

I. Review

I hope you have been seeing how progressively I have been building on the importance of you building your relationship with the Lord. If you haven't, hopefully you will see this by the time we are done today. And the importance of a New Testament Bible believing, Bible teaching local church.

Last week we looked at how we should examine ourselves. What a key aspect to the Christian life. I tried to show you each week a different level of our walk with God. When we finally get the world out of our life. **We all go through our struggles in life but there should be a time in our life when we no longer look back anymore.** We are not going to be like Lot's wife who couldn't get Sodom out of her life. You are going to look forward and at that point you will begin to go up the different levels.

❖ Looking Inwardly at Our Life

I showed you in Psalms 7:3-5 about a man that has come back to God and how he was looking inwardly at his life. Most of God's people don't do that---all they see is outwardly. All they see is what they don't like, or what they struggle with. All they see is the things out there that give them attitudes about different things. Churches are filled with them and the reason for that is because they have failed to look inwardly first. **We must get honest with ourselves and God.** Honestly is a great deal and it is an important fact. Being honest with your husband, your wife, your kids, and people at work. Being honest with everybody else in the world yet being dishonest with God will never serve you any favor---and that is where it has to start. You have to look inwardly first. I showed you this guy is getting honest with God. He is asking God if there is any iniquity in my hands or if he has stirred up trouble with someone that was at peace with him. He asks God if I made people my enemies who were not my enemies. Then he says judge me O Lord if I have been at fault in any of these things then deal with me.

I took you over to **2 Corinthians 13:5-6 which is the New Testament principle and showed you the next level.** Which is looking inside yourself---self-examination. Talking and getting honest with God in three basic areas.

1. Examine yourself to see if you are in the faith. Not necessarily if you are saved but are you doing what God saved you to do?
2. Prove your own self. Your love for Him, what you give Him. Your ministry in your own church, and you prove the will of God in your life. I gave you some examples last week.

3. Know our own selves. Knowing our limitations and what our strengths and weaknesses are. I have found over the years that everybody has strengths and weaknesses. Most of us don't want to work on the weaknesses, we just want to look at our strengths. But you have got to get past that. The mark of growing in the Lord is getting honest with yourself. Looking inside and then knowing your limitations and your strengths and your weaknesses.

❖ Looking Outward to Others

So far in Psalms we have talked about the **importance of building your relationship with God. First inwardly**, and then in God's timing your inner walk will prove you. Then it will go **outwardly to others**. Building your life in time by talking to God and looking inside, getting, and keeping yourself between the white lines so to speak, will be the key to everything we do.

II. Mary & Martha – John 12:1-3

There is a great story of this that illustrates this great truth in John 12. It will show you this very thing that we looked at last week and will continue to look at in Psalms 7. In John 12-1-3 there is a familiar story about Mary and Martha.

John 12:1-3 1 Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

2 There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

The first thing that I want you to notice is an incredible picture of New Testament Christianity even though the church is not in effect yet. We have Mary and Martha. They represent for us two different types of Christians. It is a great study on God's people. **This will be the picture of our worship and what our relationship should be.** Martha is so busy serving; she is a picture of a Christian who does a lot of good things. But she really has no personal relationship with Christ. She is a picture of a saved Christian but she is so busy doing. She is one of those types of Christians that wants everybody to see what she is doing. In fact, there is a couple of places in the Bible where the Lord is there, and everything is going around, and Martha is serving and she says to the Lord. Does anybody see what I am doing? Jesus says to her, Martha, you are cumbered about with many things. She is busy doing!

On the other hand, you have Mary. **Mary is a picture of what our worship should really be.** Where **Martha serves, Mary worships.** In this example she takes a pound of ointment, the Bible says very costly, and she anoints His feet. Then she uses her own hair to wipe His feet.

Notice what takes place here. Again, this New Testament story will illustrate an Old Testament verse and you will find it going both ways.

A. Three Personal Aspects of a Relationship with God

In these verses we find the **three personal aspects of a relationship with God**. A lot of people love God, but never do anything for God. I believe they love Him, but they are so cumbered about like Martha that they just can't ever get to that point.

