

I. Review

❖ Psalms 8 and Proverbs 8 go Hand-in-Hand

Psalms Chapter 8 and Proverbs Chapter 8 really go hand in hand as two of the deepest places in your Bible. When we came through Proverbs, **I showed you how Proverbs 8 takes you deep inside God's total plan.** It shows you where it all started, how it began, and how it moves through time. It's probably the deepest chapter in the Bible on the hand of God and what He is doing from Genesis 1:1 all the way up to where we're at today. **In Psalms 8, I showed you the practical side of it all, and how you and I fit into it as God moves through history to establish His government.**

❖ Three parts to History, Spiritual Beings, God's Order & Structure

I also showed you that there are three parts to history. Without these three parts, you'll never figure much out about life, yourself, history, or certainly what God is doing. That obviously is past, present, and future.

I showed you the different spiritual beings that God created for His purpose, honor, and glory to establish His government. I hope you got those in your Bible because they're going to pop up either as you're working with somebody or in your own study. It will be of great value to you as you learn your Bible.

I showed you within God's order and structure, the Bible says that He made man a little lower than the angels; moreover, He gave him three things: a crown, glory, and honor. I showed you in God's overall plan what these three things really mean.

❖ The Kingdom of Heaven and The Kingdom of God

We also really nailed down the idea of God's two kingdoms—the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God. You should now thoroughly understand them and their importance. When a pastor or Bible teacher makes them both the same, which everybody seems to do today, they lose any truth about God, His plan, and what He's doing. This is because **all of your Bible and what God is doing will be wrapped around those two kingdoms. Every government, nation, and kingdom today is basically a counterfeit of God's coming kingdom.** The devil designed it that way. You saw how God intended it to be with the nation of Israel in the Old Testament; however, once that didn't work out and the times of the Gentiles came in, the devil made sure that all the nations that he was going to bring into play were going to, one way or the other, counterfeit God's true kingdom and government and get people off track. And that's exactly what he's done.

I told you about the book *The Sure Word of Prophecy* by Peter Ruckman. It's not a book for just anybody, and that's okay. You've got to decide when the Bible is going to be the most important

thing in your life and then put it into a proper perspective from there; however, it is a must for a serious Bible student. Years ago, I went through it three or four times breaking it down chapter by chapter without moving on to the next chapter until I thoroughly understood the chapter I had just come through. Dr. Ruckman also did a drawing of the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven. The wall chart we had at the other building was based on that and having a visual really cements it.

❖ The Devil uses Both the Secular and Religious Worlds

God established the bounds for man, and when man gets out of bounds, he starts to take the honor, glory, and the things God gave him (kingdom, crown) and turns it to himself. He then develops a mindset that replaces God with himself, and as the Bible says in Romans 1, now they worship the creature more than they do the creator. Man will establish himself as the final authority, and he too will set up a counterfeit government or kingdom. You will see it in both the secular world as well as the religious world.

In the world's governmental system, after Genesis chapter 10, it all changes. Most people don't realize that up to Genesis 10 with the tower of Babel, it was a one world government and language. It wasn't diverse like it is today. God knew continuing that way would become a real problem. In Genesis 10-11, they're building a tower whose top will reach unto heaven (which is a study in itself). The Bible says that God came down and looked at what they were doing. It's always been amazing to me how it doesn't take much for God to mess up our plans. We put the most elaborate plans together to get what we want, and all it takes is a little monkey wrench that God throws into the plan to make it all go sideways. And that's what He did here. He didn't bring down fire from heaven or an earthquake; He just changed the languages. The Bible says at that major point in history, *they left off to build the city* while speaking different languages. Now we have the beginning of the nations. Now it's all diverse. **When the language changes the nations begin, and the devil uses these nations to not only control the world, but to eliminate the idea of God's coming government.** I showed you in Romans 1 what man's desire is once he gets out of bounds—to completely eradicate any knowledge from God. So, you'll find countries that in time turn against everything that God and the Bible are.

You'll also see it in the religious world. **The devil uses both the secular and religious world hand in hand.** The religious world will be the groups that came out of the Roman Catholic Church during the reformation with Martin Luther. This will be the protestant churches like the Methodists, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Episcopalians (church of England), and some Neo-Evangelical groups. We call these denominations "kingdom builders." They take the position that they are establishing the kingdoms of God. They don't make a distinction between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven—they think they're the same. They take the post-millennial or amillennial approach to Christ's return. In other words, they think they're going to make the world better every day. They do this through the social gospel, good works, peace programs, or standing up against war. They are the ones who say we are all God's children. Now, we may be all God's creation, but we're not all God's children. They also say that God hates the sin but loves the sinner, and that is not true either.

