what it's about.

Then in John 13:21, part of *these things*, He identified a mole in the ranks. John 13:21 He said, *“One of you will betray Me.”* Now keep in mind, they're at a table. The Lord Jesus Christ is here and there are some disciples down here and disciples down here. One of them down here said, “What did He say? What?” They weren't paying attention. They just had a big meal. They just had their feet washed. They were probably ready to go to bed, they weren't paying attention. Listen to John 13:29 when I say they weren't paying attention because the Lord Jesus Christ emphasized the need to pay attention. *“Some thought because Judas had the money bag that Jesus was telling him to go buy merchandise for the feast or give something to the poor.”* That's not what He said, that's what they thought He said. They weren't paying attention. *“One of you will betray Me.”* There is a mole in the ranks.

Then He taught in John 13:14, back it up just a little bit, *“If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you ought also to wash one another's feet.”* We know this as the royal law. This is forgiveness of each other. If He can forgive us of our sins, we are

to forgive each other for sins. I'm not to hold a grudge against you. I'm not to get angry at you. I'm not to get bitter at you, I'm not to get vindictive at you. If you do something wrong to me, I am to forgive you. *"If I, your Lord and Master, wash your feet, you are to wash one another's feet."* Now they never practiced foot washing again after this.

There are a few churches that still do this today. I have spoken in hundreds of churches, but nobody's ever offered to wash my size 13s yet and I wouldn't let them if they offered to do this. And nobody's offered to handle any snakes where I've been either or I'd make out a back door. A guy said, "They don't have a back door." I said, "Where do they want it made?" Yeah, you have to be able to forgive one another. This is what the Lord was teaching.

In John 13:34, another one of *these things* that He taught was impersonal love. This is the forgiving one another. Listen to what I'm about to read to you, John 13:34-35, *"A new mandate I give to you, that you love one another just as I loved you. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you love one another."* That's the daily dynamics of virtue love in the believer's life. I have been in a lot of churches where there were a lot of battles, a lot of power struggles, a lot of Deacon A that didn't like Deacon B and Deacon C didn't like Deacon F and all that stuff. This wasn't love, it was all bitterness and hatred. People say, "If that's a Christian, I don't want anything to do with this." The unique thing about you is you have virtue love. You understand personal love for God, impersonal love for each other, and these are problem-solving devices you must know and you must understand.

Jesus Christ went on to teach genuine humility. Remember this is all the same night now. Are you beginning to see how much time Bobby could spend just teaching this one point? He taught genuine humility in John 13:36-38. *"Peter said, 'Lord where are You about to go?' Jesus said, 'Where I'm going, you can't go for now but you will follow Me later.' Peter said, 'Wait a minute, why can't I follow You right now? I'll lay down my life for You. I'm not afraid to die.' The Lord said, 'Really? Let Me tell you this. Verily, verily, I say unto you [truly, truly] before the rooster crows in the morning, you will deny Me three times.'" Peter had no genuine humility. You have to recognize something, you have the potential to fail on a massive scale. An extraordinary believer, a grace transmitter can fail on a massive scale. I mean this failure made the Bible. This man's sin made the Bible. Now, I want you to know in Luke 22:61, the Lord looked at Peter with compassion. The Lord never threw him under the bus. He said, *"Go tell them and Peter that I'm alive."* Peter thought he was not even a disciple anymore. He went back to the boat, went back to fishing and thought, "It's over with, I'm done, I denied the Lord." There were probably a few times in your life you should have spoken up and you didn't speak up either. You have to have some genuine humility. If you think that you're the apple of God's eye, you need take another look.*

He taught belief, this is really essential here, this is a salvation precedence, He taught these disciples that belief in God was not enough. Did you hear me? If you're here today as a visitor and you think you're going to heaven because you believe in God that's not enough. Here is what Jesus said in John 14:1, *"Let not your hearts be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in Me."* You can't go to heaven just by believing in God. There are a lot of people that went to the synagogue that believed in God but they didn't believe that Jesus is the anointed Son of God. Unless you believe that Jesus Christ is the anointed Son of God, you'll never go to heaven. Just because you believe in God, that's not enough. *"He that believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life, and he that believeth not, the wrath of God abides on him already. This is the will of God, that you believe in Me, whom He has sent,"* Jesus said. What did Paul tell the Roman jailer? *"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved."* So the salvation precedence is faith alone in Christ alone, not just to believe in God.

Then He taught eternal security. Here we go again, this is in John 14:2-3. *"In My Father's house are many dwelling places. If it were not so, I would have told you. I'm going to go and prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I'll come again and receive you to Myself, so that where I am you will be also. [So don't worry, I'm coming back and will receive you to Myself.]"* You're not going to lose your salvation. Once you put your faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross, you're not going to go to hell. You may do some hellish things but you're going to heaven because all of your sin was dumped on Him on the cross. *"He who knew no sin was made sin for us."* Jesus Christ, the anointed Son of God, paid for all of our sin. Sins are not even the issue today. The issue is, *"What think ye of Christ?"*

When you come to the cross and you make a decision to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, His righteousness is attributed to your account. Your sins were imputed to Him and judged on the cross and His righteousness was then imputed to you, a real imputation. This was a judicial imputation, this is real. God is absolutely righteous. Here's what the Bible says, *"He that knew no sin was made sin for us so that we could be made the righteousness of God through [or by means of] Him."* When you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ you're given plus R. God has plus R. Now the grace pipeline opens up and God imputes to you at least 40 wonderful things the moment you believe in Christ. You have eternal security. You're never going to lose it, you've got to remember this. It's not going to be taken away from you. You're not going to go to hell because you fornicated. You're not going to go to hell because you cheated on your taxes. You may get a lot of discipline. You may move into reversionism and you may wish you were dead because your life has become so miserable because you won't admit your sin and won't confess your sin, but you're not going to lose your salvation.

What else did He teach them? Well, He taught them the only path to God is through Him, John 14:6, here it is again. *“I am the way, I am the truth, I am the life. No man comes to God but by Me.”* That's why I said you can't go to heaven by just believing in God. You can't even get to God until you go through the Lord Jesus Christ.

He even taught them about the hypostatic union, how's that? John 14:7, *“If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also and from henceforth you shall know Him and you have seen Him.”* What did He just say? “I'm God,” that's what He just said. “You see Me, you see God. I am God.” Undiminished deity, true humanity, one body forever, hypostatic union, the Lord Jesus Christ, theanthropic unity, there He is, the Lord Jesus Christ, the God-man, that's what He taught them. Do you see all this massive doctrine coming out now? “Boom, boom, boom” and they're sitting there at the table “wham, wham, wham.” “Write that down.” “I don't have time to write it down, it's coming too quickly.”

Jesus Christ taught them that they would have a great impact, John 14:12. This is before we get to John 15:11, *these things*. I'm referring back to *these things*. John 14:12, *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believes in Me, the works that I do, he shall do also and greater than these because I go to My Father.”* Greater, what? Greater than these, that's their impact. He taught them they would have a greater impact than He had. Not that they could do what He did, that was not the case, but the impact. He walked around on foot, you drive around in race cars. You can cover the city of Houston in one day. He could never have covered the city of Houston in one day.

He taught them something else, John 14:13, the power of prayer. We could do the whole doctrine of prayer. *“Whatever you shall ask in My name, that will I do so the Father would be glorified in the Son.”* There is the ministry of prayer. There is intercessory prayer, prayer of petition, prayer of adoration, it's all right there. Do you see how much He's giving them? Boom, boom, boom.

He challenged them to be obedient based on personal love, John 14:15, *“If you love Me, keep My commandments.”* This is obedience based on virtue love. In John 14:16 He taught them the coming ministry of the Holy Spirit. John 14:16-17, *“And I will pray for you to the Father and He will give you another One to comfort you, which is the Holy Spirit so that He may be with you forever; even the Spirit of truth whom the world [the unbeliever] cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither do they know Him; but you know Him because He dwells in you and will be with you.”* The way the Lord said it here is, *“He dwells with you and shall be in you.”* Prior to this time there was no indwelling of the Holy Spirit for the disciples. You get it, Ephesians 1:13, when you get saved. You get indwelt by the Holy Spirit and you get sealed by the Holy Spirit until the

day of redemption. You're filled with the Holy Spirit when you get saved. When you sin, you quench and you grieve the Holy Spirit. When you rebound, the filling of the Holy Spirit picks back up again. The disciples didn't have any of this. The Holy Spirit dwells in you. He walks along beside you, that's what He's trying to tell them. *These things* you're doing, *these things* you're remembering, the Holy Spirit is here to assist you but He is not in you yet, it hasn't happened yet. This was a reference to the Pentecost.

With the Holy Spirit's indwelling there is a guarantee there will never be a separation between you and God. *"He seals you until the day of redemption"* (Ephesians 1:13). Have you ever canned any jelly at home or things like this, you know the old way? They used to put paraffin wax on top of it and it sealed until you used it. The Holy Spirit seals you until the Lord Jesus Christ returns to call us home, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, at the Exit Resurrection. With the indwelling of the Holy Spirit there is a guarantee there will never be a separation. We are instructed not to grieve the Holy Spirit and not to quench the Holy Spirit, Ephesians 4:30 and 1 Thessalonians 5:19. What does this? Remember when you sin, you get out of fellowship and under the control of your sin nature, you grieve the Holy Spirit and you quench the Holy Spirit.

Here's something else Paul said in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. *"What? You don't know that your body is the temple of God, the Holy Spirit who dwells in you?"* Our pastor wrote his graduate thesis on the Shekinah Glory. The Shekinah Glory lives in you, Christ in you. The Holy Spirit lives in you. Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Have you ever thought about this? Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. He indwells us. He fills us. He restrains our sin nature. He refreshes our lives with the fruit of the Spirit. He equips us for service with our spiritual gifts. This is how important the ministry of the Holy Spirit is. Can you imagine how big a study we could do on this? I promise you I could teach for a month on this right there. Jesus Christ did this all in one night, all in just a few hours.

Then He taught them about the Second Advent in John 14:18, *"I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you."* This was the Resurrection appearance to encourage them, as well as the Second Advent. Listen, the Lord Jesus Christ has not abandoned you, He lives in you. If you don't remember anything else today, when you leave this auditorium remember, Christ lives in you. Where do I get this from? 2 Corinthians 13:5, *"Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not know that Jesus Christ is in you?"* Romans 8:10, *"And if Christ is in you then the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."* And Colossians 1:27, *"Christ in you the hope of glory,"* that's the mystery doctrine of the Church. You might walk away from the Lord Jesus Christ, He will never walk away from you.