1. Mary Anoints Jesus' Feet—Looking Godward

First, she anointed His feet. That is her looking Godward. Mary is sitting at His feet listening to what He says. **Martha is busy doing instead of being. Mary makes an investment in Him.** The Bible says she takes a pound of ointment of spikenard. The Bible clearly tells us it was very costly. **Here is an example of the principle I talked to you last week in 2 Corinthians 8:8 about proving the sincerity of our love by what we give Him.** She didn't count the cost or look at it and said that is more money than I want to spend. She gave to Him based on her love for Him, based on her understanding His love for her. That is the New Testament principle. It is incredible!

A little later on, Jesus says, leave her alone, she did this against the day of my death. He hasn't died yet. But it shows me the insight of Mary. The perception of Mary that she has been listening to Him and she knows that He is going to die and make the sacrifice. So, she is making her sacrifice to Him before He has made the sacrifice for her. **What an attitude of heart she has, proving the sincerity of her love.**

2. Mary Uses Her Own Hair to Wipe His Feet---Looking Inward

The second thing is that she uses her own hair. **When she anointed His feet, that is Godward and when she uses her own hair---it goes inward. She gets personally involved.** It wasn't enough that she just gave to Him, or that she bought this pound of ointment, very costly and gave it to Him. Now she wants to make the inward investment in Him by personally getting involved. By wiping His feet with her hair. I don't have to tell most of you that in 1 Corinthians 11 that the women's hair is a picture of her submissiveness. It is a picture of her brokenness to the will of God in her life---inwardly. **You are going to find, just like Martha there are a lot of people who will give to the work of God, but they will not personally get involved in the work of God.** This is true of rich people. I have seen rich guys that will give millions to missions or to this or that, but never get involved in the ministry themselves. The great principle is giving is no excuse for not living. You must get personally involved.

This is a picture of us, first Godward, then inward. This is the New Testament principle of 2 Corinthians 8:5 where she gave of her own self first. She gave of her own self in a sacrifice

giving to the Lord before He even sacrificed for her. These are principles in the New Testament that will illustrate what is being said in the Old Testament.

3. The Ointment Filled the Whole House---Looing Outward

Look at verse 3. So, it went Godward, it went inward and then it went outward. And the odor of the ointment, not only got all over her, but the Bible says that it filled the whole house. What a great example of that for every mom and dad who has kids. That if you take your life and you go Godward and you go inward, in time, your whole house will smell of the sweet savor of the Lord in your life.

So many places in the Bible tells us that the sweet-smelling of spices or aroma is always a picture of our relationship the Lord Jesus Christ. In particular you will want to look at the book, Song of Solomon. This is a process within your spiritual growth. The sweet smells of a garden. This is why last week we talked about seeing the natural face (James 1:23-25). I made a little joke about women and guys. When you get up in the morning and look in the mirror. You know mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the fairest of them all. And it comes back, not you baby! That was a fun way to illustrate my point. But perfume is the same way. That is why women wear perfume, we are a type of the church, the bride of Christ. We should in our spiritual walk have a sweet-smelling savor that God smells when He sees us. In our earthly world, a woman wears perfume because she wants to smell good. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 2:15 when we witness to unsaved people, it is a sweet savor unto God.

The garden of Eden in Genesis, was a literal garden of Eden that was the most beautiful place that God intended for man to be in. I know that the devil stopped that. On the spiritual side, our life with God, your relationship with Christ, should be a garden of Eden. God intended for Adam and Eve to be in a literal garden with the sweet smells of that garden and it represented everything that God wanted with them. They lost that. Remember Eve is a type of the church and Adam is a type of Christ. When you and I got saved our life today should be that garden. And the sweet smells of the fragrances out of the Song of Solomon. But just like Adam and Eve, I am afraid that so many times, the devil stops it today, just like he did back then.

B.) A Sweet-Smelling Relationship with Christ

Mary started Godward, it went inward and then it went outward. If you read down through the chapter not everybody was happy with that. The world and even Christianity today will be against you having a sweet-smelling relationship with Christ. This is not always easy, but in our walk with God we should always cast off the stench of this world. And even Christianity and its apostate state that has no Bible and just does a lot of serving like Martha. But are never at His feet listening to His word like Mary. This is the example that shows you of when we look inward, this is what we see. And the real relationship with God should be for everyone of us, the garden of Eden, spiritually speaking.