In 1994, the Catholic Church got together with the Neo-Evangelical leaders to sign an accord in which they would work together to bring the kingdom in. Their idea was that they were going to clean the world up; however, it's not getting better—it's getting worse. **God is going to come back, take it by force, and establish His kingdom. That's what we call the pre-millennial return of the Lord Jesus Christ. The whole Bible is built around the pre-millennial return of Christ. Christ is coming back as a conquering king (Revelation 19:16). He will subdue the nations and set up His two kingdoms (Revelation 11:15).** When you get to the point where you reject the Bible and adopt one of these ridiculous ideas, you lose all your understanding; and as we saw in Romans 1:22, the end result is *professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.*

The devil will use both systems, the secular and religious world, but you see it in modern day Christianity, too. Pastors come to the place where their idea of building a church is some mega church. It's like they're building their own kingdom down here. Why do you need a \$200 million dollar church building when you can put a Butler Building up for \$200,000-300,000 that will cover the bases? Even though they can't do it entirely, they want to base it on Solomon's Temple because it's so beautiful and they think people will come to it; however, **the true beauty of a church is if you have the treasure of the word of God in it.** The devil uses the secular world and higher education to promote the idea that there is no God. We have many generations who don't know if there is a God, or if they do, don't know anything about Him. In the Christian higher education world, he teaches you that you don't have a Bible that is real. Then the devil just walks out the door laughing. This is how he operates. Once you understand that, you see exactly what we're up against today.

II. Psalms 9:1-4: A Solid Practical Lesson for All

Today we're going to move into Psalms 9. Doctrinally, this is a millennial psalm (the second coming into the millennium). **As all millennial psalms, it will deal with establishing God's government and those two kingdoms.**

You will also find that these millennial Psalms really have some good inspirational material in them for your practical, everyday life. Over the last few weeks we've covered some solid doctrine for you to get into your Bible. Today I want to give you a good, practical lesson out of Psalms 9 that is for everybody—no matter what level you're on spiritually.

Psalms 9:1-4. I will praise [thee], O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

2. I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.

3. When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence.

4. For thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging right.

❖ When you got Saved, Three Basic Things Changed About You:

1. The Inner Man—When you got saved, something changed inside of you.
2. The Outer Man—Once the inner man was changed, the outer man changed. Things are different now.
3. The End of Man—Once the inner man then outer man changed, the end of man changed. You're no longer going to hell; you're going to heaven.

The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 5:17 that when the inner man changed, you became a new creature in Christ Jesus, and *old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new*. We talk about the word repentance. People say it means to be saved; it doesn't—you know that. The word repentance never means salvation. **Repentance simply means that once the inner man changes, the outer man changes.** These three things, even though they are basic, are the beginning of you understanding where you're at today with the Lord.

In our first four verses, we will find six solid, basic, practical principles for the Christian life that you need to understand based on the changes in your life—the inner man, the outer man, and (praise God) the end of man.

III. Six Practical Principles for the Christian Life

1. Praising God with your Whole Heart

Psalms 9:1: *I will praise [thee], O LORD, with my whole heart; ...*

When you give your whole heart to God, it will be the day of your salvation which will change the inner man. It is the beginning of your spiritual growth. Then in time, through the outer man (our life), God will show forth His marvelous works. It's profound in its simplicity. A few weeks ago in Psalms 8, I showed you the four areas that God uses to declare His glory—the heavens, the word of God, Christ Himself, and you & me.

❖ The Concept of Contrast

One of the great ways to study your Bible is understanding the concept of contrast. These are things that change in the Bible, and by the contrast (light vs darkness), you get a great lesson from it. It's in our lives, too. It's the world seeing the contrast between what you were before the inner man got changed, and now when the inner and outer man gets changed, seeing the difference in your life—the contrast. Unfortunately, most of God's people never understand this. **They think the greatest witness in their life is what they say, however, the greatest witness in their life is the change in the outer man and the contrast between the two.**

Someone asked the question a couple of weeks ago in Bible study, from James 2 where it talks about *faith without works is dead*. I get from a doctrinal standpoint of James, it's Israel and the

tribulation; however, there is a practical side to it, too. It deals with God's marvelous works in your life. **You may be saved, but if you don't have the outer man displaying the marvelous works that God wants to do through you, as far as the world is concerned, your faith is dead even though you may be alive in Christ Jesus.** We get the idea that the best witness is what we say. Every Christian ought to witness, and sometimes you should even use words. The greatest witness in your life is people seeing the contrast—once the inner man got changed, the outer man got changed.