If you're a Christian and you get out of fellowship with God because of your sin nature trends, what you're doing is you're pushing Christ out of your life in essence. That's why Revelation 3:20 says, *"I stand at the door and knock. If any man will hear My voice and open the door, I will come back in and dine with him and fellowship with him."* Once you quench and grieve the Holy Spirit, you shut down the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ.

How long has it been since you fellowshiped with the Lord? Communion and Bible class are the way we spend time with Him. Prayer is how we utilize our connection with Him. Recall is how we remember what we've learned about Him. Application is how we express our devotion to Him. When you're here for Bible class or here for communion as next Sunday when Bobby gives communion, you are fellowshiping with the Lord.

Then Jesus Christ taught them the recall ministry of the Holy Spirit, John 14:25-26, *"These things I have spoken while I'm still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit which the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I said to you."* This is recall, and as I said, nobody was taking notes.

He taught them how to have internal peace, John 14:27, *"Peace I leave with you [the fruit of the Holy Spirit], peace I give to you; but not as the world gives to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."*

Christ taught them in John 14:30-31 that Satan was coming directly to get Him. *"I will no longer talk much with you for the ruler of this world [Satan] is coming. He has no claim on Me, but I do as the Father has commanded Me, so the world may know that I love the Father. So rise up, let's go from here."* "It's time to move out, I'm through teaching you."

He taught them that they must bear fruit by means of occupation with Christ, John 15:4. We haven't arrived at John 15:11 yet. *"Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abides in the vine, no man can unless you abide in Me."* He also taught them how to glorify God to the maximum, John 15:8, *"In this My Father is glorified, if you bear much fruit."*

Then after He said *these things*, once they accumulated this information, here's what He said, "Get Ready." John 16:2, *"They will put you out of the synagogues, yet the time will come that they will kill you and they will think they're doing God a favor."* He said there's a lot more to teach you but you can't handle it, John 16:12, *"I have many more things to say to you, but you're not ready to hear them yet."* Be patient. This is something that a lot of Christians have a problem with. They get antsy, they want

answers. I remember Colonel Thieme saying, “Just show up and be quiet and I’ll answer the question eventually.” It doesn’t have to be answered right now. You will learn, it’ll come, it’ll be there, you’ll get it. “What about this, Rick? And here, what about that?” One question will lead to another question, to another, endless questions. Just be quiet, come to Bible class, take in doctrine, apply it in your life, your questions will be answered but some things you can’t handle yet. That’s why you don’t have the answer for it yet, you’re not ready.

These ordinary individuals were going to be capable of doing some extraordinary things by means of understanding and using *these things*. Can you see what I’m talking about here? Can you see the massive amount of information He gave them in this short three or four hour Bible class? How can they comprehend this? How could they remember all of this? How could they grasp all of this? Colonel Thieme once said, “The ordinary believer in the ranks may be out of sight as far as the Christian community is concerned, but he is never out of God’s sight.” This is why you don’t need a portfolio, you don’t need to be publicized in the paper. I remember a friend of mine who was a Christian businessman and they put his picture on the front page of the “Birmingham News” kneeling in his office, behind his chair, praying, talking about what a great Christian he was. I cannot even begin to tell you the persecution he endured in the next year. He just put a target on his back. You don’t need a target on your back. You may be out of sight as far as the community is concerned but you’re never out of God’s sight.

What distinguishes the ordinary believer from the extraordinary grace transmitter? It’s what’s in his soul, *these things*. Now a lot of people say, “That’s too much information, my gosh, how am I suppose to learn all this information?” Proverbs 1:22, “*How long you simple ones will you love simplicity?*” When I first heard Colonel Thieme, I had to buy a dictionary. “What’s he talking about, epistemological rehabilitation, what is that? What is grace orientation? What? How do I spell that word? What is this? What is that?” Not only did he teach me how to study the Bible and read the Bible and learn the Bible, he even taught me how to order good food, that was unbelievable. The Christian life is not simplistic. You have to learn the protocol plan of God.

You have to understand just taking communion is not simple, it’s a test. It’s a test of your remembrance, what do you remember? When you put that piece of bread in your mouth next Sunday, what do you remember? Do you remember virgin birth, impeccability, King of kings and Lord of lords, hypostatic union and deityship? Do you remember these doctrines? Because that’s what you’re suppose to be reflecting on when you put that bread in your mouth. You should run all five of these major doctrines through your mind as you contemplate the Lord Jesus Christ in you.

When the little cup is passed, what do you remember? Sanctification, imputation, justification, all of these doctrines of what that cup represents, the blood of Christ, spiritual death on the cross for you. If you can't recall these doctrines, you're just going through a ritual and there's no reality to it. It is not a simple thing.

You must learn the Word of God. You must learn the protocol plan of God and how to operate under the filling of the Holy Spirit and glorify God. That's why we say learn it, apply it, and then you can glorify God. What am I learning? I'm learning the mind of Christ, the mindset of Christ, how He lived so that I can replicate His life. A mature believer is not a simpleton, he's not foolish, he's not gullible, but he does not inherit these extraordinary qualities I'm talking about. They have to acquire them. There is no high-end of the gene pool in the Christian life. I mean, I know some people who lived to be 90, 95, and a friend of mine just celebrated his hundredth birthday. He's still driving, getting around, he's from the high-end of the gene pool. There is no high-end of the gene pool in the Christian life. Many great men of God have had simpleton children.

The fact that Bobby can stand up here and teach us Bible doctrine is not related to the fact that his father was a genius. It's related to the fact that he loves God and loves God's Word. He studied and learned it and applied it into his life. It's not about what he inherited from his father. It's what's in his soul. Over the years, many great men of God have had simpleton children. Adam had Cain. Noah had Ham. Abraham had Ishmael. Isaac had Esau. Jacob had his murderous sons who sold Joseph to the Midianites. David had Absalom and Amnon. Here's one for you, Billy Sunday, a great famous evangelist, the most famous, most successful evangelist in the early 1900s. A flamboyant professional baseball player who met Christ at the Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago and within a few years he had formed a very successful crusade team which captured media attention all over the country. He's remembered as a colorful preacher who not only led multitudes to Christ way before Billy Graham but he would be considered a success by almost any standard. But listen, Billy Sunday lamented, "The greatest tragedy of my life is although I've led thousands to Christ, my own sons are not saved." Indeed his sons mocked their father's ministry and were drunks with horrible family lives, one of whom took his life by suicide. You don't inherit extraordinary capabilities. You learn them. Without positive volition, you're never going to get there.

Extraordinary parents do not guarantee extraordinary children since each child has free will and free volition and this is the difference between winners and losers. We'll see this in Proverbs 2:10-11 and we'll quit with this because I've got a lot to say. *"When wisdom enters your heart and knowledge becomes pleasant to your soul, then [and only then] discretion will preserve you and understanding will keep you."* This is

what makes a winner, “*When wisdom enters your heart and knowledge becomes pleasant to your soul.*” What do you like? Do you like Twinkies or Butterfingers? Do you like Snickers Bars and think I wish I had a Snickers bar?” Are you like this with Bible doctrine? Is Bible doctrine that appealing to you, that pleasant to you that you want to get up in the morning and study the Word of God? That you don’t want to go to bed at night without listening to the teaching of the Word of God? Is it pleasant to your soul? Then and only then discretion will preserve you and understanding will keep you. That's why no ordinary believer can become extraordinary unless they have a hunger for the Word of God.

Well, there’s a lot more to say. Wednesday night I’m going to light into you ladies, so be prepared. Wear your hip waders, it’s coming. You're going to see some amazing things about how ladies can be extraordinary grace transmitters. Then on Thursday night, we’ll light into the men. That will take twice as much time, I assure you. Okay, why don’t you join me in prayer?

If you're here today and you've never trusted Christ, we want to make sure that you understand believing in God is not enough. You’re not going to go to heaven just because you believe God exists. It’s only through the finished work of Christ on the cross that you could even have eternal life. You can express your faith by simply calling on the name of the Lord. The Bible does say, “*Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved,*” and in a silent prayer, you can tell God the Father you are believing in Jesus Christ. Through your act of faith let Him know this and this will be the time of your salvation. Sometimes people don't know what to say. Just say, “Father, I know I'm a sinner. I believe Christ died for me. I'm willing to accept Him as my Savior.” It could not be more simple than this. “I know I'm a sinner. I believe Christ died for me. I'm willing to accept Him as my Savior.” This is the moment you get saved. You pray this prayer, you won't feel anything. Your seat won't vibrate I promise you. We’re not going to ask you to join up or fess up but you’ll walk out of this church different than you came in here. You’ll walk out of here born-again. You’ll walk out of here a new person in Christ because you put your faith in Christ alone.

Thank You for this time that we get to visit, Father. Thank You for Your Word that enlightens us. Thank You for helping us understand *these things* and what they refer to. May we be challenged by this We ask it in Christ's name, Amen.

Second Class – March 10, 2021

Just a couple of quick reminders before we start Bible class tonight. Daylight Savings Time begins next Sunday, 14 March. I wish it would stay that way all the time. I hate this going back and forth. I don't like it when it's dark at 4 o'clock, do you? No, so please remember to set your clocks ahead one hour so you can arrive in time for communion Sunday morning. Bobby will be back. We'll have a communion service along with an annual business meeting of the members of Berachah Church. That's Sunday, 14 March, communion will be held at 10 o'clock. The meeting will follow after a short break and it is necessary to have a quorum so please stick around for this meeting if you will.

*“The Word of God is alive and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit and the joints and the marrow and is a critic of thoughts and intents of the heart. All Scripture is God-breathed and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness, that the man of God might be mature, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.”* Ephesians 1:17-20, *“So that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation through the knowledge of Him. With the result that the eyes of your understanding will be enlightened and you will know what is the hope of His calling and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us who believe, according to the working of the mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in heavenly places.”*

We have a lot to cover tonight and we need to get started but before we do, let's take a moment to rebound if necessary. Remember this, it is possible you're in the right place, but in the wrong way, this is the protocol plan of God. So if you've made a decision to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, you're in this relationship and it will never change. He said, *“I will never leave you, I will never forsake you,”* but the bottom circle can change and that's your fellowship with God in time. This fellowship with God in time can be broken by sin and this sin puts you under control of your sin nature. This sin can be a mental attitude sin, sin of the tongue or an overt sin. Whatever it is, once you get under control of this sin nature, you may be in the right place but you are in the wrong way because you've quenched and grieved the Holy Spirit and He can't do His job. It's always important before we begin Bible study that you use the rebound technique if you need to. 1 John 1:9, *“If we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and purify us from all wrongdoing.”* So let's have a moment of silent prayer

and we'll jump right into this with both feet, okay? Let's pray. We are grateful Father to have the privilege to fellowship together tonight. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will challenge us with what we'll be looking at. We ask it in Christ's name. Amen.