III. Building a Biblical Christian Life

Today, I want to show you what all this will lead to in our Christian lives. Building the biblical Christian life. We don't know how to do that today. Because we don't follow the simple biblical principle of looking inward and building our relationship as I have laid it out. Where I want to take you today is what I would call the final phase.

The Christian life is a series in a progression of going up different levels. It is like the stairs of a high rise building that has a hundred or two hundred stories/levels in it. Like the levels of the stairs in any building, there will be a door on every level on that floor that you can get off and not go any further. I have noticed in Christianity, (over the last fifty years of my life) that a lot of God's people get off on floors and never make it to the top. In fact, most of God's people get off somewhere between the twentieth and the thirtieth floor. Because it is just too hard to keep climbing up those levels. I understand that. Climbing up those levels will strengthen your legs (your walk with God). Climbing up those levels will build up your endurance (your ministry with God). It is important for every one of us to keep moving up those levels. I wish every Christian that I ever had in my ministry would have done that. It is so easy when you get distracted because you are not looking inwardly. You are not doing what you need to do inside. And it is so easy to get off at the twenty-ninth floor, and that is where you stay.

❖ Our Growth Process---What We have Learned in Psalms (so far)

Let me go back and recap our growth process as I have laid it out for you in a different aspect each week.

- **Chapter 1.** We saw how we lose our walk with God. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the council of the ungodly.....
- **Chapter 2.** How does the heathen rage? We saw that the heathen will rage against everything that God tries to put in our lives.
- **Chapter 3.** We saw all the trouble that comes with the world in our lives. When you hang out with God's enemies, in time you make them your friends.
- **Chapter 4-5.** We saw when a man rejects reproof and rebuke, he lands into the hands of God's chastisement.
- **Chapter 6.** We talked about the story of the prodigal son. I showed you how this man, which is David in the Psalms, he gets right with God. And like the prodigal son does in the New Testament, he comes back from the far country. I also took time to show you the valley of the pig pen.
- **Chapter 7.** Verses 1-2 I showed you now that he is back, the Bible says he is trusting in the Lord.
- **Chapter 7.** Verses 3-5 He has learned the great lesson of a true relationship with God. And we saw last week that he doesn't want to lose it again. So, like in James 1:23-25 he is looking inwardly. He is looking at the Bible as the looking glass that shows us our

natural face when we look into it. He is getting honest with God and not blaming everybody else for his problems. He knows who he really is and the work it is going to take to stay with the Lord.

We see the child of God has come through these stages. He has learned from his mistakes. Another thing most of us don't do! He has grown and matured and has added the right things to his faith (2 Peter 1:5-8). We see his prayer widen and more biblical and deeper as he approaches, what I would call, the greatest level of his Christian life.

IV. Psalms 7:6 Arise, O Lord (Get me out of here!)

Arise, O LORD, in thine anger, lift up thyself because of the rage of mine enemies: and awake for me [to] the judgment [that] thou hast commanded. Psalms 7:6

Now we see the next level. He is sick of this old world and has come to the place that he now loves the things that God loves and hates the things that God hates. He is exactly where he needs to be and where we should all be. The cry and prayer now is, Lord get me out of here! He is so in tune with God that he is living every day of his life like it might be the last day of his life.

I have often wondered. I know why God does not tell us the time of the rapture of the church. He knows us too well. If we were really where we needed to be, and the Lord came down and whispered in our ear the day the rapture would take place. God's people ought to kick it into high gear and do everything they could, to reach everyone that they could. But that is not us today. We would go out and buy everything that we could knowing we would not have to pay for it. We would run up our credit card knowing that we wouldn't have to make a payment. We would take that information and use it for our own self. He knows us too well.

Now this man is living everyday like it may be his last. He is focused on his coming. He is looking and praying for the Lord's return.

