I. Review

Last week we finished Psalms chapter 13. We saw that chapter 13 not only shows the nation of Israel in total collapse right before the captivity, but it also shows in an inspirational application the train wreck of Christianity today. God's people are a defeated broken church.

In verse 4 we talked about the enemy of the church trying to get you off your foundation. To move you, to get you to stumble and fall. To get you off the things that you once believed that saved you. Once you fall, they are rejoicing in your fall. We saw this back in the Old Testament where God wanted to destroy the nation of Israel, Moses interceded for Israel. Moses told God, if you do that all our enemies are going to rejoice because you clobbered Israel. The world will rejoice when you fail. The world will rejoice when the devil moves you off your foundation.

Last Sunday, I tied Psalms 13 around our camp week. I wanted to give you a good report of camp and I wanted to show you that the very things that I told your kids will apply to all of us. The theme of camp was the Born Identity based on the Jason Bourne movie where he had amnesia and couldn't remember who he was. We changed it to the born-again identity. Teaching your kids and you folks how to be unmovable and steadfast. So that our enemies can never rejoice in our failure. I built it around the Seven Things that Changed About You, the Day You Got Saved

Therefore if any man [be] in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 2 Corinthians 5:17

We talked about laying the foundation in your life the day you get saved and then the rest of your Christian life building those seven concepts on that foundation. When you do that, in time, nothing and no one can move you off that foundation. That is key! You now are steadfast and unmovable in what you believe.

The teaching of the Seven Things that Changed About you the Day you got Saved makes up our Discipleship II program. Our Discipleship I program brings you through the basics of what salvation, Christianity and your understanding of all things around it. Discipleship II focuses on a more intense internal upper level of what really changed about you the day you got saved. When you finish Discipleship II, you have a pretty good handle of the foundational basics and the second and third level of your spiritual growth on building your foundation. The key to it all is seeing the importance of the three areas that God has provided for you in this church.

- 1.) A place for you to believe
- 2.) A place for you to belong
- 3.) A place for you to **become**

All through this hopefully we will realize that when it comes to what God has provided for us in this church that we understand that it is all based on two fundamental principles.

- 1.) The choices we make in life.
- 2.) You only get out of something what you are willing to put into it.

Always keeping the song of victory in our hearts due to our steadfastness.

II. The Ministry is People

I have told you many, many times that the ministry is people. The ministry is not programs, or the bus ministry, or a choir. The ministry is people taking the word of God and getting it into people's lives. Pastors today and churches today make everything a ministry, but people. People are the most important aspect of ministry. In Psalms 14, I am going to take the next couple of weeks, and I am going to give you some of the greatest material in dealing with different kinds of people. This is a key lesson. Several years ago, I started the People Ministry. Many of you came through that and you folks make up the backbone of the counseling ministry and dealing with people. You will see today and the next couple of weeks some really good principles on dealing with people. Always try to remember that the ministry is people!

Everybody is familiar with the movie Forest Gump. When I watch movies, I like to find hidden within the movie, principles for ministry. I understand that whatever "Hellywood" does, they have to operate on biblical truths. Sometime down the line, I think I will teach you the most valuable lesson you could ever learn in ministry from Rocky V. If you want to know how to make a ministry successful and what you got to do as a pastor through the word of God. Watch the movie with Gregory Peck, Twelve O'clock High. It gives you the principle of how to get people to buy into what you are doing. It is all right there in that movie.

Forest Gump has some good lines in it. But the greatest line, which is the true to life, is when he is sitting on that park bench talking to that lady, and he says, "Life is like a box of chocolates." "You never know what you are going to get." Some are cream, some are caramel, you never know what you are going to get. Life is like a box of chocolates, because you never know in the box of life what you are going to get. Let me expand this a little farther. The ministry of people is like a box of chocolates. You never know for sure what you are going to get.

III. Psalms 14:1

I want to talk to you today out of Psalms 14 about a certain segment, that sooner or later you are going to find people just like Psalms 14 is going to lay out for us. I want my people and my good people listening online today, to know how to deal with this. Because dealing with people is like a box of chocolates and there are no two alike.