We started this study Sunday morning talking about grace transmitters, how you can be a grace transmitter or how God takes an ordinary person and turns this person into an extraordinary individual called a grace transmitter. How does an ordinary believer become an extraordinary servant of God? Let's start with this tonight, Hosea 14:9, a key verse. *"Whoever is wise [we'll look at this] let him understand these things."* Oh-oh, didn't we spend time with *these things* Sunday morning when the Lord Jesus Christ said in John 15:11, *"I told you these things so that your joy might be full?"* What are *these things* referred to here in Hosea 14:9? *"Whoever is wise, let him understand these things; whoever is discerning, let him know them."* Here's what he's referring to. Beginning in Hosea chapter 1 he said, *"Israel is an empty vine"* and *"Their heart is divided."* In chapter 14 Hosea said, *"Israel has fallen by its iniquity,"* the fifth cycle of discipline is coming. They are urged to rebound on a national scale. They are to recognize that their safety is not in a coalition with Assyria. They are to recognize that God's grace and mercy are available, verses 4-8. But they will be destroyed, Hosea 4:6, *"because of lack of knowledge."* These are the *these things* Hosea is talking about.

Here's what the wise and discerning believer must understand. He must understand the second half of this verse, *"For the ways of the Lord are right [Hosea 14:9b] and the righteous will walk in them and the wrongdoers will stumble in them."* *"The ways of the Lord are right,"* that's His eternal decrees. *"And the righteous,"* that's those who have capacity righteousness. They *"will walk in them"* they will be obedient. *"Wrongdoers will stumble,"* negative volition, disobedient, and *"they will be destroyed"* by their own bad, negative decisions.

I want to give you now some traits of extraordinary grace transmitters, both men and women, before we get to the women tonight. Let's get a few principles on these traits. Let's see if you line up with these in your life.

1. An extraordinary believer, a grace transmitter, will associate with other believers who have Biblical wisdom. You must associate with other believers who have Biblical wisdom. Proverbs 13:10, *"He that walks with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed."* Right away we understand if you're going to have any opportunity to be a grace transmitter you can't hang around with a fool. A fool is a person with negative volition who rejects the plan of God.

2. If you're going to be a grace transmitter you have to come to understand exactly what God expects from you. Proverbs 3:35 says, "*The wise.*" When we're talking about wise, what I'm talking about here is a person who has insight, a person who has discernment, and a person who has understanding. I know you can't read this too good but anyway, you see what I'm doing. A wise person has insight, discernment and understanding. So Proverbs 3:35, "*The wise person shall inherit glory but shame shall be the promotion of a fool.*" Now we've determined that fools will be destroyed and that fools will have shame in their life and this is nothing short of embarrassment, embarrassment for being such a loser.

3. The grace transmitter has positive volition and stays filled with the Holy Spirit. He doesn't walk like the Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind as Paul warned about this. You know *mataiotes* and that's the vacuum in the soul and the vacuum in the soul is the unbeliever that sucks in human viewpoint thinking. Here's the concept, if the pressure on the inside is not as great as the pressure on the outside, you'll be crushed. Years ago the US Navy had a submarine and it went real deep and it imploded. It was crushed from the depths. What God has designed you to do is put within your mind Bible doctrine so that the pressure on the inside can stand up to the pressure on the outside. The *mataiotes*, if there's a vacuum going on here, there's nothing on the inside to stop it. It's an empty chamber, there is nothing to equalize the pressure. If you're going to be this grace transmitter, you can't live like Gentiles live in the empty mind. You have to put something in your mind and the Bible says, "*Let this mind be in you that was also in Christ Jesus*" (Philippians 2:5).

4. Divine D.E.S.I.D.E.R.A.T.U.M., the divine desideratum, you say, "What is this?" The wise believer, the grace transmitter, will understand the divine desideratum which is God's policy, God's procedure, and God's protocol plan. This is what you must understand, so here it is.

God's policy is always grace - saving grace, living grace, dying grace, surpassing grace - and you must be a grace transmitter. You have to, that's your message. The first grace message you have is, "*Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.*" You can't work for it, you can't earn it, it's a free gift, "*For by grace are ye saved through faith, it's a gift of God.*" A grace transmitter transmits God's policy of grace.

God's procedure under the divine desideratum requires faith. You can't live the Christian life without operating under the faith-rest drill. Hebrews 11:6 says, "*Without faith it is impossible to please God,*" impossible. So you must understand and know and utilize the faith-rest drill. God's protocol demands order and the right thing has to be done in the right way. So the divine desideratum includes God's policy of grace,

God's procedure of faith, and God's protocol plan meaning a right thing must be done in the right way. Are you with me? Okay, here we go.

The advancing believer, assuming that's you, must never focus his attention on the temporal things of life, don't ever do this. When you do this, you have delusions of grandeur, not illusions, delusions of grandeur and this means you have a false belief about your own greatness. The Bible says if you're a believer, you must not focus your attention on temporal things. There's a rule of order in the time continuum, do you want to hear what it is? 2 Corinthians 4:18, "*While we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things which are not seen; [Here it is] for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal.*" In order to live like that you must walk by faith. You don't always know exactly what the outcome is going to be but if you're walking by faith, you're focusing by faith, you're not looking at the temporal.

You're looking at the eternal and that's the rule of order of the divine desideratum. You must live like this. You cannot have a delusion of grandeur. The extraordinary believer, the grace transmitter is going to follow precisely correct procedure during this phase of his eternal existence and you do know you're already in your eternal status, you already know this. The minute you believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, your eternal life picked up right there and people that haven't believed in Christ, they are in an eternal status too, in the wrong way. John 3:18, "*He that believes in Him is not condemned and he that believes not is condemned already.*" Already, not at the Great White Throne of Judgment, he's already condemned because he has not believed in the name of the uniquely born Son of God. You must understand you're already in your eternal status the moment you make a decision to believe in Jesus Christ.

It's critical that you understand the God you worship or else you're going to wind up doing right things in the wrong way. That's why Hosea said these words that we looked at. According to Hosea 14:9, "*Whoever is wise [insight, discernment, understanding] let him do these things.*" Wise, the Hebrew word *chakam*, and it's a descriptive adjective meaning prudent or intelligent, capable of determining something. Understand is the Hebrew word *bean* and we pronounce it bean and it means to comprehend or discern or have great discernment. "*Whoever is wise, let him understand these things.*" A modified expanded translation, "Whoever's intelligent, let them comprehend the ways of the Lord." Rick Hughes' translation, "Whoever has half a brain, it's not hard to understand these things."

How do you understand *these things*? 2 Timothy 2:15, "*Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.*" Wise and understanding is important for you. That's the divine

advantage we have at Berachah Church. We have a well-qualified pastor, Bobby, that understands and he's wise and his messages to us have always been "*The ways of the Lord are right, and the righteous will walk in them*" Hosea 14:9. This verse reflects the attitude of the grace-oriented believer, "*The ways of the Lord are right and the righteous will walk in them.*" This is the attitude of the grace oriented believer. Seated in this congregation, I'm looking at you, you're looking at me. I've got an eye on you, you've got an eye on me, we're both looking cockeyed. Seated in this congregation are many faithful believers, grace transmitters.

You have imputed righteousness and you know what this means. The moment you came to the cross, the righteousness of Christ is imputed to you and this means that you can have a relationship with God who has plus R. God the Father's judicial imputation of your sin to Christ and a real imputation of His righteousness to you when you believe in Christ.

People that have capacity righteousness from imputed righteousness have moved from being an ordinary believer to an extraordinary believer. No fanfare, no special pin, nobody's going to be back there passing out pins. "Oh, you've been a faithful person. You've attended Berachah Church, you haven't missed a day in the last 20 years so we're going to give you a pin for 20 year attendance." We don't do this, but you have performed extraordinary service to your church, to your nation, and to your family.

Your spiritual gift, you the extraordinary believer, the grace transmitter, your spiritual gift makes it possible for this church to reflect Christ to this city, to this nation, and I'm talking about this church in its various locations, not just here in Houston, in various locations. The body of Christ is made up of extraordinary men and women who serve and demonstrate faithfulness in their lives. I have been in the ministry since 1969 and I have never seen a church with more extraordinary individuals than this church, this congregation, wherever it's located. And this is what's really amazing, when one of us graduates to heaven, another one is there to step in and take up the slack.

Now here we go girls, are you ready? Extraordinary ladies, Proverbs 31, this is an acrostic poem illustrating an extraordinary woman called a woman of virtue. We might call her extraordinary. Bobby told us about how this is written in Hebrew parallelism. Proverbs 31:10 says, "*Who can find a virtuous woman?*" The Hebrew word means a woman of force. Who is a woman of force? She is a spiritually mature believer. It's referring to a woman of great inner strength. Proverbs 12:4, "*A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband [never a liability].*" A virtuous woman is a spiritually mature female married to a man giving him blessing by association in her life. Many, many times I have seen ladies that are mature believers and leave their husbands way far

behind. This doesn't mean they can't have a successful marriage but it means they don't have an equal spiritual life and that's a sad state of affairs. What do you have to talk about if you can't talk about this? Talk about your children, talk about your house, talk about your problems, but no fellowship around the Word of God is a sad state of affairs for a man and wife.

Proverbs 31:10 says when you have this sort of woman that her price is amazing, *"Much more valuable than rubies."* Proverbs 8:11, *"For wisdom is greater than rubies,"* and this suggests that a woman with great insight, a woman with great discernment is the product of Biblical wisdom in her soul. But there's a warning, the warning is Proverbs 31:30. *"Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised."* *Fears the Lord*, the Hebrew word *yara*. This means that she has great respect and awe for God, so here are some principles.

In the Bible there are a lot of extraordinary women of God and their greatness was not based on their exterior beauty or on materialistic things. All of these are totally useless and meaningless unless she has inner beauty of virtue and inner happiness based on Biblical wisdom that gives her soul stability. If she has this, she has contentment and here's the secret to life. If you have contentment, it's called capacity. Consider a cup, the more content you are, the more God can pour into your cup and your cup can overflow. If you're not content, you'll never be satisfied so whatever He gives you, you'll want more, you'll want more, you'll want more. You'll be a manipulator, nothing worse than being a spiritual manipulator, trying to beg God for more, more, more.

