

I. Review

You'll remember last week, and if you have your Bibles you'll want to turn to Psalms 16, that I showed you one of the key chapters in the Bible on one of the unknown elements within the tribulation period. If you get books about or hear teaching or preaching about the tribulation period, much like the millennium, they pretty much all fall into the same category. They really don't have an understanding of it. They always try to mix and match it into the church thinking the tribulation will be just like the church age except we won't be here. That's simply not true any more than the millennium is just going to be a glorified church age.

I showed you that Psalms 16 is one of those great chapters that really deal with the unknown element. **It deals with the aspect of the religion of Baal worship.** Baal worship is the devil's religion by which he, in the Old Testament and down through history, controlled the nations and thereby, he controlled the world. **Doctrinally, I told you in a prophetic sense that Psalms 16 will be a reference to the antichrist in the tribulation who literally hunts down the Jews.**

The Jews have been the most hunted down and persecuted people in the history of planet Earth. The reason for that is the devil, who runs these nations who concocted this Baal worship, uses all his means to destroy the nation of Israel. **The reason why he wants to destroy the nation of Israel is because he knows the nation of Israel will get all of the land and all of the inheritance that was once his;** therefore, it make sense, if you have that little piece of the puzzle, why he has such a hatred for the Jews as well as a hatred for Christ who will reign in the millennium. The devil wants that position.

I showed you last week, and it's very graphic, how he is literally cutting off their heads (found in the book of Revelation) which is what you did to the Old Testament sacrifices. **He then takes the bodies and makes them a human sacrifice and then literally begins eating their bodies and drinking their blood in a worship service to Baal.** I know that sounds outlandish, but if you remember, I gave you seven strong passages that literally say that in no uncertain terms. It's found in the Old Testament showing you this grievous act against the nation of Israel.

➤ God's System of Threes

We defined this religion as Baal worship; Baal being the sun god. In laying it out, I showed you an easy way to not only study it, but to keep it straight in your mind. It's that little system of God's threes. A couple of weeks ago when we were talking about the devil, I showed you that the easiest way to study the devil and keep it all straight (because it can get complicated), is just to realize that the devil is kicked out of heaven three times. If you put each one of those in its own context and get the material, that's all there is.

The three times the devil is kicked out of heaven:

- Genesis 1:1—The devil is kicked out **positionally**.
- Revelation 12 & 13 (At the start of the second half of the tribulation period)—The devil is kicked out of heaven **bodily**. Up to that point he has been the accuser of the brethren.
- Revelation 20:11 and forward (At the great white throne judgment)—The devil is kicked out **eternally**.

So if you want to look at something that is very complex, just break it down into those three little subjects, and you'll have it.

Now it's the same way with Baal worship. There are three ways in which you'll want to look at it and get it down:

- Old Testament Baal worship—From Genesis 10 up to the time of Christ and a little bit beyond.
- New Testament Baal worship—From about 300 A.D. up to our present time.
- Tribulation Baal worship—Will be happening any time as soon as the rapture takes place.

This is how you can follow it all through not only the Bible but history. My job, and the job of any pastor, is to take the Bible and break it down into a simple form for you so you can grasp and better understand it. And it's things like this, that little system of threes that God puts throughout the Bible, that really help us understand it.

➤ We covered the three phases of Baal worship in detail

*** Phase I** showed you where it started in Genesis 10 with a man by the name of Nimrod, and he builds a city which becomes the city of Babylon. That's the first time you'll find it in the Bible. It spreads from there, and in time it spreads through all the other nations. The devil made sure of that. Through Baal worship the devil took control, and thereby opposition against what God was doing and God's people. You'll also see during this time the beginning of God calling and structuring the nation of Israel, so you have two things going on. You have God doing His thing and developing the nation of Israel, and you have the devil doing his thing and developing Baal worship which is going to counter what God is going to do; by which, he in time, is going to control the known world.