The fool hath said in his heart, [There is] no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, [there is] none that doeth good. Psalms 14:1

At first glance you can see how this is a reference to Romans 3:10,12 an unsaved man. I get this question all the time from people that have family members or somebody they work with that are very obstinate to the gospel. They don't want to hear anything about it. I get the question all the time as to how can I reach that person? Or what can I do? In dealing with people, you are going to find folks who take this position that there is no God. Basically, you will find they come in two categories.

1.) **AGNOSTICISM** – If God does exist, he exists in some form that is unknowable.

If he does exist, it will be some higher power. The programs that used to help alcoholics like Alcoholics Anonymous and drug addicts like Narcotics Anonymous, they looked to God as the sustainer. When you went through their 12-step program, many years ago, they looked to God as the sustainer to get them out of those things. Today that is not true. Today like the rest of the world they have all slid into the agnosticism side of the chart and God has been taken out. Now you look to your higher power, whatever that may be. They leave you to decide what is the power in your life that is going to direct you through life. Terrible mistake!

2.) **ATHESIM** – NO belief in God. He does not exist.

One of the greatest atheists of the 20th century was Madalyn Murray O'Hair. She is the one who took on a one-handed crusade to get prayer banded in schools. All of her life she was against anything that had to do with God. She was a factor in getting God our of the schools and out of public places. It is an irony that one of her boys got saved and became a Baptist preacher (William J Murray). He even wrote a book about her. Madalyn Murray O'Hair along with her son, (Jon Garth) and granddaughter were kidnapped and tortured to death in a most horrific way. Somebody asked me what I thought about all of that. And I just said one thing, she knows there is a God now! But in both cases, you will find the Bible calls them fools. God has a sense of humor and the great joke in all of this is found in James 2:19

Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

In Acts 19:15 you have the story of the unclean spirits, and they believed in God, and they trembled. One of the first things I want you to see so you can get a foundational understanding is when the devil attacks to make people agnostics and atheists, he first goes after their heart. The devil attacks man's heart. That will be the first place he goes. Because he knows that is the first place God's is going to go. So, if he can get in there and destroy it before God's Spirit can get in there then he has got a leg up on Him. You see this in Matthew 13:19 in the parable of the Sower.

When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth [it] not, then cometh the wicked [one], and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

The Bible says that the Holy Spirit of God sows the seed and the devil comes and takes it out of man's heart. When the devil attacks, he will always, always, always, come after your heart. Once the devil gets rid of the Bible, getting rid of God will be very easy. Today we live in a world and country that is void of any knowledge of God. You find this in Hosea 4:1

I have told you about the parallels between Israel right before they go into their captivity and how they dump God and His word, and New Testament Christianity and how we dumped God and His word. This is where we are right now! We see the same situation in Hosea 4:1

Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: <u>for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because [there is] no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land</u>.

This is America today, if not the world. **There is no truth left in America**. That is why people get so caught up in all the phoniness that goes on. There is no standard of truth. There is no absolute standard, no yard stick of life that we can gauge everything from. It is all blurred lines because the **Bible has been taken from us and there is no truth. Once you lose your truth, then you lose your mercy**. You don't care about it anymore. This is why the value of life today is nothing. People will shoot somebody in a drive by shooting just so they can join a club. There is no quality of human life, no sanctity of human life. We don't think that way anymore because mercy is gone. Once you lose the truth and you lose mercy (this is America and Israel) then there is no knowledge of God in the land.

Christianity today in America has no real knowledge of God. To grasp all of this verse and learn how to use it is my goal in the next couple of weeks. I know that some of you won't do anything with this. But I also know that there are many of you who will. It will only make you stronger, this church stronger and give us a more dynamic ministry. Learning that life is like a box of chocolates. You have to take what you pick out of the box.

IV. A Biblical Study on Fools

We need to do a biblical study on fools. <u>Fools are not just limited to unsaved people</u>. Some of the biggest fools I ever met in my life were pastors, Bible teachers or Christians. They were saved and we need to understand how this breaks itself down. We need to find a simple way to define them.

- 1.) An unsaved fool will deny the existence of God.
- 2.) A saved fool will deny the existence of the word of God or the clear teaching doctrine of the word of God that has been established down through history.