Around these fishermen that I'm around sometimes, these professional tournament fisherman, you ought to hear them, it's amazing. "If God will just let me win this tournament, I'll give 10% of all my winnings," and so when they get a big fish, I hear them go, "Thank you Jesus." You know they don't say "Thank you Jesus" when the fish gets away. Only "Thank you Jesus" when the dollar signs go up "cha-ching, cha-ching." The more fish they have, the more money they win. You don't bargain with God to win a bass tournament. You don't bargain with God to make your life happy. We are not basing happiness on materialistic things. Inner happiness is based on Biblical contentment and capacity for life so the more contentment you have, the more capacity you have where God can pour on you more and more and more, and it won't distract you or destroy you. If you don't have contentment, you can get destroyed real quick with things you don't need to have, all right?

Many years ago Colonel Thieme published a book called "Careless Women." I don't know if you have it, I do, I saved it. It was a long time ago when he wrote "Careless Women." In this book he said, "The Word of God is the only true authentic textbook on

a lady.” If an ordinary Christian woman ever hopes to become an extraordinary lady she has to put first things first. Without Biblical wisdom, she may possess all the trappings of luxury, beauty, and still be one miserable, empty person. Why? An empty soul. If the soul is empty then the person is going to be miserable for sure.

When a man finds this sort of woman then he's found an amazing woman. If he can find an ordinary woman functioning under God's extraordinary plan, then he's set for happiness and comfort by means of the Holy Spirit. If a man finds this type of extraordinary Christian lady, he finds a dedicated trusted friend and perhaps even a mate for life. Here's an enigma about this, weak men are frightened by strong women who have virtue because they feel inferior due to their inordinate competition. I'm not talking about some Christian actor. You know, I've been around a lot of these female Christian actors, we call them Christian caricatures. They say the right things, they act the right way, but they live as they please. That's not what I'm talking about. I'm going to give you seven traits of extraordinary women in the Bible. Write them down.

1. Rahab the harlot of Jericho lived in a mighty city called Jericho. A lot of people have heard about the battle of Jericho, “Joshua fought at the battle of Jericho,” remember that song? Do you know how many times those Jews marched around the walls of Jericho? Some people say seven times. No, once a day for six days, seven times on the seventh day. By that time everybody was selling popcorn and peanuts and laughing at them. But there was a woman in that town name Rahab and Joshua had sent in some spies to check it out, find out what was in this land. This lady hid these two spies from the king's men at the risk of her life. She was a woman of courage. So the first trait of an extraordinary woman in the Bible is courage. Rahab hid two of Joshua's men from the king after the king got word that they were in town, Joshua 2:1-2. The king knew they had been in her quarters, so in verse 3 he commanded her to produce them and she did not. She hid them, verse 4, and she cut a deal with these two spies to spare her family once the Jews attacked. Do you know why she did this? Because she was a believer. In chapter 2 verse 11, she said, *“The Lord your God is in heaven and above and on earth beneath”* and *“I believe in the Lord your God. That's why I'm willing to help you.”* She was a woman of courage. She laid her life on the line to save those two spies.

2. Next we want to look at is a woman named Ruth in the Bible. She was a woman of virtue who followed her mother-in-law Naomi back to Israel from Moab. Naomi had done something stupid. She'd gone to Moab, that's the last place in the world she belonged and when things died out, kids died and she had to go back to Israel, then her daughter-in-law Ruth followed her back to Israel. Ruth was a woman of commitment. Another C word, commitment. Here's what Ruth said, listen to what

she said to Naomi, *“Don't ask me to leave you because where you go I will go and where you stay I will stay and your people shall be my people and your God will be my God.”* That's a total commitment. If you can't make a total commitment to the plan of God in your life, you're never going to be an extraordinary female. It demands this total commitment by you.

3. Another characteristic of an extraordinary woman is shown by Esther, a woman of influence who had tremendous character. Character, another C word, character. Why? Well you know she had married the king and Haman who had set up a plot to kill all the Jews and she had to tell the king she was a Jew. This is what her Uncle Mordecai said, *“If you keep silent at this time, then liberation and rescue will come up for the Jews from another place and you and your father's house will perish and who knows whether you've not obtained royalty for such a time as this.”* See, she had married King Ahasuerus and she had to speak up. She had to let him know, she had to make a commitment. There will be times in your life as a mature lady, who as a grace transmitter, you must make a commitment to stand for truth. It is going to come, especially the way this nation's going today. It's going to come in the future and it's going to come pretty soon. You're going to have to make a commitment to stand for truth. You can't hide anymore. *“Are you a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ?” “Yes I am.”* Who knows what's going to happen from there? She was a woman of character. Esther was a woman of character, tremendous character.

Rahab was a woman of courage, Ruth a woman of commitment and Esther a woman of character.

4. Now Mary Magdalene was a woman of concern, extremely loyal to our Lord. Did you know in John 20:1-2 that she was the first one to see the resurrected Christ? She was the first to the gravesite, she had such a concern about what had happened to the Lord. She went to the gravesite and He wasn't there and she took off running to tell Peter, *“The body's been taken. Somebody's moved the body, it's not there anymore.”* Mark 16:9, she was the first person that Jesus Christ appeared to after the resurrection. That's how important she was and she was a woman of great concern.

5. Then Mary of Bethany, the sister of Martha, was cognizant of her need for Bible doctrine over the need for food. In Luke 10:38-42 she had her priorities straight. She wouldn't help her sister fix a meal so the Lord Jesus Christ said in Luke 10:42, *“One thing is needful and Mary has chosen the good part which shall not be taken away.”* Martha said, *“Tell her to get in the kitchen and help me. I've got a load in here and I've got to do all the cooking by myself and she's in here sitting at Your feet listening to You.”* You know, ladies like to prepare meals for us guys and we love it but the best

meal that you could ever have is the meal Bobby gives you right here and the meal I'm giving you now, the meal of Bible doctrine and that's what Mary of Bethany wanted. She was cognizant of her need for Bible doctrine over food.

6. Next we have the woman at the well, John chapter 4. *"Why would You ask me for water?"* she said. Jesus said, *"If you knew who I was, you would want Me to give you some living water."* This lady was a divinely appointed influencer and she was confrontational, there's another C word. She was a gospel influencer. She took off and ran back to town and said, "You have got to see who's at the well, at Jacob's Well. Whatever you do, come on back with me. I have found the Messiah. He's out at the well." She was cognizant that He was the Messiah and comfortable confronting others with the gospel message.

7. Bobby talked to us recently about Abigail, remember this, David's first wife? Bobby taught it not too long ago, Abigail, a woman of compassion. She saved the life of her loser husband Nabal and kept David from making a terrible mistake in coming up there and wiping everybody out which David should never have thought of to start with. By her act of going to David and confronting him, she showed concern and compassion. She stood up to David, "You're about to make a terrible mistake, don't do this."

Extraordinary women will have these seven traits:

Courage, that's the use of the faith-rest drill, standing on the promises of God.

Commitment, never looking back, pressing on, pressing forward.

Character, unmovable, solid, a risk taker.

Concern, genuine empathy and support.

Cognizant, having right priorities.

Confrontational, not afraid to give the gospel message boldly.

Compassion, having great concern.

These are the seven things you must have in your life if you're going to be an extraordinary female, an extraordinary individual.

Now, there are five warning signs to notice in the ordinary lady, so guys, you better take notes. Here are five things to watch out for:

1. Complaining. The neglect of Bible doctrine will cause complaining about what you do not have because there's no contentment, no capacity for life, and complaining is a mental attitude sin. If you're thinking about getting married and your woman that you think you love is a complainer, don't do it. Move on down the road. Listen to what Martha said, Luke 10:40, *"But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made and she came to Jesus and said, 'Lord, don't You care that my sister left me*

*to do all the work by myself? Tell her to come help me.”* No, she was doing the right thing. Complaining, you have no right to complain ever. None of us, no men, we have no right to complain about anything.

2. If you run into a woman who is contentious, lookout. Notice how we’re starting with C’s. This is called an alliteration. Contentious, she's argumentative. The Bible says in Proverbs 21:9, *“It’s better to live on the corner of a rooftop than to share a house with a contentious wife.”* There is nothing worse than a marriage that, “Yak, yak, yak” “Yak, yak, yak,” going back and forth at each other. *“Do nothing [Philippians 2:3 says] from contentiousness or empty conceit, but with humility of thinking let each one of you regard one another as more important than himself.”* You know what this is, this is impersonal love. This is how you live in a relationship with a man or a woman that sometimes you get crossways with, you forgive them. See, whenever something happens you can do this. You can react or you can respond, it’s up to you. If you react, this is going to be your emotions kicking in, and if your emotions kick in, you're going to blow up, you’re going to be hot. If you respond, this is Bible doctrine kicking in and you will forgive. So you can get angry or you can forgive. This is reacting or responding from the Word of God. So if you're married and you have a situation in your life between you and your spouse and they want to argue, forgive them.

3. Here's another warning sign, a female that's competitive, competitiveness from inordinate ambition. Competitiveness is what you accomplish by the use of your own human ability, what you can do and the Christian life is what God accomplishes for you by the use of divine ability. You have human ability, you have divine ability, they are not the same. You may have a talent that God would use, Glay has an amazing talent to sing. It’s not a spiritual gift, it’s a talent. Spiritual gifts are different. Competitiveness from inordinate competition is you with your human ability competing with another person saying, “I'm better.” The Christian life is what God does for you by use of divine ability, the spiritual gifts He gives you. There's a warning in 1 Timothy 5:6 that warns about a competitive woman. It says, *“She who lives in wanton pleasure is dead while she lives.”* This means she's headstrong, willful, and vulnerable to flattery, socially unrestrained, competitive, flirtatious, getting involved in sexual lawlessness. Here's what Colonel Thieme said about this many years ago, “The worst thing that can happen to any man is to fall in love with a woman who lives in wanton pleasure and wanton means, sexual lawlessness, unrestrained, headstrong, willful in pleasure, socially competitive, unrestrained, vulnerable to flattery, provocative, flirtatious, and everything in life centers around collecting men and her approbation for them.” Lookout if you run into a woman that’s competitive.

4. Another C word is comparativeness from subjectivity. This is the woman who compares herself to other ladies in order to justify her claims. She has an unrealistic self-image and you know, arrogance will give you this. If you have an unrealistic self-image, you look at what you think you are, not what you really are. If you look into the mirror with arrogance and you see what you think you are, then you want people to treat you in a way that you are not worthy of being treated because you have unrealistic expectations from an unrealistic self-image.