Throughout the Old Testament, you'll find human sacrifices and the drinking of blood offerings as Psalms 16 tells us. It was all part of Baal worship in the Old Testament. You'll remember throughout the Old Testament, Israel's main struggle that kept pulling them away from God was Baal worship. When you look at the kings of the nation of Israel in Kings and Chronicles, it's rampant. You'll find it in the early book of Judges, too. In I Kings 16:33, you'll find the worst king in Israel's history and his wife: Ahab and Jezebel. Jezebel had 450 prophets of Baal, and they go up against one of God's prophets. You'll find, if you're paying attention, all the way through there that **this is Israel's #1 stumbling block**. I want you to notice that because it's important as we move this into the New Testament.

You will find that Israel also made groves. They were groves of shrubbery that you walked through. They are like hedges, and you walk through them like a corn maze of sorts. As you move through them, there are little areas with statues of gods by which you sit and meditate then make your way through to the next one. You will find these same groves in every Roman Catholic seminary today except the statues are of the saints and apostles; however, it's the same system of groves and imagery. Then you have the sacrifices, the sodomites, you have everything that they build...the temples. In fact, if you want the key place in your Bible to see this during Israel's time and their struggle with Baal worship, read 2 Kings 23. Everything about Baal worship is laid out for you there.

*** In Phase II**, I showed you that the book of Daniel will be the bridge that brings us from the Old Testament to the New Testament and from Old Testament Baal worship to the New Testament form of Baal worship. It shows us how the devil changed it now because the world was getting bigger and nations were getting more sophisticated. The devil knew that the Old Testament form of Baal worship would never survive. So around 325 to 400 A.D. under Constantine, we see the start of the New Testament Baal worship in the Roman Catholic Church. **It's just the New Testament form of Old Testament Baal worship.** Here they still drink the blood and eat the flesh; however, now they eat the flesh of Christ and drink His blood, but it's the same system. This is called the mass through the magical act of transubstantiation.

*** Phase III** will be back to the Old Testament practice in the tribulation period. God again, in the tribulation, turns His attention to the nation of Israel and so does the devil. This is the last-ditch effort of the devil to wipe out the nation of Israel. He tries with everything in his power, and you'll find this throughout the book of Revelation. In Revelation 17:6, we find the great Babylon where *drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus*. In Revelation 17:2, it says *the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication*.

➤ Everything Around us will go back to a Truth in the Bible

I showed you how everything around us today will go back to a truth found in the word of God. The devil's work is very easy to understand. It's one of deception. It's giving you the appearance of something that is true, but it's really not: disinformation. It's taking truth and twisting it, subtracting from it, adding to it, to produce a lie or half-truth that's going to wind up sending somebody down the wrong road. You see this completely laid out in Genesis 3.

Then I pulled it all together, how everything out there comes back to the Bible, showing you the story of **Count Dracula**. He was a real person that lived in the 1400s in Transylvania (modern-day Romania). He was Roman Catholic. The name Dracula was given to him by his father which means son of the dragon. They both were members of a secret Roman Catholic order. This was during the time of the great hotbed of New Testament Christianity when John Hus and others were preaching the gospel. Dracula, or Vlad as his real name was, killed Christians and Jews. He was a Roman Catholic, so he's drinking the blood and eating the body like the Roman Catholic Church does today. In 1897, Bram Stoker gave us the modern-day concept of a blood sucking vampire called Count Dracula.

II. Psalms 16:5-11 – The Tribulations we Face

Today I want to show you one of the great places in the Bible that will be invaluable when you go through the tough times of life. It can be your own tribulation or the struggles and tribulations of someone you're working with. This will be found in Psalms 16:5-11. Let's read it then we'll put it together.

5. *The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.*
6. *The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant [places]; yea, I have a goodly heritage.*
7. *I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons.*
8. *I have set the Lord always before me: because [he is] at my right hand, I shall not be moved.*
9. *Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.*
10. *For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.*
11. *Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence [is] fulness of joy; at thy right hand [there are] pleasures for evermore.*

➤ Psalms Breaks Down into Three Areas in Doctrinal, Historical, and Inspirational Applications

In a **doctrinal application**, the book of Psalms breaks down into three areas:

1. The Jew in the tribulation period.
2. The Jews crying out and God delivering them.
3. The Jews in the millennium.

In a **historical application**, the book of Psalms will be about David's life and three areas:

1. David when he goes through his trials and tribulations.
2. David when God delivers him from his trials and tribulations.
3. David now has got the victory, and he's praising the Lord for the victory God has given him.