Colossians: A Picture of the Laodicean Church Age

Last week I briefly took you into the book of Colossians and I showed you how the book of Colossians lines up with the Laodicean church period in the seven churches in Revelation. We are part of the Laodicean church period today.

When you look at the book of Colossians and break the chapters down, they really show you what is wrong today in Christianity, especially chapter 1. In Colossians chapter 1, he redefines who God is because there is no knowledge of God and because we have lost that today. In chapter 1 verse 1, he redefines what a translation is. Everything you read, every place you go, somebody's going to tell you that a translation is from one language to another. That may be true in the world, but when you get into the Bible, you find that God's definition of a translation is NEVER from one language to another. That is a great key! He redefines God as Creator. In Colossians he explains the dispensation of God. You couldn't find 10 preachers in this city that could explain to you the dispensation of God. You know why? No knowledge of God today. He redefined the concept of the church which is completely lost today. Just like Israel right before their captivity, we see where we are at from the book of Hosea 4:1.

➤ Proverbs – Defining a Wise Man and a Foolish Man

We studied the book of Proverbs a while back. I told you the book of Proverbs was God's understanding and wisdom in everything in life. The issues of life. He begins in that book to define what a wise man is and what a fool is. He doesn't want any misunderstanding or mis categorizing somebody in the wrong light. So that you can understand what you are dealing with when you deal with people. A wise man will.....

*	Win souls	Proverb 11:30
*	Inherit glory	Proverbs 3:35
*	Receive commandments	Proverbs 10:8
*	Hearken unto counsel	Proverbs 12:15
*	Guards his tongue	Proverbs 29:11
*	Seeks knowledge	Proverbs 18:15
*	Disperses knowledge	Proverbs 15:7
*	Fears & departs from evil	Proverbs 14:16
*	Hears what God says	Proverbs 1:5

This is a wise man defined for you in the book written by the wisest man that ever lived. Then he defines what a fool is. A fool will.....

*	Despises wisdom	Proverbs 1:7
*	Mocks sin	Proverbs 14:9
*	Meddles in people's business	Proverbs 20:3
*	Slanders	Proverbs 10:18
*	Like a dog that eats his vomit	Proverbs 26:11
*	Never satisfied	Proverbs 17:24
*	Rejects correction	Proverbs 17:10
*	Trusts in his own heart	Proverbs 28:26

You will need to know this truth also. You will find that in fools that are saved or lost, the Bible says in Proverbs 17:24 that their eyes are in the ends of the Earth. They are never satisfied.

➤ The Way of a Fool – They are Unteachable

Proverbs 12:15 says, "The way of a fool [is] right in his own eyes...." They are unteachable. You can't get them to see the truth because of their pride.

I was in a Bible believing church in Alabama years ago where I was preaching several times a day and they wanted to have a Bible study after church that night. There were a couple of guys there that did not believe that the sons of God in Genesis 6 were giants. So, they asked the question, and I laid it out. They got a little argumentative, and I was okay with that, good spirit, you know. I came around and I nailed the guy where he had no place to go, and do you know what he said? Out loud to his friend! I don't care what the Bible teaches, I know what I believe. That is a fool!

➤ The Way of a Fool – They Never See the Value of a New Testament Local Church-No Biblical Accountability

Also, a fool will never see the value of a New Testament local church structure in their life. They won't belong to a church anywhere. They always have an authority problem. This is the number one problem that leads to the road of heresy and false teaching. No biblical accountability to anybody. They are left to themselves. If they are part of a church, it is usually a very weak church and there is no Biblical accountability, so they are left to their own devices. They come up with some of the goofiest stuff you have ever seen in your life. A fool will never get the full picture of any issue that they are confronted with. They are fools because they believe what they have been told or think is right in their own eyes.

One of the greatest verses I could give you in dealing with people in circumstances and situations is found in Proverbs 18:13

He that answereth a matter before he heareth [it], it [is] folly and shame unto him.