❖ John Our Model for our Relationship with God

Another great example of this in the New Testament is found in the life of John. John the apostle, one of the original twelve. We saw him when we studied the book of John as one of the most perfect models in the whole Bible of what we should be in our relationship with God. When it comes to John, he is set apart from the other twelve for a reason. We learn that out of the twelve that are with the Lord, John is the only one that the Bible says that the Lord loved. He loved them all, but there was a special love that John had for Christ that we ought to have. And that set him above the other eleven. John is the only one in the Bible who lays his head of the breast of Jesus and hears the heartbeat of God. Something that only you and me as a New Testament Christian can do with the word of God. **God's heartbeat is what you hold in your hands today.** We saw how John goes all the way to the cross when everyone else flees. When Christ is at the Lord's Supper, and he says somebody is going to betray me this night. The Bible

makes it clear that everyone of the apostles looked at Jesus and said, "Lord is it I?" John looks at Him and says, "Lord, who is it?" Every one of those eleven in their minds thought it was possible that they could leave Him and did. But not John! That is a picture of where we ought to be today! I know many of God's people out there wish I was some soft soap evangelical guy that never preached hard and made everybody love him. Let me tell you something. **Truth is truth and you are better off hearing the truth here than at the judgment seat of Christ.**

❖ Five Wisdom Books Written by John

John in the New Testament is most complete example of what our lives should be in our relationship with Christ. You will also remember that John writes five of the wisdom books. By doing this we see what we should know about God and the Bible. I showed you where the **gospel of John was written so a man could get saved. When he wrote 1st John which is an epistle, it deals with what our fellowship should be. In 2nd and 3rd John we get our understanding of the nation of Israel. In the fifth book, the book of Revelation, it becomes the capstone and the overview of everything God is doing.**

The book of Revelation contains all the events of two thousand plus years that will lead to our going home. Wisdom for the child of God will be in these five books that John wrote. A Christian who is saved five years or more and you don't understand these things? This is why Christianity is in the mess that it is in! This is not popular preaching. That is why when you go to most churches you will never hear anything like this. You will hear stuff that will make you feel good about yourself. But you will never find many pastors that tell you that you need to look inside yourself.

The book of Revelation talks about the church age for two thousand years and breaks it down into seven phases. Then the rapture in chapter 4. The tribulation in chapters 5 through 18, the second coming in chapter 19. The millennium and the great white throne in chapter 20 and the new heavens and new earth in chapter 21. Eternity in chapter 22. In the mix of all that you will find for you and me the marriage of the Lamb and the marriage supper.

❖ Would the Lord's Coming Interrupt Your Day?

Please, take this is in the spirit it is given. You are looking at a pastor who loves you. Who will take all the rebuke and criticism from everybody on the planet that doesn't like this church. Or that doesn't like me or the Bible, so you can have the truth. When we fail to look inside ourselves is why many of us got up this morning and never considered that the first words out of our mouths should be, arise O Lord!

I wanted to come to church today and see all of you. Last night at volleyball was a great time for me. But I would have given it all up if He had just come yesterday. I would much rather Him do the preaching up in heaven this morning than be here in this pulpit. It would be alright with me

if He came today! I got plans this afternoon. One of them is a nap! I don't have anything on my agenda that I wouldn't throw in the trash if I just thought He would arise and take us home!

I know a lot of God's people have medical issues in their life, some are terminal, and I totally understand that when you get to that point in your life the idea of the Lord coming and taking you out of your affliction is a very real thing. But what about the rest of us where everything is going fine? **Would the Lord coming interrupt your day tomorrow?**

A.) Two Great Keys in Revelation

The five books that John writes will show us what we should see, understand, and what God is doing. How many times do we lose sight of that? I think it is the biggest problem that God's people have that leave them and their families up for grab by the world. When John writes you will see in **Revelation 1:19 he writes in three tenses**. He is told to write **what has been, where we are at and where we are going**. The most complete layout all in one book. In those five wisdom books you have everything that you need.

For me, there are **two great keys in Revelation** that personally are for me. One is a doctrinal and the key to the whole Bible. The other is inspirational which is the key to everything in my life after salvation---Psalms 7:6. We talk about understanding and wisdom. We talk about perception and perspective. Well, the end of the book of Revelation, here it is.