In an **inspirational application**, for you and me, it also breaks down into three areas:

Here lies the great teaching for all of us today that I want to focus on out of Psalms 16 because **when we too go through our tough times, when we have our own personal tribulation periods of life, we also can see Psalms inspirationally that will apply to us.** This is why so many people go to the book of Psalms when they're having tough times. They don't understand what I'm about to lay out, but they know the book of Psalms is a place of comfort. In Psalms, you have the Jew going through those three things, you have David going through those three things, but God's people will go through those three things, too.

1. God's people will have some trials and tribulations in their lives. Some of you have come through some trials and tribulations and maybe some of you have them today.
2. The next thing you will see will be when God delivers us. There's always a deliverance for whatever issues that we have, and I want to focus on that today because I want to look at this from an inspirational application.
3. The third will be when you get the victory.

These three things will apply doctrinally, historically, and for you and me inspirationally.

➤ The Devil wants to Devour You

Last week we saw the way the devil operates in the Old Testament. It was to kill God's people, the Jews, and literally (now that we have this established) eat them alive so to speak—swallow them up; eat them in a sacrifice. Now here's the point I want to make, and I want you to see this. **Inspirationally, for you and for me, though the devil may have eaten people literally in the Old Testament, I Peter 5:8 tells the church (you and me):**

*Be sober; be vigilant; because your adversary **the devil, as a roaring lion**, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: I Peter 5:8.*

Where he ate the Jews literally, he wants to devour you spiritually. He wants to swallow you up. He wants to take everything out of your life that God has for you, and he wants to just eat you alive like the mosquitos at a picnic at night without insect repellent. That's what the devil wants to do, spiritually speaking. He wants to devour you. He wants to take everything from you that God has for you. This is what I want you to see today.

So whereas he ate the people of God in the Old Testament literally (the Jews), in the New Testament, spiritually speaking, he'll eat you, consume you, and devour you in a spiritual way. Now we know that the trials of the nation of Israel were a terrible thing in the Old Testament, and the tribulation is really going to be a tough time for them. Keep in mind that in the Old Testament he kills them physically, but in the New Testament he wants to devour you spiritually. In both cases you're dead, physical in one and spiritual in the other, and in both cases you're totally consumed.

In dealing with people, you will find that they too, spiritually, will go through some really bad times. They will have their own personal tribulation period. Right now, many of you are working with me in our Patterns of Human Nature classes. What that simply means is that I've asked for those of you who really want to get to a higher level to work with me by learning how to help people who are going through some really tough times. I showed you how they themselves have three levels of their issues. Everything comes down to that little pattern of threes.

➤ Breaking Strongholds in People's Lives

Last week I told you that there wouldn't be a Patterns class because we have a workday; however, as I put this together last week, I began to see that in Psalms 16:5-11, you will find the information that will go right along with what we talked about last month in our Patterns class.

So be advised: this message today will be your class for this month and all the rules will apply. Once I got into this I saw exactly how this fits it, and I'm not going to miss that opportunity.

In last month's Patterns class, we dealt with breaking strongholds in people's lives. I built it around 2 Samuel 5:1-10. It's a story of David taking Jerusalem from the Philistines. In the story, the Philistines have Jerusalem; David and the nation of Israel do not have it. What takes place is how he defeats the Philistines to get Jerusalem back. That is a great picture because I gave you 5 or 6 different principles. If you're going to help somebody break a stronghold in their life, it's what you have to begin to put into their lives, and they have to begin to understand. Whatever that stronghold is, it's how you help them. **A stronghold will simply be when the world gets a "strong hold" in your life.** This is what happened. In 2 Samuel 5, the story is built around the city of Jerusalem. **The nation of Israel can do nothing for God without Jerusalem because it's where the temple is going to be built which is going to be the center of everything that God does with Israel.** It's where the ark is going to be, and Jerusalem was the key to Israel's future.