He is saying that there are two sides to every story. When somebody tells you something about this situation or that, and you just believe it without finding out the other side of the story. Then you are a fool, and you are in folly. I find that dealing with people you will find somebody that is in a situation, and they will start giving them advice. Good advice, but bad advice for this situation. They have no idea what is going on from the other side of this scenario. They see somebody hurting and they know the Bible, they know principles, so they just start spewing out things without ever understanding what that person is going through. The good information you are giving them is not the right information. You answer a matter before you really understand it. It happens all the time. Before I start dealing in somebody's' life telling them what they need to do, I am going to find out every piece of information about where they are at and both sides of the story, then operate out of that mode. Otherwise, it is foolishness and folly unto you. It's just that simple!

> Proverbs 26:4-5 Two Kinds of Fools and How to Deal with Them

The verse in Proverbs 26:4-5 lays out how to deal with a fool whether they are saved or lost.

- 4. Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.
- 5. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.

This has been very confusing to so many people. At first glance it looks like it is a contradiction. What you have here is not a contradiction but two principles on dealing with two kinds of fools.

1.) The First Type of Fool You are Told **NOT** to Answer (verse 4)

This will be a person who is totally unteachable. They can be saved or unsaved. This will be people that you meet like Jehovah Witnesses, Mormons, Charismatics, Calvinists. Part of the American cults that have been trained in a circular reasoning of argument. They are trained long before they hit your front porch. They are trained to what Baptist standard answers are going to be. They go through a process to deal with you just like many of you go through a process to deal with them. They are trained to know the answers you are going to give them to the questions they are going to ask. You will give them your verse and they will counter with their verse. It becomes a worthless waste of time because you don't really know how to deal with them. You are falling into their play trap because they know Baptist really well. They swallow you into that circular reasoning where you just go from one subject to another subject and you never answer anything. This is how they operate. Because you don't know how to deal with them (verse 4) and you try to answer that fool when God just told you not to, the Bible says you becomes like him. You are a fool too.

Rule #1 Never get into the Bible with Them

When you are dealing with one of the American cults, you never get into the Bible with them. In combat when you are faced with a strong dug in enemy you never attack from a frontal assault.

In WWII the battle of Okinawa was the most severe battle of the Pacific if not all of WWII. Okinawa was Japanese territory. It was the next step to get to Japan itself. It was defended with a 100,000 Imperial Japanese Marines. We lost more American Marines in the seventh Army during that campaign than any other battle in WWII. They fortified the caves in the big coral ridges and there was no way to take them in a frontal assault. Finally, they came up with a plan that flanked them and came in from behind and finally took that great battle.

When dealing with these types of people, it's the same thing. They are a stronghold. They are deeply entrenched, trained and disciplined far beyond the average Baptist. They know where you are going before you go there, and they are ready for you. You can't get these guys on a frontal attack.

In Christianity today you don't find many people that have that militant mindset of dealing with people like this. You must get them on an issue that they have absolutely no answer. **The issue**

<u>for each one of these American cults is the fact that they have no history</u>. All the American cults, Mormons, Seventh-day Adventist, Christian Science, Church of Christ, Jehovah Witness, Unity and the Charismatic Movement. They all started in the 1800's.

The Mormons started in the 1800's with Joseph Smith. The Seventh-day Adventist who believed that they should meet on Saturday, because that is what Israel did, started in 1840. The Church of Christ started in 1850 with Alexander Campbell (water dogs). They believe in baptism for salvation. Jehovah Witnesses like the Mormons started in 1860. Unity started in 1889 by Charles Fillmore and Emilie Cady, they don't believe in anything.

Rule #2 Never Attack Them on a Strong Point

You want to remember this Rule #2. This is the weak spot in these cults. You never want to attack them on a strong point. I am never going to try and break down the front door of this stronghold when I realize that somebody left the screen door in the back unlocked.

These American cults are not good combat fighters. They are brainwashed. They have been trained in a system that takes their thinking out of it. So, you must get them outside of that. All of these American cults, the Charismatic Movement which is held up today as the great alternative to Christianity didn't start until 1900. You have 1800 years where nobody on planet earth believed what they believed. Now suddenly in the 1800's it all pops up. The reason why these American cults popped up (Mormons, 7th Day, Christian Science, Church of Christ, Jehovah Witness, Unity and the Charismatic Movement) is because they were manufactured by the devil in the 1800's to stop the Seven Great Awakenings of the Holy Spirit of God bringing revival across America. God's people don't even know this.