1.) Doctrinal – The Bible is a Complete Circle Revelation 22:14

Blessed [are] they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. Revelation 22:14

This verse is rejected by every apostate Bible college in the country and ninety-nine percent of the pastors and Bible teachers. They cannot begin to understand why there has to be a tree of life in Revelation 22:14. They get why there is one in Genesis but not Revelation. Don't take my word for it! If you are going to another church some place, ask your pastor about it. The answer to this is the key to the whole Bible. You are told it is a verse that should not be in your Bible by all the scholars and pastors. They say the better manuscripts (Roman Catholic ones) don't have that verse in them. In fact, the only manuscript that has Revelation 22:14 in it is the manuscript that your King James Bible comes from. **Why is this verse so important? Because it shows you the Bible is a complete circle**. The key to understanding the Bible is realizing history always repeats itself. You will find in Ezekiel 36:35 it talks about when Christ comes back it is a garden of Eden just like it was in Genesis.

*And they shall say, **This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities [are become] fenced, [and] are inhabited.** Ezekiel 36:35*

The Bible becomes a complete circle. There is a tree of life in Genesis 2:8 and one in Revelation 22:14. It starts in a garden, and it all ends in a garden. As Isaiah 46:10 says:

Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times [the things] that are not [yet] done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Isaiah 46:10

Learning the end from the beginning. That is the doctrinal application. The whole Bible in history is laid out based on that one verse! We call these **salient verses** which mean most important or most prominent to be understood.

2.) Inspirational -- Even so, Come, Lord Jesus! Revelation 22:20

Then we have the inspirational. This is where every child of God, if you are truly saved, have walked up those levels and you didn't get off on the twenty-ninth floor. Or the tenth floor, or maybe you are still in the lobby. **This is where every child of God should be after they understand the Bible, God's plan, the history of the work of God, and how it applies to our lives. Through your intimate time, looking inwardly, you will get there.**

Years ago, I heard a message by a guy who was a really good preacher. No, I was not listening to one of my own messages. This guy said God's people are so complacent and so satisfied today with all the things of this world. This was over thirty or forty years ago. He says everything around them that has nothing to do with God has attracted them. And what they try to do is bring all those worldly things in and try to tell us this is of God. It was an incredible message.

He said that the coming of the Lord for Christians today, the very thought would be an inconvenience to most of God's people. It would ruin their plans. He said in time, the world will have to get so bad that Christians and their life will be under such an attack. That God's people will beg for Him to come back because of what is going on around them. God's people have become like Israel a dysfunctional church body, without any idea of God's victory in their lives.

Then he said, if God would grant you one wish or prayer on the spot, what would you ask Him? The answer to that is found in the last prayer in the Bible that was recorded by the greatest Christian that ever lived and the greatest model for us. It is the last thing that John tells us in Revelation 22:20. **The last request and prayer by John in the Bible, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus".** That is where your Bible ends. It ends with the greatest Christian model and picture of what your life and my life should be! A man who started out just like us! But walked up those levels and never got off on the twenty-ninth floor. This old boy back then said **our Christian lives will simply be defined by two days. The day you get saved and the day He comes for His bride and the condition He finds us in.**

❖ One Day He's Coming! Oh, Glorious Day!

We see it back in the book of Song of Solomon. The whole book is laid out around two aspects. It starts out by telling us **how Christ looks at me, thinks about me, and can't wait to be with me.** Then you will find chapters on **how I should love Him. How I should view Him, and how I ought to feel the same way and just can't wait until we are together! So, arise O Lord!**

In the New Testament there are no weddings like we have today. Everybody thinks when you have a wedding ceremony that it is out of the Bible. It's not! But you need to understand that nobody in the New Testament gave out wedding rings or made vows. That didn't happen. But **at a wedding you have the bride and the groom. That is a picture of Christ and the church.** The wedding attendants (bride's maids and groomsmen) are found in the book of Song of Solomon which will be all the different Jews and people down through the history of the Bible that show up at our wedding!