5. Be careful for conspiracy, another C word. This is from inordinate ambition. It's a carefully devised plan to overthrow authority. God speaks about this in the Old Testament. A verse we can apply in our lives is Exodus 23:1, "*You shall not carry a false rumor into a court and do not join your hands with an evil person to be a malicious witness.*" In Psalm 12:3-4, "*The Lord will destroy all flattering lips, [that's a conspiracy of the arrogant] the tongue [conspiracy of the inadequate] which speaks boastful things; who have said, 'We will triumph [in this conspiracy] with our tongues and our lips are with us, who can master us?'*" Kind of sounds like politicians today, conspiracy. As a matter of fact political conspiracy is the act of character assassination and we've seen this. Proverbs 6:12-15, "*A worthless person, a wicked man is one who walks with the perverse mouth. He winks with his eyes, he signals with his feet, he points with his fingers, but with perversion in his heart he continually devises evil and spreads strife. Therefore [and I like this part of this verse] his disaster will come suddenly and instantly he will be broken and there will be no healing.*"

Let's go back over this one more time for you. What do you want to look out for? Look out for the complaining woman. Look out for the contentious woman. Look out for the competitive woman. Look out for a woman who operates on comparativeness. Look out for the woman in conspiracy.

Now the real beauty of the ladies, the real beauty of this extraordinary grace transmitter is in her soul and some of you that I know personally have unbelievable souls. You're beautiful in your soul. Proverbs 31:30, "*A woman who fears the Lord shall be praised,*" saluted, exalted. The woman who stands in awe, the woman who respects. What we know about God, we know from His divine Word that it has been preserved for us. Thus respecting God implies obedience to the mandates found in the Scripture.

Where is beauty? The true beauty of a lady is in her mind, what she thinks. That's the true beauty of a lady. Your true beauty is your thoughts. Are you a responder or are you a reactor? Which one are you? If you're a reactor, you're not going to have any beauty. Isaiah gave a warning in Isaiah 32:9 to the women of Judah and we need to pay attention to this today. Ladies, this is important for you. Isaiah said, "*Rise up you*

*careless daughters and listen to what I'm telling you.*" He foresaw the Assyrian invasion of Judah in 701 BC and he issued a warning to the ladies.

No mother can afford to be ordinary. You must be extraordinary. You must plant the gospel seeds of the Word of God in your children and you must encourage the spiritual life of your children and your husband. As a mother, as an extraordinary lady, as a grace transmitter, transmit grace to your children and to your husband. Unless the moms of this nation get their eyes off political solutions, and not Trump or any politician, and on the Lord, we will not survive as a client nation much longer. I mean, you can see it. It doesn't take an idiot to see what's happening. Wives and mothers are the backbone of this country and it can be their faith and their encouragement that stabilize the future of this nation.

No matter what a woman possesses, be it exterior beauty, be it materialistic things, be it status in society, these are all utterly, totally meaningless unless she has inner beauty and stability, unless she thinks Bible doctrine. If she doesn't have the Word of God circulating in her soul, she's going to be one miserable person.

This is how ordinary ladies become extraordinary members of the pivot, Proverbs 31:25, *"Strength and dignity are her clothing."* She's not disillusioned with life, she's not discouraged by circumstances, she's not full of bitterness and not possessive. She has strength and she has dignity. She is a truly exceptional, extraordinary lady. I say this unhesitatingly, the backbone of this church and ministry are women of this caliber. Wives, widows, moms, staff, I salute you. You are the extraordinary ladies I'm talking about right here looking at me tonight. I thank you for what you have in your souls.

Now guys, oh my goodness, Job 5:7, *"For man is born into trouble as sparks fly upward,"* yep. In Job 28:28, *"And to man, God said, 'Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding,'"* back to wisdom and understanding. If you're going to be the man after God's own heart, you have to understand that the only way to keep from self-destructing is to acquire some divine viewpoint under grace orientation. This means you must understand, if you're a believer, if you've accepted Christ as your Savior, you must come to understand the protocol plan of God, the policies and the procedures that go with it. The policy of grace, the procedure of faith, and the protocol of the right thing being done in the right way because the Lord takes nobodies, and you're looking at one of them, nobodies, and makes somebodies out of them by His grace. God takes a nobody and makes a somebody out of him because of His grace. The Bible is full of men that God used, ordinary men who did amazing things by means of His grace provisions. There is no doubt that God through His omniscience decrees certain individuals for specific tasks.

However, each man has opportunities to self-destruct by means of his own bad decisions.

Listen to 1 Corinthians 1:27, *“God has chosen the foolish things of this world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of this world to shame the things which are strong.”* The foolish things of this world, there is nothing more foolish than to do what I did in college, walk away from a free education, a college scholarship, to go down the My Way Highway for three years. There I was at Alabama, they were depending on me to be a starting offensive lineman after my freshman year, and off I went into the toolies. Yet, by the grace of God I was given the gospel. I responded to the gospel. I was led to the ministry of this church, learned Bible doctrine sitting right down here in this congregation when I was in town and playing a tape recorder the rest of the time. As a friend recently told me, sharing it with them too, telling them “Let me stop the recorder, back it up. Did you get that? Did you get that? Listen, let's run it again.” It used to take two or three hours get through one tape, learning, learning, learning. God took a nobody and made a somebody out of him. You know, normally when a person goes and speaks in 450 high schools in two years, he's a celebrity. I wasn't a celebrity, I was a loser. I blew it and yet God opened the door for me to go and talk about the true Celebrity which is the Lord Jesus Christ. So in 1971 and 72, 72 and 73, we spoke in 450 schools across Mississippi and have been doing it ever since then. *“God chooses the foolish things of this world to put to shame the wise and God has chosen the weak things of this world to shame the things which are strong.”*

There's not one man in this room that I'm looking at, or maybe you're not in this room, maybe you're in another room somewhere watching by DVD or video, who does not have the potential to become extraordinary by means of God's grace provision, if you want it. God raised up one ordinary man for an extraordinary task to rescue the remnant of humanity. What did God rescue humanity with? A boat, a ship, Noah built that ship. Do you know why? Genesis 6:8, *“Noah found favor in the eyes of God.”* Why did he find favor? Was he good-looking? Was he handsome? Was he a big contributor? What was it about him that made God take notice of him? Genesis 6:22, *“Noah did according to all that God had commanded him, so he did it.”* He was obedient and the ark delivered humanity.

We don't have an ark today. We have a cross and the cross is our vessel of deliverance today. I'm sure that Noah was not expecting God to come calling, but I'm also sure that Noah was aware of the wickedness of man because in Genesis 6:5 it says, *“The wickedness of man was great on the earth and every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only on evil continually.”* Noah knew what was going on and I'm sure he wasn't happy about it and I'm sure he had a lot of harassment during the time it took to build

the ark. God's rescue vehicle, an ark. God's rescue vehicle, a cross, both made of wood. Can you imagine the harassment he endured during the time that he was building that thing? Why Facebook would have banned any pictures of that boat, they would have put up words of warning. Twitter would have canceled his account for spreading lies. "It's coming, you all need to come get on the boat soon now. There's going to be a flood." The rescue vehicle for today is the cross. Proclaim it, warn of what's coming for those who reject it and you will vindicate God's justice.

There are other men I'm going to talk about tomorrow night, we'll go on further with this, but I hope you're seeing this. Is this making sense to you? I trust it is, I trust you're learning. It's amazing to be able to study this together. You say, "How long does it take you to do this?" Maybe three or four months, you don't just sit down and do it in an hour or two. Our pastor doesn't sit down and come up with what he teaches us in an hour or two. It's a long drawn out process, but as you put it together it's like a giant jigsaw puzzle how the Holy Spirit reveals one piece at a time and one piece at a time and then you come up with what you have. You have seen the jigsaw puzzle tonight that God's given to me. I have been able to piece it together for you to look at it, to see what it means to be this extraordinary believer, a grace transmitter that God is looking for in this generation. I know there are a lot of you here in this congregation that are extraordinary grace transmitters. All right? Let's have a word of prayer.

We are grateful Father for the privilege of studying these things and much more to come. We pray that God the Holy Spirit would challenge us with these lessons that we've learned especially about the women and the seven characteristics that go along with being extraordinary and the rescue vehicle for today which is the cross. May we be challenged, may we apply it into our lives, may we glorify our Savior, Your anointed Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, for it is in His name that we pray this prayer. Amen.

Third Class – March 11, 2021

Don't forget to set your clocks Saturday night. Sunday morning Daylight Savings Time starts so set your clock ahead one hour when you go to bed. If you don't, you'll miss communion. Bobby will be back. We'll have communion Sunday morning at 10 o'clock by the way, not 11, at 10 and then there will be a short break followed by the annual business meeting. A quorum is necessary. This meeting will be broadcast to the telephone hookups and live-stream groups. I love going back to Daylight Savings Time.

All right, good evening. Are you ready to pick up where we left off last night? Thank you for being here. I'm Rick Hughes filling in for our pastor and thank you for being here to

encourage me. It's great to look out and see you, I appreciate it very much. So many of you I know personally and love you very much and I'm just grateful to be able to sit up here and give you this information that I've worked hard to prepare for you. Let's start off with a word of prayer, shall we?

Father, we know You empower us by means of the Holy Spirit. We realize that if we quench and grieve the Holy Spirit, we're out of fellowship and the Holy Spirit cannot do His job. So tonight as we take a moment to look at our own lives and analyze any personal sin that may be there, we're encouraged to confess this sin and You said You would be faithful and just to forgive us and purify us from all wrongdoing. Thank You for this wonderful promise of rebound, this provision that You give for us to use on a daily basis. Now we appeal to You to feed us from Your Word. Help us to see ourselves as we really are, not what we think we are, so that we might be challenged and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. We ask it in His name. Amen.

We're going to review just a little bit and then pick up. Ladies, relax tonight, we're on the men. We were on the ladies last night, so now tonight is the men's night. Job 5:7 in review, I mentioned this last night, *"Man is born into trouble as sparks fly upward."* One of the reasons for this is that man is born with a sin nature. Adam's original sin is imputed to us at birth, so at birth we actually look like this. At birth we have a body, some of us have incredible bodies, the incredible bulk, I mean hulk. We have an incredible body, we have a soul which has mentality, volition, conscience and self-consciousness, and you have a human spirit. Because Adam's original sin is imputed to the human spirit, you're born physically alive but spiritually dead. When you're born again, God the Holy Spirit indwells the dead human spirit and you become spiritually alive and now you have a body, soul, and spirit.