2. When you have given your Whole Heart to God, then you will show forth all His Marvelous Works

Psalms 9:1...I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

❖ The Evidence of your Salvation

The evidence of your salvation will simply be what God does with you. I know this is foreign to modern day Christianity. You have heard me say many times, and this is not a judgment on anybody, that many if not most of the people who claim to be saved in the day and age that we live in have probably never truly been born again. I say that based on 50+ years of dealing with people. **I say that based on understanding the great teaching in the Bible that the only true evidence of your salvation, no matter what you say, will be what God does through you—the marvelous works.** When you give your whole heart to the Lord, the marvelous works just come automatically. **When you don't see those marvelous works, the evidence, I'm just going to tell you (and I'm not making a judgment), there is something wrong.**

I watch how God uses you all. One of the greatest joys of my life in ministry is to watch how God changes you. I watch you when you come in, and I'll watch you either get saved or plugged in and through a process of time, it's proof that something changed with the inner man because the outer man now begins to show forth this marvelous work. I watch you parents and how proud you are when your child does a devotion or preaches somewhere. You get to enjoy the blessings knowing that your child is where they're at now, and God is using them. The evidence that they are truly saved is not on a Sunday school card someplace or a date written in their Bible. **The evidence of their salvation is the fact that God is doing marvelous works through them. It's just that simple.**

Many times, long before you see it, I see the hand of God working in your life. I see the hand of God orchestrating circumstances in your life that you don't see. You think people just randomly show up in your life; however, God saved you for a purpose, and He wants to bring you to the point where you can really be used of God. He will not only do that once you're here, but He'll do that through the people and the circumstances that helped get you here. The quicker you understand that, the quicker you're going to be on the road to the great marvelous works that God wants to do with you.

❖ Some Things must Simply come from Building your Relationship with God

As a pastor, there are some things I simply cannot teach you. I can teach you the Bible, I can break it down for you, and I can give you the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Heaven like I did a week or so ago. I can lay out the books of the Bible, we can have a Bible Institute, we can have a People Ministry, I can talk about loving the Book, loving God, sacrifice, and commitment, but there are certain aspects of a solid Christian life and the evidence of it that I simply can't teach you. They must come from you building your relationship with God. There are certain things and certain places which only God can reach. **I may lay the foundation, but there comes a point when I can't really go any farther. You must pick up what the pastor says, and you must begin to do something with it.** When you begin to do that, the evidence comes into your life, and the marvelous works will be right there with you.

I can't teach you when you work with somebody to go that extra mile. It's how you use everything to help people which ultimately helps the ministry here. I watch some of you develop little Bible studies at work and bring people to church or volleyball. That happens because something changed about you on the inside, and now God has His hand in your life. You fellows get your apartments together, and rather than party, you live together as a base of ministry to help other people. You use it first as a camaraderie among yourselves to help each other stay accountable, and then you reach out and invite little groups over. I can't teach you to do that. **It's the evidence of God working in your life. It comes because you have bought into the word of God, you have given your whole heart to God, and now God is going to do marvelous works through you.**

❖ Allowing God to Work Through You

You give your life to the people that you work with. You go way over and above, and in time, you reproduce yourself in others. That is the evidence that God is working through you. I've seen kids that didn't have anything, and the Lord only knows where they would be if you had not seen the need. I didn't tell you to do it. Many of you have come to me and said you were going to do it, but initially, it was God speaking through you. That's the evidence. **It's you getting changed in the inner man and then the outer man changing other people. That's a result of you allowing God to work through you and do His marvelous works through the outer man.**

People will call me and say they are working with someone and had an issue, then they will tell me how they handled it. They ask me what I think, and I say that I think they did it exactly the way I would have done it. I can't teach you those things. Some of us have a real kindred spirit in the ministry and the word of God because we work so closely together. But I'm going to tell you right now, those kind of things on that kind of level is nothing more than God's hand in your life doing those marvelous works. It's the evidence that God is in your life. **In this church, young and old, you see the evidence of people's salvation through everything that they do and all the things that they get into.**

3. The Source of our Gladness and Rejoicing will be our Relationship with God

Psalms 9:2: I will be glad and rejoice in thee:...