Traditionally, the bride and the groom are not to see each other on their wedding day. If you saw each other, it is okay. Right now, I am going to get married to Christ, but I can't see Him. In Song of Solomon chapter 2 He gets a glimpse of me, but I can't see Him. Then on the wedding day, the music begins to play, and the bride enters the room. The groom is standing waiting for her to come down the aisle all dressed in white. And for the first time that day he gets to see her. She comes down the aisle to meet him. Do you know what that is a picture of? **Right now, the church age can't see Him. But there is coming a day when we are going to go to Him, and we will be dressed in white robes of righteousness. It is going to be some day!!!**

Most of God's people get so excited about their own personal wedding day and never think about the one that is coming. Song of Solomon says not only about the aroma and smells, but He can't wait for the bride. He describes her in detail and then she describes Him. What a love story!!!

V. Psalms 7:7-17

Moving on in Psalms 7:7-17 we now see in the rest of the chapter what has really changed about his life. We see that his view of the world and everything in it has clearly changed. He has grown. Verse 6 says, "*Arise O Lord --- lift up thyself because of the rage of mine enemies.*" That will be Psalms 2:1 how does the heathen rage? He knows that now. He says, "*Awake for me to the judgement*". This is the great white throne judgment.

Verse 7 says for all of us, "*return thou on high*". Verse 8 says, "*judge me, O Lord.*" That is the judgment seat of Christ. Verse 9 says, "*Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end.*" This guy now understands that everything he thought, (and we thought) in this world, was so wonderful and great; is against God. Even the church in many cases, according to Revelation 3:20. This guy is sick of the world, the flesh, the devil, sin, wickedness, ungodliness, and everything that is in it. He says in verse 11, "*God judgeth the righteous and God is angry with the wicked every day.*" He says in verse 12 that his sword and his bow are ready. Verse 13 says

“he hath also prepared for him the instruments of death.” That is the tribulation after the rapture and you will find those instruments of death over in Habakkuk 3, Isaiah 9:2, the threshing wheel, and the shadow of death. Then he says in verse 14-15, the world conceived mischief. The world brought forth falsehood. He now understands that the world has lied to him about everything. He has been delivered from all that and now he can see that the devil has fallen into the pit that was dug for him. That will be Jeroboam and the old prophets that we talked about last week. This life is all a lie!!

Verse 16 *“His mischief shall return upon his own head and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.”* Pate is an Old English word meaning “head”. And he winds up being taken just like the world and unsaved people do. All those people that you thought were your friends. All the false preachers out there that can’t get to the truth. They wind up being taken by the very plan that the devil put out there to destroy and stop you. But God delivered you.

❖ Hallelujah Psalms

In verse 17, *“I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness and will sing praise to the name of the Lord most high.”* This is one of the many Psalms in the Bible that we call the “Hallelujah Psalms” where people are singing and laughing and praising God. It is a picture of the victory that we have when Christ comes back and takes us out. I am telling you, don’t let anybody rob you from the victory of that day when Jesus comes! Don’t let anybody get into your world to stop you. Don’t get your nose bent out of joint because you keep looking outwardly and won’t look inwardly. Don’t try to blame your problems on everybody else in life instead of owning it yourself and looking inwardly. And doing what the man did to try and fix them.

God’s people today, as rotten as the world is, can still have the victory today in their life! Why? You are living in a garden, and nobody can take that garden from you. But you can give it away. So many of God’s people have. I see people all the time who are saved but they get an attitude about this or that and their life and family get turned upside down. The devil walks in and steals everything God has for them. They are so busy looking outwardly that when this day comes it won’t be, arise O Lord; it will be oh no O Lord!

I believe at the judgement seat of Christ there will be some of God’s people that will be on their knees begging God to go back down to this earth for just ten or fifteen minutes to do it the right way. But it won’t happen. You have all of this right now in your life. Don’t listen to some preacher out there who will never tell you the truth because he wants to keep everybody happy. They are out there! The evangelical crowd never preaches on sin, or on this or that. He needs you to be there because he needs your money. So, he is not going to take the chance to preach the truth to you that could make you mad and cause you to leave. God’s people fall for it and in the process, they lose everything God has for them at the judgement seat of Christ. All because they keep looking outward instead of inward. Folks, we all need to work on it.

Most of you are where you need to be, so the next thing you need to do is guard what you have and get up those levels.

❖ What Great Things has the Lord Done for You?

The Bible tells us in Ephesians 4:15 that we are to grow up (this is our going up the levels) as Christians not to be like Him but grow up **into Him**. Big difference!