When it says, *"Man is born into trouble,"* it's referring to us being born spiritually dead and with the capability to destroy ourselves and other people along with this. This is not God's plan for you, to destroy yourself. Job 28:28, *"And to man God said, 'Behold the fear of the Lord is wisdom and to depart from evil is understanding.'" This is a word a lot of people don't understand, evil. What is evil? Well it's the opposite of grace. The Bible says, "For by grace are you saved through faith, it's a gift of God not of works lest any man would brag about it."* Evil says, "For by grace are you saved through faith and quit drinking Pepsi-Cola." No, the Bible doesn't say this. Whenever you add a condition, then you twist grace. Evil is a twisting of grace. Salvation is faith alone in Christ alone, not faith plus giving up Dr Pepper, not faith plus quit eating M&Ms, it is faith alone in Christ alone.

Evil is a distortion of grace and this is Satan's genius. This is exactly what he's good at especially when it comes to the Christian life and getting people to think they know how to live the Christian life. "I read my Bible every day." Well wonderful, I'm glad you read your Bible every day but God designed you to be taught the Bible. It's a textbook and God gave men like our pastor the gift of pastor-teacher and his objective is to study and teach, study and teach, study and teach. You're not designed to teach yourself. You're designed to sit under someone that has this gift so they can teach you God's Word. There are a lot of distortions out there to living the Christian life such as some people would tell you it's morality. Yes, well the Christian life does include morality, there's no doubt about that, but just because you're moral doesn't mean you're a good Christian.

Evil distorts grace in many ways and when this verse says, "*Depart from evil,*" that's understanding. God does not want you to get caught up in evil, that's Satan's genius. The only way to keep man from self-destructing is to acquire divine viewpoint and what is this? It's the opposite of human viewpoint. How do you acquire divine viewpoint? Under grace orientation. So what is divine viewpoint? Make sure you understand this. If I gave you a test and I said, "What is divine viewpoint?" How would you answer? Divine viewpoint is the mind of Christ. That's why Philippians 2:5-7 says, "*Let this mind be in you that was also in Christ Jesus, who thought it not robbery to be equal with God but made Himself of no reputation and took upon Himself the form of a bond servant.*" "*The mind of Christ,*" 1 Corinthians 2:16, the New Testament is the mind of Christ and when we learn God's Word, we are thinking like Christ thought, His intentionality and His mentality. This is thinking divine viewpoint, not human viewpoint.

The Lord takes nobodies like you and me and makes somebodies out of us by His grace. The Bible is full of men that God used, ordinary men who did amazing things by means of His grace and His provisions. There is no doubt, listen to this carefully, God through His omniscience decrees certain individuals for specific tasks. However, every man has an opportunity to self-destruct by means of his own bad decisions. I gave you this verse in 1 Corinthians 1:27 and made an analogy about myself, "*God has chosen the foolish things of this world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of this world to shame the things that are strong.*"

One of the things that gets me when I see the Christian world today, it's Christian celebrities charging appearance fees. There are certain Christian celebrities that are well known, very, very well known. You see them on television all the time, some of them are sports athletes, some of them are actors. If they came to Berachah Church to speak, they would expect an appearance fee, that's right. Minimum being \$5,000, minimum, and if you want your picture made with them, that's 50 bucks a pop just to

get your picture made with them. I'm not joking, this is real, we don't operate like this. There's not one man in this room, and I'm looking at a few of you right now, who does not have the potential to become an extraordinary grace transmitter by means of learning God's Word and applying God's grace provisions to your life.

God raises up these ordinary men for extraordinary tasks and in the case of Noah, we mentioned this last night, he was a man of obedience. God expects you to do the same thing, to be obedient. 1 John 5:3, this is your key verse. *"If you love Me, obey Me and My mandates are not grievous."* This is your key and it's called virtue love. The greatest virtue you have is personal love for God and the reason you obey God is because you love God. What about obey? This is the next question. *"If you love Me, obey Me."* "Okay, what do You want me to do, God?" Go sit under a tree and wait until He tells you what to do? No, we already know that He has a policy. We already know He has a procedure. We already know He has protocol. We studied this the other night. His policy is grace, His procedure is faith, and the protocol is a right thing has to be done in a right way. This is what God wants you to know and to operate under grace, using the faith-rest drill, doing the right thing in the right way.

Noah was a man of obedience. *"He found favor in God's eyes,"* the Bible says in Genesis 6:8. It wasn't that he was sinless. That's not the point. You don't have to be sinless for God to use you. I can demonstrate this myself. No one in this room is sinless, men, but God does expect from you obedience and when you sin, He expects you to rebound. Genesis 6:22, *"Noah did all according to what God commanded him to do."* He was obedient and I'm sure he was not expecting God to come calling, but I'm sure he knew what was happening on the earth, and we talked about this last night.

Let's move on to Joseph tonight, all right? A man of misfortune and a man of fame. I was listening to Colonel Thieme's "Biblical Heroes Series" from R.B. Thieme Jr. Bible Ministries and he taught about the amazing humility that God used in Joseph's life. Joseph had tremendous cognitive ability and Colonel Thieme taught something called the conversion box. I don't know if you ever heard him teach this or not, but the conversion box is when God turns misfortune into blessing. You know it as Romans 8:28, *"All things work together for good to those that love God, to those who are called according to a predetermined plan."* So in this "Biblical Heroes Study" Joseph had amazing humility and God-given business acumen and everything he touched flourished, everything. If you read through it, you'll see it, Genesis 37 through Genesis 50 and in the last verses of chapter 50, verse 18, I love this. When his brothers came to where he was in Egypt to try to survive they thought he'd probably kill them. He didn't.

Joseph said this in Genesis 50:20, *“You meant evil against me, but God turned it into good.”* This is the conversion box. A lot of things that will happen to you, you may think are wrong, but there are reasons for them. It may be momentum testing, it may be suffering for blessing, and God can always turn it. Once it goes into the conversion box, He turns it around and what someone else meant for bad becomes good.

Gideon, a man of courage, an ordinary man who did an extraordinary thing, Judges chapter 6 through Judges chapter 8. I want to give these examples before we get into our analogies here. Gideon delivered Israel from the famous Midianite army in a nighttime maneuver that was directed by God, Judges 7:19. Here are a few facts about this ordinary man.

1. God predetermined this in eternity past.
2. The Angel of the Lord paid him a personal visit. You say, “Who is the Angel of the Lord?” This is the Lord Jesus Christ in His pre-incarnate form. In Judges 6:11 He showed up and He spoke to Gideon.
3. Gideon was the youngest in his father's house, Judges 6:15.
4. Gideon received a direct commission from the Lord in Judges 6:14. The Lord said these words, *“Go, I have sent you.”* That’s a direct commission and you men have the same commission. *“Go into all the world,”* you have the same commission. You have a commission to be a spiritual influencer. We dealt with this last time I filled in for Bobby, on being spiritual influencers, divinely appointed spiritual influencers and you have a commission also.
5. Gideon was endued with the Holy Spirit in Judges 6:34, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him. You have been indwelt by the Holy Spirit, filled with the Holy Spirit. You have a commission and the Lord Jesus Christ has appeared to you too because He lives in you. I showed you this the other night. He lives in you, *“Christ in you the hope of glory.”*
6. As a result of his mission of faith in Judges 7:7, victory was accomplished and they had 40 years of peace, 40 years, Judges 8:28.

Another one that God raised up, a nobody and turned him into somebody was Samson, a man of strength and a man of submission. You say, “What happened to Samson?” Well, from Judges 13 through Judges 16, after 40 years of divine discipline on the nation, 40 years of living under the Philistines, God raised up a deliverer named Samson to deliver Israel from the Philistines. Here is another visit by the Lord Jesus

Christ, Judges 13:3, *“The Angel of the Lord appeared to the childless wife of Manoah of Zorah.”* She had no children, she was minding her own business one day and the Lord Jesus Christ shows up and says, “I got news for you honey, you’re going to have a baby.” She was a Danite and He told her, *“Behold, you are barren now and you have borne no children, but you will conceive and you will give birth to a son. He will be a Nazirite to God from the womb and he shall begin to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines”* (Judges 13:3-5).

There's a direct appointment, I mean there is a reason for this. This is how the omniscience of God decrees in eternity past specific men for specific tasks. It happened in the past and is happening still. We at Berachah Church, I assure you, are recipients of this very concept. God ordained, called out one man, set him apart. That's why a lot of us are here tonight. That's why Bobby is our pastor tonight because it was his father. There is no doubt that God can take ordinary men and do extraordinary things through these individuals.

Samson on the other hand was rather reckless and disobedient in regard to his Nazirite vows, he didn't completely honor them. We know that he couldn't handle women because he was betrayed by his first wife and then eventually by Delilah. I love these famous words that he said when he gave a riddle and told a Philistine to figure it out, and his first wife told him what the riddle meant. This is what he said in Judges 14:18, *“If you had not plowed with my heifer you would not have found that my riddle.”* What does this mean *“plowed with my heifer?”* I had a friend, we called him Taco Blandojo, he was a fishing buddy of mine and he called his wife a white faced heifer. I don't think that went over too good. Samson was used by God in spite of many failures.

Men listen to me. God does not expect you to be perfect nor me to be perfect, but He does expect us to be persistent in our spiritual walk. Persistent, it's not perfection, it's persistence. I played football a long time ago and I got blocked, not very often, but I got blocked and the bad thing was they videoed it so they had the cameras rolling in the game. You know, if the game was on Friday night and I got blocked, well then that Monday we'd be watching the video and, *“Who is that big fat guy laying on his back?”* Well, I learned to cover my numbers up so they wouldn't know who I was. Sampson was used by God in spite of his many failures. God does expect persistence. Samson judged Israel for 20 years in the days of the Philistines, Judges 15:20 and there was peace in the land because the Philistines feared him, this was freedom through military victory. Another one that God raised up, called out, David, a man of faith and a man of failure.

Now the Berachah man, here we go. You are the Berachah man and here is your verse for you, 1 Corinthians 16:13, *“Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, and act like men, be strong.”* *“Alert”* is the present active imperative of an interesting Greek word called *gregoreo*. It means to give strict attention to or to be cautious or to take heed lest you get lazy and miss something. Laziness, you don’t want to be lazy. If you’re lazy, calamity and destruction can overtake you suddenly, so you have to be on the alert. What does this mean? I’m going to tell you what this means. You are recruited every day by the cosmic system. Do you want to know who the biggest recruiter is? Politics, they want to suck you into politics. That’s not your field of expertise and to the point that you get on the internet and you start putting up political thoughts and political things, stay away from this. This is not your job. Every day the cosmic system will lure you into politics, lure you into perversion, lure you into money, lure you, lure you, lure you. Be alert, know when you’re being recruited. Someone will appeal to you and you’ll jump right in the middle of it. You’ll get out of fellowship from being distracted from your mission in life. Stay alert. Vigilance and expectancy are required of you rather than laxity and indifference. Vigilance and expectancy are required of you rather than lack of care and lack of concern, so be alert. Your spiritual life is too important to blow it and you can blow it real easy.