❖ Knowing God—The Theme of I John

Now we see the source of our gladness and rejoicing. It will be our relationship with God. Notice it says *in thee*. **I've said for years that the key to being what God wants you to be is learning who God is, and the greatest book on that is I John.** Almost all the commentators and preachers out there will tell you the theme of I John is love, and that is totally wrong. The theme of I John is not love; **the theme of I John is knowing.** In five little chapters, you have the words *to know* or *knowing* 27 times. That's why marriages fail and why we get into the messes that we get into. We always fall in love with something before we really know what it is. That's why so many of God's people who claim to get saved come to church for a few weeks or months then you never see them again. It's because they never really got to know Him.

One of the key areas here is to build your relationship in your own time. I saw a movie filmed somewhere in Alaska where they would get 4-foot snow drifts which would cover the roads. One guy's job was to drive a snowplow to keep the roads open because no cars could get to any destination until he plowed the road and made it clear enough for them to pass. I've always looked at my ministry just like that. **I look at my job as to plow the road for you to get every obstacle out of the way so you can grow to be what God wants you to be. I can't make you grow, and I can't make you get there. All I can do is plow the road. That's what ministry is, and once I plow the road for you and you start working with somebody, you're going to plow the road for them.** Learning to know God is a process and when you get to know Him, as the old saying goes, to know Him is to love Him...and it starts with us just getting the inner man changed, beginning to take our first baby steps, and allowing God in a very small way to begin to use us.

❖ God will Take what you can do well Now, use it, and Grow you Through it

Matthew 25:23. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

I understand the doctrinal aspect of Matthew 25:23 (tribulation/millennial context), but **it's also a great practical verse for every child of God where Jesus tells us if we are faithful over a few things, He'll make us ruler over many.** It sets the principle for growth. When you begin to do something, basically God will use it to grow you to the next level. It's just that simple.

Moses was the greatest prophet and leader Israel ever had. In Exodus 4, God wants to use him to go to Pharaoh and has all these great plans for him; however, Moses doesn't feel as though he's able or ready to do them. God is talking about him going before Pharaoh and doing all these great signs and wonders and Moses is just saying, "How in the world am I ever going to get to

that point?” Then God says to him in verse 4, “Okay Moses, what do you have in your hand?” and Moses says, “Well, I’ve got a shepherd’s rod.” God says, “Then, we’ll start and just use that,” and the growth of Moses to become the great leader started just with what he had in his hand. My point is this—whatever you can do well right now, God will take it and use it, and grow you through it.

Years ago, we had dirt bikes at camp, and the kids would tear the dirt bikes up all the time. They were always beat up by the time camp was over, but I had a guy one time that had just come into my church. He said he enjoyed working on motors and would take those dirt bikes home and get them running. That guy wound up becoming a pastor and working in a church simply because there was a time in his life when he asked himself what he had in his hand and could do for God. He had a wrench in his hand, and God used him through that. He’ll take whatever you’ve got and wherever you want to start. You don’t have to know how to preach or know all the Bible. He’ll start with whatever you’ve got in your hand. That is the process by which God begins the marvelous works because when you begin to do things for the Lord, no matter how small, that’s when the Bible says in Matthew 25:23 that when you’re faithful over a few things, He’ll make you ruler over many. Then he says enter into the joy of the Lord.

The joy of the Lord in your life starts when you start to do something for Him no matter how small it is. These are the marvelous works He does through us, and our rejoicing in Him over it. This is why so many Christians, who I believe are truly saved, are truly miserable. **There’s no joy because joy, my friend, only comes from God using you in the marvelous works He does through you—no matter how basic it starts.**

❖ With every Obstacle will come Opportunities

As you grow up through the different levels of spiritual growth, you will meet challenges on each level. Nobody gets saved and then just runs up the hill and makes it to the top. There’s always a staircase of levels that you must go through, and on every level of your spiritual growth you will find an obstacle—something you’re going to have to deal with if you’re going to get to the next level. I’ve seen people get up to about five or six levels and then find out what the real issue is in their lives. This is where so many people stop; they’re just not willing to get through the barrier of that obstacle, but **I’m going to tell you that with every obstacle will also come opportunities. What the devil does is try to get you to look at the obstacles and miss the opportunities.** I always wanted to get through the obstacles because I couldn’t wait to see what the opportunity was.