Now in an inspirational New Testament sense, you can see the parallels. **Your body is the temple today.** When the devil had the stronghold of Jerusalem, they could do nothing. **When the devil has the stronghold of your temple (your body; your life as a Christian), you can do nothing.** See how it works?

➤ Strongholds will Always come from the Wrong Patterns you put in your Life

This is why we're calling this class the Patterns of Human Nature. I am showing you how human nature operates in almost any given situation so that you can see and understand it; subsequently, when you must deal with it, you'll understand what you're dealing with. Patterns in our lives are vital.

They tell us now, and I have taught it for years, that when you have children, by the time your child is 5, 6, or 7 years old, they have already established the patterns of their human nature and character that are going to carry them through the rest of their lives. You can see now the importance of understanding parenting from before the baby is born up to getting them prepared because they are like sponges. They are absorbing everything, even the things that you don't see and understand, and by the time they're 5, 6, or 7, their patterns are pretty much set. The problem is, with strongholds or dealing with people, **the wrong patterns of thinking will always lead to the wrong patterns of actions.** This is something that is fundamental, as absolute as the sun coming up in the morning. These are things that you need to begin to understand as we look down through here.

Today in Psalms 16, you will find 7 key things here that I want you to see, and as you apply 2 Samuel 5, you'll want to match these together. This is why I'm adding this to the Patterns class because the two go hand-in-hand. Each one of these 7 will begin the process of bringing either you or someone else out of their stronghold. For unsaved people, their whole life is a stronghold. They have nothing they can do to overcome anything in their life. The Bible says in

John 8:44, *Ye are of [your] father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.* End of story. Their whole life will be a stronghold connected with the world and the devil in an unsaved state.

Strongholds in a Christian's life will be in two forms. You'll find this when you start dealing with people.

1. **Your basic strongholds.** These will be based on the flesh. You'll find people who have a stronghold of drugs, alcohol, or gambling in their lives. Those are things for which you put the wrong patterns in your life and now those things control you. You can't come to church on Sunday morning because you were out at the boat until 3:00 in the morning.

When you start to deal with people who have problems in a second or third level, this is what you're dealing with. This is where marriages will have problems. Marriages will become a stronghold one way or the other. Either the wife or the husband doesn't want to do what they need to do, and it forms a stronghold. **Strongholds take a lot of different forms.** I've seen where some of God's people have a real problem with confidence. They're very insecure and that insecurity is a thing that will destroy them in time. The devil will have a heyday with that, and while it may not be like drinking or drugs, it's every bit a stronghold. I've told you many times, but I've seen guys and gals where 98% of what they had was incredible. I thought they had tremendous futures with God, but sometimes it only takes 2% to offset the 98%.

I've found that a lot of times you're going to find God's people who just have no self-confidence. They get insecure about everything. I've seen insecurity in marriages and in relationships. It will never work. **You must come to the place where you are secure in who you are.** It's just that simple. So the first basic stronghold is of the flesh, and it's many different things as you can see now, and I just touched the tip of the iceberg.

2. **Satanic Strongholds.** Satan himself is involved in something that you allowed into your life, and there is demonic activity, not to the point of demon possession, but certainly demon oppression.

I get phone calls probably once or twice a month where somebody asks me about a person, not even from around here, but talking about the goofy stuff that they're doing. The first place they always go is they think the person is demon possessed. Hey, in any given situation that I have to deal with, demon possession is the last place I'm going to go. In my life, I've only had two encounters with demonic people. I love Job 41:8 where it talks about the devil; he says *remember the battle, do no more.* I just never go there; you have to force me there. I'm telling you right now, that's the same goofy stuff somebody can do that just got devoured by the world. **God's people can get so caught up with the world and the flesh that you sometimes can't tell the difference.** You just don't go to demon possession right out of the chute; in fact, I have six or seven things that I must see before I come to that conclusion.