Then *“stand firm”* another present active imperative verb of *steko*. *Steko* means this, stand firm, be perseverant, persevere in your spiritual life, or be anchored, to anchor yourself. Now you are an anchor. This is the anchor we’re looking for, the pivot. The pivot of mature believers is what anchors this nation in God’s plan and you must, as a Berachah man, you must stand firm and be a part of this pivot. Why? Galatians 5:1, *“It was for freedom that Christ set us free, therefore keep standing firm and don’t be subject again to the yoke of slavery.”* Again, *steko*, another present active imperative, be firm, be alert, stand firm. You cannot be a Berachah man and ignore this. Your mission in life is too important.

Then we have another verb, a present passive imperative meaning that we receive the action of the verb. It’s the word *“be strong,” krataioo*. the subject receives the action of the verb. The passive voice says the Holy Spirit plus God’s Word give you the ability to stand strong. Be strong, this means to be in good spiritual shape, not a spiritual weakling, and this requires discipline and routine in your life. Now some of us, myself included, are not in very good physical shape. That’s not what this is talking about. This is talking about being in great shape spiritually. To the point that you ignore the Word of God, ignore Bible class and reviewing your notes and go through life forgetting about all this except on Sunday, you don’t have any strength. You’re just a caricature of Christ. Is this all you’ve got going for you, just to show up every now and then and not apply this info in your life? You must be strong, you must be alert, you must stand firm.

There are a lot of men that have come and gone through those doors back there, some through negative volition and some through distraction and some through physical death. There is not one of these men who did not have the opportunity to be a preservative of this client nation. Some of them who went through this door did the job and grew to spiritual maturity and some of them who went through this door went AWOL and never came back. It takes humility, you know, to admit you failed, it takes a lot of humility. It takes humility to admit that you abandoned your post, but it's never too late to get back in the game before you're thrown away as useless. We'll see this here in a minute, a useless person who has no persevering factor in his life. That's the question I have to ask you today, Berachah man, has your spiritual life helped preserve this client nation? Have you been a divinely appointed influencer that had an impact in the invisible or even the visible realm?

Have you been this spiritual man or are you the carnal man? I mean I could go on for hours talking about examples of nobodies who God turned into somebodies due to their conversion and their spiritual growth. Men like Charles Spurgeon, Martin Luther, Billy Sunday, Billy Graham, all had an impact in God's plan and so shall you. What I'm about to show you is a message of our Lord and it was taught to the disciples who had just heard the Beatitudes. They had just heard Him do Matthew 5:1-13 and now the Similitudes. You say, "What's a Similitude?" It's a statement in the present or future tense of what people typically do or don't do in any given situation.

Here's what the Lord said, listen carefully, *"You [disciples] are the salt of the earth, but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? [It can't] It's no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by people."* The salt of the earth is a metaphor. It's a new title for the mature believer, the Berachah man. I want you to be the salt of the earth. The Navy had a term for this, 'Old Salt,' they used for the longest-serving surface warfare officer on active duty, he was the Old Salt. A lot of times it would be a Command Master Chief. Once we understand what this word means in Scripture, we can use it to determine the oldest serving believers in Berachah Church, you're old salts. I talked to one of them tonight before Bible class, he's an old salt, been here for years, done his job. Recently we lost one of our old salts Roger Lewis went to be with the Lord. He was an old salt, he was rather salty too, I assure you. People who are described as the salt of the earth are those who are considered to be of great worth and great reliability, but this goes for men or women, either way here.

Salt is used in the Bible for seasoning food and Job 6:6 says, *"Is tasteless food eaten without salt?"* This is a Biblical analogy. A lack of seasoning is used to indicate human viewpoint. If you have no seasoning in your life, you lack salt. It means you have no

taste for spiritual things. Do you want to know what this kind of person is? A person who has no taste for spiritual things is just a pitiful, wandering soul who can never find their real reason for existing. I mean, is this why you're here, just to gather things and more things and more things, and die and hope nobody else gets your things?

If you are a salt, you're analogous to the mature believer who preserves his nation. That's why the Bible says in Mark 9:50, *"Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with each other."* The greatest thing you can do as a mature believer is to have Bible doctrine inside of you and to be salty. This means you bring historical blessing to the land.

A person who is unsalty is being an active agent that has no use for preservation. You're analogous to being in reversionism and you're under divine discipline. You've lost your effectiveness. If you're a believer and you have no salt, you're not effective. You're not having an impact for the Lord Jesus Christ. You may be coming to Bible class, you may be coming to church, and then you may go live your life the way you want to live it. What this verse says, *"Salt is good [Luke 14:34], but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile. It's thrown out."* Salt will help the manure pile dissolve, salt will help fertilize the land, and what the Lord Jesus Christ is saying is that if you lose your saltiness, if you lose your positive volition, if you lose your spiritual momentum, you'll move into reversionism. Let me show you an illustration you're used to seeing.

When you commit sin, you move under control of your sin nature. If you don't recover, you stay out here, you get sucked into the cosmic vortex, you know about this. Eventually you're going to die the sin unto death. You're going to go through warning discipline, you're going to go through intense discipline, and eventually dying discipline and you've wasted your life. There are a lot of people that have walked into this church and walked out, and wasted their lives, cast aside as worthless. What a waste of your life, to be worthless, not worth anything, have no salt, no preservative. The Lord Jesus Christ died for your sin, He freed you from Satan's domain and you turn right around and march right back into the cosmic system as a deserter and you're cast aside as worthless and you die the sin unto death. In Genesis 19:26, the Bible describes how Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt and not the kind of salt you put on french fries.

Here's what the Lord says about salt types, Matthew 5:13 again, listen carefully, *"You are the salt of the earth, but if salt becomes tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It's no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by people."* The principle of this passage was that Israel had sinned away her usefulness in the plan of God, that's what had happened. Matthew said it in Matthew 3:10, *"The ax*

*is laid to the root of the tree.*” Divine discipline was coming to the nation. The whistle was blowing and Titus saw a train wreck coming that would arrive in 70 A.D. and Israel would go under divine discipline, under the 5th cycle of discipline.

Our Lord had just finished teaching the Sermon on the Mount, just finished it, Matthew 5:1-12, and He had just finished presenting the Beatitudes, which was His first public message ever to His disciples, His *mathetes*. He taught, and I like this part here, notice He taught using the “Rabbinic Method.” Do you know what this means? I like this, it means He sat down as He taught, I can agree with that. Matthew 5:1-2, He sat down on the mount. Luke 5:3, He sat down in the boat. Matthew 26:55, He sat down in the temple. In Luke 4:20, He sat down in the synagogue. I feel comfortable sitting down tonight, okay? What did He teach? He taught this, *makarios*, and this is the word for happy. Luke 11, “*Happiness belongs to those who hear My Father's Word and keep it.*” This is what He taught in the Beatitudes. He taught happiness and how to be happy. He taught it to a Jewish audience who were looking for the kingdom on the earth but it wasn't coming. Christ had a different message to proclaim, His death, His resurrection, and His ascension.

Jesus Christ gave a seven fold outline of character traits of extraordinary individual followers and note that this is impossible to attain by any self-effort or religious tradition. *These things* are only possible by means of the filling of the Holy Spirit and doctrine in your soul. He taught virtues and values in life that result in happiness, *these things*. I want you to see them so you'll understand this. I'll give you some background.

This is not an in-depth study on the Beatitudes. I'm not here to do this, but give a small summary of these traits identified by Christ. I'll give you the footnotes from the *NASB Bible* so you'll see it, “The Sermon on the Mount was a call to moral and ethical living and it is so high that some have dismissed it as being completely unrealistic or have projected its fulfillment to the future millennium. There's no doubt however that the Lord Jesus Christ gave this sermon as a standard for all believers. Realizing that His demands cannot be met in our own power, it's also true that the Lord Jesus Christ occasionally used hyperbole to make His point.”

You want to take the Bible literally, how about this one? Matthew 5:29, this is hyperbole. “*If your right eye offend you and makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it away.*” Now He obviously didn't mean pluck your eye out. What He gave here is a guidepost for Church Age believers and this guidepost will be the policy in the future kingdom of the Millennium. This is where this application takes place, but it's a guidepost for you today.

The poor in the spirit, He says, *“Blessed are the poor in spirit”* and *“Happiness belongs to those that are poor in spirit,”* not outward financial poverty but a spiritual dependency upon the Lord, intellectually humbled as opposed to religious arrogance. At the time that's what was going on.

Then He said in the Sermon on the Mount, the Beatitudes, *“Blessed are those that mourn”* and *“Happiness belong to those that mourn,”* and this means to weep or to lament. It means to recognize a failed spiritual condition of the nation or of individuals. This is exactly what God expects of you. He doesn't expect you to be poor but expects you to be spiritually dependent upon Him and to be intellectually humbled as opposed to being religiously arrogant. He expects you to recognize the failed condition of our nation. Why? Because you are the solution, as goes your spiritual life, so goes the history of America. You're the solution, you're the pivot. Do you mourn for your country? Do you mourn for your neighbor? I mean if you saw their house on fire in the middle of the night, would you rush over and wake them up? “Get up, get up, your house is on fire.” Your neighbors may be lost and facing the flames of hell right now. Have you attempted to wake them up?

*“Blessed are the meek”* and *“Happiness belong to the meek,”* the ones that got rid of their arrogance, the ones that have genuine humility. Where do we get this? From Philippians 2:7-8, *“He humbled Himself,” “Made Himself of no reputation,”* humility. This doesn't mean being a wimp. This doesn't mean you're Mr. No Shoulders. This doesn't mean you say, “I'm just a humble Christian. I wouldn't squash a little bug. I'm just a Christian.” You can be a tough Christian and squash bugs, it's okay. Humility is orientation to authority, it's obedience. This is what impressed God about Noah. He was obedient and this is what God is impressed about with you, obedience. Obedience, especially in the areas you don't like, things that rub you wrong. We've studied this before and I'll tell it to you again. Your objective is to be laconic. Keep your mouth shut unless you have an opportunity to give something worth saying. Don't get involved in arguments, don't get involved in politics, don't get involved in anything that's not necessarily worth talking about. Stick with the issues. If someone is going to hell, give them the gospel as quick as you can, wake them up, warn them, let them know. *“Blessed are the meek,”* the broken ones who have lost their arrogance and have genuine humility.