God, through the opportunities, will teach you how to trust Him. He’ll teach you and show you the principles. You’ll see His hand in your life, and then through the principles, see how He’s going to establish things in your life to get you where He wants you to be. Then every day of your life, with every obstacle you have to deal with (and that you’re willing to deal with), you’ll get deeper and closer to the Lord Jesus and your joy becomes fuller every day. And I John 1:4 which talks about our fellowship and relationship with God says, *And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.* **There will be no joy in your life without the marvelous works because joy only comes in Him, and it only comes through what you’re willing to do for Him.**

4. Praising Him for all He does in us.

Psalms 9:2...I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.

Now we see our attitude in our walk and relationship with God...praising Him for all He does in us. People think they are having a praise service because they have a praise band, but that is the mark of the Laodicean church. Praise doesn't come from a band; praise doesn't come from you having some praise service. **Praise comes from what God is doing through your life.** Now where do I obviously go with this? When you don't have God doing anything in your life, you're going to make it a praise band. You're not going to pretend you're a Christian and not have praise in your life. You're just going to make it something that isn't real because there's nothing real in your life. **Praise comes from you giving God praise from the marvelous works He's doing in your life. When there's no marvelous works, you have to find your praise someplace else.**

I'm thankful every day for my family and for the fact that we have a ministry team together. I praise God for that, and I know many of you have this, too. That's what you want to praise God for. You don't need a band. **Your praise is thanking God for what He's done with your family and what He's doing through your life.** I also look at all of you, the church that God has allowed me to be a pastor of—I mean He's The Shepherd of the flock, but He gives me the job of being the sheep dog. This is my Cave of Adullam (I Samuel 22). As far as I'm concerned, it's the greatest job in the world.

❖ God has put us Together in this Church by His Design

I look at you, what God has done with you, what we have here, and I know how I feel about you—you're my friends through the good times and the bad times. You're like the guy in Philippians 2:25 of whom Paul calls his *companion in labour, and fellowsoldier*. We have suffered together, we have bled together, we've walked the course, ran the race of life together, and experienced the blessings together; however, without the Holy Spirit of God putting us all together, we never would have met. We would have never had what we have here together, but I'm going to tell you something. **In this church, you and me, God saw and put us together in His mind before Genesis 1:1. He's orchestrated every circumstance to get the people here that He wants to be here.**

I believe with all my heart that He brings people here and gives them a chance to fix their issues; however, some of them say no thanks. The ones that do, though, never just look at it as a bunch of people meeting on Sunday morning. Sometimes I think it's easy for some of God's people to take everything we have here for granted. The blessings of God here are overwhelming. It says in Psalms 23:5, *my cup runneth over*, and you could almost write *Old Paths Baptist Church* next to that verse. It has nothing to do with me; it has to do with all of us.

The real praise of any church ought to be out of the mouth of everybody because you understand that God has put us together by His design. **He put us together for a purpose, and I never take for granted what God has given me because each of us are a part of what God's mind had for this church.** The greatest gift God ever gave us outside of our salvation and our family

is this church and each other, and in this we should never forget to sing praises to His name, O thou most High. **It's the reason we are here today and the reason what we have is a work of God and not just a work for God...and boy there is a big difference.**

5. Your Enemies and the World can't Stand in God's Presence

Psalms 9:3: When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence.

Oh, what a great practical verse for all of us. **You see when you make the word of God the center of your life, like the three families camping around the ark, the world and your enemies will never be able to stand against you**—whether they're saved or lost. You never have to fear them. There's a great lesson I've always followed in John 18:4-6, and most people never make the connection.

John 18:4-6: Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him (they're getting ready to come and take Him to be crucified), went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

*5. They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, **I am [he]** (there's the old Tetragrammaton out of Exodus). And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.*

*6. As soon then as he had said unto them, **I am [he]**, they went backward, and fell to the ground.*

The world couldn't stand up to the word of God and the I am. This is the boldness we should have as God's people. This is the power untapped for every one of us who's saved. The power of the word of God that your enemy will never stand against the I am or what it says.

Matthew 24:35: Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. God's word is settled in heaven. Your enemies and the world cannot stand. I don't care what it looks like, when you're in the middle of it and you're holding the line, you'll still be standing there doing the job.

6. God will Maintain your Christian Walk

*Psalms 9:4: For thou hast **maintained** my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging right.*

The key word here is maintained. I love that word. If you live in an apartment someplace, your apartment complex has a maintenance man who fixes everything that's wrong. If you live in your own house, most generally you are your maintenance man, but the thing I love about this is it shows that **in my Christian walk, I have a maintenance man; it's the Lord Jesus Christ.** He fixes everything in my life daily. When the lights go out in my Christian life, I just call the maintenance man, and He helps me fix it. I thank God that after I got saved, He doesn't expect

me to figure it all out by myself. He's given me a maintenance man, and He maintains my right and my cause. That's an incredible principle.