Other than that, you're going to find a lot of people that get caught up in things like child molestation, homosexuality, and lesbianism. Those are satanic strongholds.

III. Applying the Principles of Psalms 16:5-11 to Keep from being Devoured

Now I want to walk you through these and show you how you apply them. **These seven principles will not only be what you use with people that you work with** (many of you are trying to get to that point or are at that point), **but they're exactly what you and I need to keep ourselves from being eaten and devoured.** Remember I Peter 5:8 says *your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: and he's talking about Christians.*

- Principle #1 – Getting Your Focus Back: Remembering your Inheritance, Your Cup (Blessings), & Your Lot (All that God will give you in Life)

*The Lord [is] the portion of mine **inheritance** and of my **cup**: thou **maintainest** my lot.*
Psalms 16:5

There are three things in this verse that we want to separate out. First, when somebody starts to come back and break any stronghold, you're going to find that 2 Samuel 5 will give you the plan of action; that is, the steps you must follow. In these things here, however, it's more of a mindset—getting your focus back. This is where it all starts. When you want to get right with God, you don't get right with God just because of the mechanics of it. You get right with God because God has convicted you in your heart and your spirit. Now wherever you were that God was not; you're going to bring it back into focus.

- *The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance*

When you start to break that stronghold and start to put these things in here, you must stop and think about your inheritance because you've forgotten that. If you're saved here this morning, you are the richest people on the planet. You have everything that God and Christ have at your disposal.

I knew a man quite well who was a miser. He pinched every penny and hoarded every dollar he had, and he had a lot of money. He didn't want his family or anybody else to get the money, so he buried the money in the walls of his house. Then he got Alzheimer's, and he got dementia, and couldn't remember where he put the money. He died in poverty, and it was all because he lost track of the riches. This is what God's people do. You get spiritual dementia or spiritual Alzheimer's. God has given you an inheritance, and you forgot where you put it.

The Bible says in Romans 8:17: *And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; You have everything that He has. **We are the richest people in the world because the inheritance of our Father is all given to us.** This is why the Bible says in Revelation 3:11, *hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown*, and why he says in 2 John 1:8 that he wants us to *receive a full reward*. Yet we lose sight of that. You lose focus, and that's where you start putting the stronghold in your life. That's also where you've got to start to get out of it because why would any of us allow the devil to take the inheritance that we have from us? God*

took us from being beggars and made us kings. Why in the world would you give up that kingship to go back and be a beggar? Strongholds. Wrong patterns.

So he says the *Lord [is] the portion of mine inheritance*. We can never forget that we are children of the king, and we have an inheritance. When you lose sight of that and you lose your focus, you actually think that the slop of this world is better than the inheritance that God has for us. God help us, but it happens.

○ *And of my cup*

Now the cup will represent all that God has for you in this life. It will be the blessings of God found in the cup.

Psalms 23:5: Thou **preparest a table before me** in the presence of mine enemies: thou **anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.**

There are three things here:

- ❖ First, he says he's prepared a table in the presence of my enemies. That is your fellowship with God no matter what happens—who likes you, who doesn't like you, or what they say about you. That should NEVER take your fellowship away.
- ❖ The second thing is that he anoints your head with oil. That's the Holy Spirit of God. That's God anointing you to do the work that He wants you to do.
- ❖ Third, he says my cup runneth over. That's the blessings of God in our lives as Christians, or it should be. The blessings just overflowing because you were anointed with the Holy Spirit of God to do the work of God and you're fellowshiping with Him in the midst of this dirty old world.

The book of Dr. Ruckman's that I like the most really has nothing to do with the Bible. It is the one that he wrote before he died which is simply called *The Full Cup*. It is a book that shows you what God did in his life through the good times and the bad times, and how God brought him through. At the end of his life, brother, his cup was full—the blessings of God.

I guess you know by now that there are two cups in the Bible. **There's the Lord's cup and there's the devil's cup.** So when you want to break free from being devoured in a stronghold, you need to start drinking from a different cup.