*“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.”* Do you know what this is, hunger? I got a hunger this week for a donut. Have you ever had a hunger for a donut? I mean when you drive through little towns in Texas, every little town has a donut shop, every little town. So Gary and I are driving down here looking for a donut shop and we couldn't find one. We found one but it was closed. We wanted a doughnut and finally

we went into a place to find some doughnuts and they were terrible. I couldn't believe I paid for that mess. Do you ever get a hunger for something? Hunger and thirst for righteousness is a spiritual appetite for the Word of God. *"When knowledge becomes pleasant to your soul,"* the Bible says. *"Pleasant to your soul"* means you want it, you desire it, and you want to know it. That's something that happens to us after a period of time. If you're here and you've been in doctrine for 20 years, are you still as hungry for the truth today as you were 20 years ago? Are you still hungry for the Word of God or do you even have a hunger for it? Would you go out of your way to get it?

*"Blessed are the merciful"* and *"Happiness belongs to the merciful,"* those who extend mercy to others. Let God do the judging, you're not there to judge them. You're just there to forgive them. *"The merciful man [Proverbs 11:17] does himself good."* *"Blessed are the merciful."* *"Blessed are the pure in heart,"* inwardly clean, in fellowship, no hidden sins, free from all selfish intentions and free from all self-seeking desires, pure in heart. What a wonderful thing to have a pure heart.

Next in the passage, *"Blessed are the peacemakers."* Now we're not talking about the kind of peacemakers that used to walk around with peace signs. We're not talking about that. The peacemakers are those who teach reconciliation. This is what the Lord Jesus Christ said, *"Peace I leave with you and My peace I give to you,"* and we know that peace is part of the fruit of the Spirit, John 14:27. These were two things He gave the disciples. He said, *"I've taught you these things so that your joy might be full"* and *"That you might have peace."* Both of these are fruits of the Holy Spirit.

In Matthew 5 next comes a warning about persecution. He said, *"Happiness belongs to you when you're persecuted because of righteousness sake."* This is you being socially disapproved of, being discriminated against, and it's coming to America sooner than you think. It's called political disapproval of you as a Christian. *"Happiness belongs to you when you are persecuted for righteousness sake."*

In Matthew 5:11-12, *"Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on My account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven; for so men persecuted the prophets who were here before you."* I don't think it's really happened yet, I mean it's starting to happen in some ways, but it's coming. You're going to be persecuted for your faith. I don't know when it's going to happen, but it's coming, maybe sooner than you think. *"Happiness belongs to you when men revile you, when men spread public lies about you because of your identification with Christ."* This is the key to happiness in your life and do you want to hear what the Lord Jesus Christ said in John 15:20? *"If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you."* There it is, you've identified with Christ, you're a believer in the Lord

Jesus Christ. You haven't really had any heavy persecution yet but it's coming and guess who's going to persecute you? This is where I see it all the time. It's not going to be the government, it will be the religious crowd. It was the religious crowd that crucified our Lord, the religious crowd.

When I'm in a school speaking and I've got 250-500 kids, you know who gets angry at me? Not the drug dealers, the religious crowd, the churches, because I didn't teach what they believe, because I didn't teach you've got to be baptized to be saved or I didn't teach whatever their favorite doctrine is in their church. So they come up to the school and they get angry at the headmaster. "Why did you have this guy down here? He's teaching our kids all wrong. He told them that once they're saved, they're always saved and that's not true. If they do something bad, they are going to go to hell." That's who I get the opposition from and that's who's going to oppose you, the religious crowd. They're not going to like your grace-oriented living. They're not going to like your faith alone in Christ alone. They're not going to like your attitude about Bible doctrine. They will persecute you, but you need to rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven will be great.

These are the people that will make an impact on their world as Christians and the Lord uses, in the Similitudes, two metaphors to explain this. He said, "You are salt and you are light." The extraordinary child of God is like salt. Do you like salt? I remember hearing the Colonel say one time, "In Texas we salt everything." I like to put salt on stuff too. Of course the doctor says, "Don't salt it too much." Here are some principles on why salt is used.

Salt represents the extraordinary child of God. The grace transmitter of God is like salt because he creates a thirst for those who are in his area of contact. If someone gets around you and you are salt, they'll get thirsty. You will preserve the nation as a member of the pivot. Salt is used as a preserving factor. If the basic character of salt loses its taste, then it is only good to be walked on and discarded and has no purpose for existence. So if you're not salty, it means you don't have positive volition, you don't have any Bible doctrine in your soul, you're operating on your emotions, and you're not growing spiritually. You've accepted Christ as your Savior. You go through spiritual self-esteem, spiritual autonomy, and the objective is to get to spiritual maturity. The objective is maximum glorification of God to the max. If this is not you, then you've lost your taste.

As a mature believer, you have a preservative effect on this client nation and a preservative effect on your family called blessing by association. That's incredibly important for you. Remember this, God would have spared Sodom and Gomorrah if

there had been ten righteous people, Abraham got God down to ten. He said, *“If I find ten, will You spare it?” The Lord said, “I’ll spare it if you find ten.”* I believe there are more than ten righteous people in this city and I think God can spare this nation. I believe there are more than ten in this nation but you must be the salt. Because if you're worthless, if you have no preservative ability, if you've sinned away your usefulness in God's plan and been sucked into reversionism living in the cosmic system, then you will be trampled down with divine discipline just like everybody else.

This can be called the salt principle, Matthew 5:13 and Mark 9:50, where we are said to be, *“The salt of the earth,”* and that's the pivot principle. Before we wrap it up I want to give you just a little small analogy here. To be salt, this is what I want you to do. I wish you had a little pin you could wear that said “SALT.” People would ask you, “What does that mean, salt?” Wouldn't that be a neat little conversation piece? If you're going to be salt, this is what you must be, SALT, and this is simple. It didn't take a genius to work this out, it's pretty simple not like some people I know that are really smart.

SALT. S is for saved. John 10:9, *“I am the door, if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved.”* You cannot be salt if you're not saved and you're not saved by joining some church. You are not saved by giving up M&Ms. You are saved by faith alone in Christ alone. Why? *“Because He who knew no sin was made sin for us so that we could be made the righteousness of God through Him.”* You're saved, you're on your way to being salt.

Then you're anointed, the A stands for anointed. 2 Corinthians 1:21-22, listen carefully, *“But God [that's our Heavenly Father] who establishes us in Jesus Christ [this means He's set us apart] along with you has anointed us [anointed us, that's the baptism of the Holy Spirit plus the sealing of the Holy Spirit] who also put a seal on us and gave us the Spirit in our right lobes as a guarantee of a down payment to come.”* If you're salt, you've been anointed, you have been set apart. You've been sealed with the Holy Spirit, you have been saved. Are you still with me? This is not going to be complicated.

Then the L means you are a learner. Matthew 11:29-30, *“Take My yoke and learn of Me. My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” “Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your soul.”* Learn, *“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.” “Grow in the grace and knowledge of your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,”* study, learn and grow. You cannot be salt and you cannot be a preservative if you don't learn the Word of God and understand the provisions, the principles, and the protocol plan of God.

Then the T, trusted. Proverbs 14:5, trust in what? Listen carefully. Can God trust you not to misrepresent Him? This is the biggest thing I face in my life. I cannot afford to misrepresent God. Who did this in the Bible and got in big trouble for it? Moses at the Second Meribah, struck the rock. God said, "I told you to speak to the rock, not strike it. You're not going into the Promised Land because of this. You can go look at it, you can see it, but you're not going in." Why? He misrepresented God. He taught judgment, not grace. You and I cannot afford to misrepresent God. If you don't know the Scripture, if you don't understand God's Word, you will misrepresent God. You must be trusted. You must be a trustworthy witness. Paul said, *"When I was a child I used to speak like a child, I used to think like a child, I used to reason like a child. When I became a man, I put away those childish things."*

Can God trust you to represent Him effectively, correctly? Don't mess this up. Don't mess this up. Don't go out and misrepresent God and tell someone something that's not true. It can be in the area of salvation. It can be in the area of the Christian life. It can be in the area of eternity. You can misrepresent God a lot of ways. That's why we have a pastor, that's why we have a guy that studies his brains out and gets up here and teaches us night after night after night after night so we know what the heck we're talking about, so we don't walk out this door and misrepresent God. Does this mean you shouldn't talk? No, it means you need to know what you're talking about. I run into it all the time.

If you go ask the average preacher, if you know one, call him up and ask him this question. Not a doctrinal teacher but some average preacher in town and say, "Can you tell me what I must do to be saved?" You would not believe what you'll hear. You won't believe it. You'll hear everything from invite Christ into your heart to give up your sins, to repent and turn away, and that's not what the Bible says. The Bible says, *"He that believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life, and he that believes not, the wrath of God abides on him already."* *"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."* Can God trust you to make it simple and accurate and correct?

This is the salt principle. This is what God is asking you to do, to be a learner and to be trusted. He's looking for people He can trust because if He can trust you, then He will give you more and more opportunities to represent Him. Think about this. If He can trust you, He'll give you more and more opportunities re-present Him.

If you don't know what you're talking about and you start trying to talk for God, you're going to get yourself in a jam and a hammer will follow you and Satan will laugh at you and he'll use you as a distraction. You don't want to be used by Satan as a distraction. Is this simple enough? All right, I'm going to quit with this. I hope you've learned

something. It's been my joy to bring you this information and I pray it's been a challenge to you, Berachah men tonight, Berachah ladies last night. All right, can we pray together now?

If you're here and you've never made this most wonderful decision to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, you have the opportunity to do this before you walk out the door. *"Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved,"* the Bible says. Being saved means you're born again, made alive spiritually and it happens when you put your faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross. You don't have to understand everything about it. All you have to understand is that He is the anointed Son of God and He died for you and He paid your penalty for your sin. You can express this faith in prayer. You can tell Him in your own words, "I am believing in Your Son as my Savior." That's as simple as it gets. You probably won't feel anything. You won't feel butterflies, you won't see any angels, but *"This is the record, God has given to us eternal life and this life is in His Son. He that has the Son has life and he that has not the Son of God has not life"* (1 John 5:11-12). By receiving Christ as your Savior tonight, you have eternal life.

Thank You, Father, for the privilege to teach Your Word. May God the Holy Spirit challenge us with it for we ask it in Christ's name, Amen.