In every situation God puts you in, know this, His word is your power and He's got your back. He will maintain your Christian life every day of your life. The problem with all of us, when we get out of fellowship and don't do what's right, we just want to live in a house with a broken sink or a stopped-up toilet; however, most of God's people who truly love the Lord don't want to live like that. There's no joy in a house with no electricity or air conditioning; the joy is the fact that on a daily basis, everything in your house (your body) is maintained. That's the key.

IV. Summary

Once you get saved, if you begin the process of growth of the inner man to the outer man, there's nothing that will stop you other than yourself.

I watch it in your life...how far you've come from and where you're at now, and I can only imagine where God is going to go with you. **Every one of you is invaluable to this church and to me because of the potential that you all have.** And even more so, you're invaluable to God. I'm not the kind of pastor who has to control everybody and everything; however, those types are out there. You can't do anything without getting their permission, and they must control you and manage every part of your life. That's not my style of ministry or leadership. **I try to set the example, try to be the best role model I can be, teach you the Bible, then help you grow to a place of purpose for the Lord because He has a purpose for you.**

You're all on different levels. Some of you will never preach down at the mission, some of you will never preach at the rest home, and some of you will never head up a ministry. That's okay. I think some people get intimidated because others do some of these things, but everybody is on their own level. If you're doing what's right with God and are where you need to be, it's all going to work out for you. All I care about is if you find God's purpose in your life.

A church should be like an engine in a car. All the pieces and parts must work together, or the car doesn't get to where the driver wants to go. In any church, all the pieces, no matter what level they're on, have to work together or this church never gets to where God wants it to go. If you want to do what's right, you're invaluable no matter what level you're on. If you don't want to do what's right, you're still invaluable just based on the potential that you do have. The tragedy is when you never realize it, but that's between you and the Lord.

❖ Earned Responsibility

I want as many people as I can around me who do everything better than I do. That's the way it's supposed to work. When you have that, you give people earned responsibility. Over the years, I've been in churches with some of the goofiest philosophies about working with people. One time they were trying to get a list together of men that they wanted to ask to be deacons. I was the new guy, so I kind of kept my mouth shut; however, I just marveled at some of the asinine things these folks were saying. One man said he had some guys in his Sunday school class that didn't come to church a lot, but he thought if they made them deacons, it would

give them more responsibility so they would come to church. Another said that he had people who were not ready to be deacons but suggested making them “junior deacons.” I must have missed that title somewhere in the New Testament! **The bottom line is that you never give people spiritual responsibility so they’ll become spiritual. They must earn the responsibility for ministry.**

When I give you something to do, no matter what it is, I don’t look back and check on you to see if you did it. You know why? It’s because I trust you, or I wouldn’t give it to you in the first place. I’ve watched you. My job is to know the state of my flocks and look well to my herds (Proverbs 27:23). You’re like the virtuous woman in Proverbs 31:16 who *considereth a field, and buyeth it.* You considered the field that this church is working in, and with your life and your family, you bought into it.

When you buy into any ministry (although I’m talking about the one here), and you make the investment, you get five key results:

1. It makes you stronger.
2. It makes me stronger.
3. It makes the church stronger.
4. It makes the ministry stronger.
5. It will make other people stronger in time.

That’s the concept of building a church as a ministry team where you look at everybody as invaluable whether they see it or not. You’ll always give people the chance to get to the next level. I’ve said it before, a church never defines people because the people will define themselves in time. **And God will get the honor and glory for it from the inner man to the outer man because God changed the end of man. Now we all belong to Him, and we too can say, *I will praise [thee], O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.***

These six principles in Psalms 9 are solid practical teachings on everyday growth and the Christian life. Nothing profound yet the profoundness of it lies in its simplicity because without them, you’ll never be what God saved you for. **The reason for Israel’s failure, looking back, boils down to one verse in 2 Chronicles 15:3, *Now for a long season Israel [hath been] without:***

- *the true God,*
- *and without a teaching priest,*
- *and without law.*

And you will find their basic, fundamental problem is the same one we have today in New Testament Christianity. Israel had lost the concept of God completely just like Christianity has today. Nobody is laying out the true God to them or preaching the word of God, and they don’t have a Bible. This is where we’re at today, and it’s the basic, fundamental issue that has destroyed Christianity in America.