In the Bible there are **four types of laughter** in the Bible. There is the laughter of sinful merriment, which is the world, (Ecclesiastes 7:2). There is the laughter of skepticism. That is the Bible college guys and the people who don't want to believe the bible, (Genesis 18:12). Then you will find the laughter of condemnation. That is the laughter of God when man is finally judged at the great white throne judgement, (Proverbs 1:26). But then you find in Psalms 126:2 the laughter of my victory when He arises and comes back. "*When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.*" I love that!

Psalms 126:1 *When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.* 2. *Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them.*

The day you got saved God turned the captivity in your life. You were on your way to hell, in darkness of the world and sin. Now you awake in the newness of life, and He turned your captivity. **You know what your Christian life should be like? A dream life!** I can't believe God is who He is. I can't believe He did that. Somebody pinch me and wake me up. That ought to be the Christian life! Instead, it is a nightmare. It is a tragedy with your kids and your marriage. Everything is falling apart. What happened to the dream?

Verse 2. "*Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them.*" Let me ask you. **What great things has the Lord done for you and your family? Anything?** At the end of the day this message is the reality of the Christian life. What great things has He done for you? What great things is He doing? Is your Christian life like that garden where it smells? Is your Christian life like a dream? I can't believe God is so good to me. I can't believe He did this or that! I even found my car keys!!!

❖ Joy Cometh in the Morning

Verse 4. "*Turn again our captivity O Lord as the streams in the south* (Psalms 126:4). "*They that sow in tears shall reap in joy*" (Psalms 126:5). I am not going to tell you there are no tears in this life. I am not going to tell you there is no heartache, or that you are not going to stumble and fall. **I am telling you that joy cometh in the morning!!!** And this guy says, arise O Lord and get me out of here! We may sow in tears, but we are going to reap in joy on that morning. Then it says, "*He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come*

again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.” (Psalms 126:6). The sheaves are not only the souls we win to Christ, but it is the things that God gave us in life.

There is a song in that hymnal that is about this very day and the title is, *Must I go in Empty Handed*?. Some of God’s people are going to go in that day empty handed. There is no need for that. You are not going to tell me you are the exception to the rule and that God will give everybody else a victory but won’t give it to you. No, you didn’t want it. You never went up those levels. You went up to the twentieth floor or the twenty-fifth floor and you got off! The Christian staircase of life; growing through the levels that we have seen in Psalms. Becoming more Christ-like every day of your life. Every month, every year and one day He arises and now you are like him in Psalms 7, getting to that final stage. We can’t stand it here any longer, but we understand that we are here, and we are to occupy until He comes. But that doesn’t mean I like it. Everything in this world exists for one reason to destroy you and your family and everything God has for you. But it doesn’t have to be that way. When He comes back, **we can stand there and know that we have finished the course and have grown up into Him and have completed the stages.**

VI. Summary

The job of this church, my job is to help you up those stages/levels. Many of you have been blinded and lost sight of everything in your Christian life. You are floating in the sea of life. It doesn’t have to be that way. People today don’t want hard preaching; they don’t want to be held accountable. They don’t want to take responsibility for their problems, and this is what leads to the apathy of Christianity. This is what leads to God’s people just being complacent, that if Jesus would come tomorrow, it would ruin your day.

Joy cometh in the morning. God has got something for each one of you. You young pastors out there that have written to me. I will give you the best shot that I can. Because you are in it up to your eyeballs. You need to have somebody that has been there and done that to show you what you are going into.

Some of you are going to look inwardly, yet some of you will only look outwardly for the rest of your life. Why? Because it is so easy to blame our problems on somebody else. That is why they will go to a church that doesn’t preach the Bible. Most of them don’t even believe the Bible. Because they can go there and never feel threatened like you do here by the conviction of the holy spirit of God that you are not doing what is right. Everybody wants to go to a church where when you leave you feel everything is just fine. I don’t want you leaving here today thinking everything is fine with you. I want you to look inside you. We all got problems and issues. This is why God gave the church and pastors that don’t mix words. This is why God gave you the word of God that you could have it for yourself. Put the holy spirit of God inside you can take and go up those levels. So, we got to the final level today!