➤ Dealing with American Cults

Years ago, I was out on a Saturday morning and I looked down the street and saw two guys coming down the way. They were Jehovah Witness. They came up to me and there was one big guy and little guy. I said you guys are Jehovah Witnesses. They said, how do you know that? I said I am a Jehovah Witness too! They looked at each other and said we know all the Jehovah Witnesses around here. When did you become a Jehovah Witness? I said about ten years ago when I trusted Jehovah God, Jesus Christ as my own personal Savior and I put my faith and trust in His finished work on the cross. The Bible says ye shall be witnesses unto me in the book of Acts. Therefore, I am a Jehovah Witness. The big guy looked at the little guy and said that is not the kind we are. I said that is the only kind there is. You guys must be phonies. Then it started. You never stop or give them a chance to breathe. You attack them, you annihilate them. You got to be smarter than the problem and realize that when you are up against this, you are up against something that is very entrenched and satanic. It has been created by the devil to stop the Holy Spirit of God and what He was doing across this country. From the 1700's when we became a nation till around 1950.

So, they say you got to be baptized to go to heaven. I said boys, I know where you are going. Before I got saved, I studied to be a Jehovah Witness, and I just couldn't buy what you guys are selling. If you want to convert me, answer just one question. It has nothing to do with the Bible.

You are telling me that you are the only true church? Yes, that is correct. And there is no salvation anywhere in any other religion outside Jehovah Witness. Is that correct? Yes, that is correct. Ok here is my problem. You didn't start until the 1800's. That means for 1800 plus years nobody on planet Earth had the truth. And everybody in 1800 years all over this world died and went to hell because nobody believed one thing you believe in the history of the world. You just give me one guy before 1800, before Rutherford and Russell came on the scene anywhere on planet Earth. The problem with you two guys is this. You are fools and you are stupid!

Ok let's stop here for a moment. I know I can see some of you saying you shouldn't say things like that. I know, I know. Go to the restroom, there is a pair of scissors on my door, cut off the lace on your underwear and come on back....... This is the problem!

➤ The Elijah Principle

Years ago, we had the Church of Christ come on a Thursday night Bible study and go toe-to-toe with us. We had our guys talk and their guys talk, and it was a great learning experience and teaching tool on how to deal with these guys. I pulled my guys aside and told them forget the Bible tonight. Here is what you have to do, or you will get your rear end kicked. My younger guys did a really good job, some of the older guys wanted to flux their spiritual muscles and they got their head handed to them. Finally in the end their head guy and I had a twenty-minute discussion back and forth and I beat the guy senseless. I asked him, where were you in 1500 AD? **The key is getting them off balance**. He didn't have any answer for the history. The key is to get them to lose control, then you got them.

This is called the Elijah principle. You want to learn how to deal with these kinds of people? There is a principle in the Bible for everything. This is called the Elijah principle, and I am going to lay it out for you next week.

I said guys look at the undisputable evidence. From 200-300 AD I got the Novatians, the Donatists, the Manichean's. From 500-1600 in the dark ages, I got the Paulicians, the Waldensians, the Albigensians, the Huguenots. Where are you? Do you realize how many hundreds of millions of people in those 1800 years represent and believed exactly what I believe. Where are you? All I need is one person. I will give you 10,000 for your one. I will give you Savonarola, Martin Luther, Christmas Evans, Billy Bray, John Clarke, George Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards, David Brainerd, George Fox, Mordecai Ham. Just give me one! They don't have any! When you don't understand that the Bible says answer <u>not</u> a fool according to his folly, then you fall into their trap of circular reasoning, and you walk away a fool. The Bible says answer NOT a fool according to his folly, lest thou be like him!

Several years back, I had a mother call me up on the phone and said my son is a Jehovah Witness and I think you are the only guy who can reach him. Would you be willing to go up and talk with him? I said sure I can. So, I am going to get him off base as soon as I walk in the door. I brought with me a box that must have had 40-50 Jehovah Witness books that they put out. He says what are those for. I said you are probably going to want to go through every one of these. He started the song and dance, and I applied the Elijah principal. I beat that kid senseless. He got so mad at me and said to get out of his house.

Five years later I got a phone call from him. He said I want you to know that I got saved and I am no longer a Jehovah Witness. I said that is good. He said, no you don't understand, the thing that drove me nuts is what you hit me with. Watch Tower in New York could not answer my question. Nobody could answer that question. It was that question that God never took out of my heart that led me to find Christ as my personal savior and see the heresy of Jehovah Witnesses. The Elijah principle works! The problem isn't the principle, it is that God's people don't have the guts to use it.

➤ The Way of a Fool – They Desire Credibility

Now we will work with saved fools too. In Christianity you will find guys who come up with some new theology or some new teaching that is right out of Disneyland. Some of these guys are even out of my own ministry that went rogue and heretic wise. They all take the same position. I found a truth that nobody has ever seen all down through Christianity for 1900 years and God finally revealed it to me and me only. All the great Bible teachers down through history missed it. I am so smart and so spiritual that I got the truth that has been missing. You got to be kidding me! That is the height of arrogancy! These guys are saved. One guy told me there is no such thing as the Rapture. Another guy teaches that the church is going through the tribulation period.

As the Bible says in Proverbs 12:15 "The way of a fool [is] right in his own eyes....". You can't teach these guys anything. They despise real biblical wisdom. All these guys fall into the same category. They are all wannabes. They don't have a church structure of authority in their life. Most of them don't go to church anywhere. Most of them have lost their kids to the world. But they want you to believe that God has chosen them to reveal His truth to only them. After 1900 years of people preaching the Bible, God hid it from them, so He could give it to you.

All the Bible doctrine and truth and teaching of the major Bible doctrines in the word of God have been settled for 1900 years. There is absolutely nothing new to be added to the doctrines of the word of God as far as Christianity is concerned. It has been dealt with down through church history and it has been settled. There is nothing new that anybody has to add. If they tell you they do, you know you are dealing with a fool.

I am taking you behind the scenes of every fool out there saved or lost and I am showing you what makes him tick. I am showing you how to know where he is going before he gets there. Here is the key. All these guys saved or lost, desire one thing, credibility. Because they have none and when you don't answer them you deny them any credibility. You mark them totally for what they are: illegitimate, phony, heretics, and fools. And in some cases, reprobate.

Most of you know Dr. Ruckman. Ruckman had some key debates over his ministry. What people never saw were the ones that Dr Ruckman turned down and wouldn't do. He told me one time that there are certain people he would not debate. They are nobody's and heretics. If I would debate them publicly, I would end up giving them a platform for which they could promote their heresy. I deny them the very credibility that they are looking for. Because the Bible says in Proverbs 26:4 answer not a fool. He understood that.

2.) The Second Type of Fool You are Told **TO** Answer (verse 5)

But in verse 5 it says, "Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit."

Now we have fool number 2. At first, we were told not to answer him, and now we know why, and we know how to deal with them. But you are going to know even better next week. Now we are told to answer this fool. These people are caught up in some bad teaching, some bad doctrine or heresy. But when you talk to them you can see immediately that what they believe is not a matter of pride or against any authority or that they even reject correction in being taught. They didn't reject the 1900 years of established truth. They just got some bad teaching and didn't know any better. God has brought them through life for you to give them the right answers and they are teachable. Some have an issue with the King James Bible, some on baptism or some other doctrinal issue. But they are teachable.

My great example of this is Carolyn. She was a Charismatic for a lot of years. She is a classic example. She wanted the truth. Somebody gave her material that wasn't true. Because she wanted the truth, she looked at it and even embraced it. But when she found the truth, it changed her life. Look at her today and her family. Now she is invaluable to our church here with all that she does.

V. Summary

Today I showed you the different types of fools. I do this because most of you work with people. Add this to your arsenal. Learn from this that when you see people who are like a box of chocolates, you never know for sure what you are going to get. You need to be prepared because sooner or later you are going to run into this. I want you to be prepared. Somebody will say, Bob really hates those people. No, no, you are wrong. My job is to win everybody to Christ. To give them the gospel no matter how entrenched they are. But based on the word of God, the Bible will clearly define for us what a fool is and how to deal with them. I want you to be fearless, steadfast and unmovable.