○ *Thou maintainest my lot*

The lot will be all that God will give you in life. We say, "This is my lot in life." **I want you to notice that he doesn't just give you a "lot," but it says he "maintains your lot."** You can't miss things like that. If you would ask me this morning what the best thing about this is I would say, "When you do what's right, God will give you a lot!" He certainly will.

➤ Principle #2 – The Principles of Bible Doctrine you Put in your Life

The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant [places]; yea, I have a goodly heritage. Psalms 16:6

Now this will be the Biblical principles of life. The pleasant places will be your Bible, particularly a King James 1611 Authorized Version. The lines here will be the principles of the Bible doctrine that you have to put into your life to guide you out of the strongholds that you've gotten into. Let's turn over to Isaiah 28. I know this is a familiar passage to some of you, but we need to make the connection here.

*Isaiah 28:9-13. Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he **make to understand doctrine?** [them that are] weaned from the milk, [and] drawn from the breasts. (He's showing you that you learn doctrine by growing spiritually from a baby to an adult that can handle doctrine).*

*10. For **precept [must be] upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, [and] there a little:** (Here is where we get the line defined for us).*

11. For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. (He's talking to Israel).

12. To whom he said, This [is] the rest [wherewith] ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear.

*13. But the word of the Lord was (He says it again!) unto them **precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, [and] there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.***

The line here will be Bible principles. You take the principles of the word of God as Isaiah 28:10 says, and he's talking about building a wall of Bible doctrine that you build around your life, and I might add your family, that protects them. You build the wall in your life one principle at a time. The *line upon line* in the context is building a wall, and when you build a wall, you put a line on it to keep the wall straight. **That's what Bible doctrine does when you build your wall in your life spiritually.** It keeps you straight, but when you build a wall (and I've learned this the hard way), you don't just put the blocks on top of each other because that wall will fall over. You don't put another block matching the seam, you put the block over that seam halfway, and what you're doing is you're tying in the blocks together. That makes a strong wall. This is what you do with Biblical principles when you build your wall. You've got to tie them to the foundation to make your wall strong. **Biblical principles will always tie into other Biblical principles.** That's what he's telling you here.

Then he says *here a little, and there a little.* **You keep adding to that as you grow.** You'll see this historically as a picture in the Old Testament. The Old Testament cities all built walls around themselves for protection to keep the enemy out. We see an example of this in Ezra and Nehemiah where the Jews are going back after 70 years of captivity. Jerusalem is destroyed. It's in rubble, so Ezra and Nehemiah go back, and they check things out. I've always thought it interesting that in the book of Ezra, the first thing they begin to rebuild is the temple. Then in the

book of Nehemiah, they start to build the wall around the city. Now that's a model for us. When you first get saved, you lay the foundation of your temple, I Corinthians 3, and the very next thing you do is what Nehemiah did after Ezra started to rebuild the temple: you start to rebuild the wall. History tells us that the walls around the city of Jerusalem were 40-50 feet high and 10-15 feet thick. The walls had 34 watchtowers on them. When Nebuchadnezzar came down to lay siege to Jerusalem with the walls that were there, it took him 3½ years, and he never breached the walls; he starved them out. Now once they took the city, they tore the walls down, but they couldn't get into the city through the wall.

- How High and How Thick is your Wall?

The real question for every one of us today, me included, is how high and how thick is the wall that protects you? You can better see now that the devil can climb over most walls that God's people put up. If we would look at most of our Christian lives and compare them to the walls we build, most of us would probably have a cheap chain-link fence. When you get saved, you begin to build that wall. How many watchtowers do you have on your wall? The watchtowers are things in your Christian life that you're always looking out for.

- Principle #3 – Only the Counsel that God Gives you will Stand and Through Biblical Principles your Emotions Correctly Instruct you in Times of Trouble

*I will bless the Lord, who hath given me **counsel**: my **reins** also instruct me in the night seasons.
Psalms 16:7*

The word that first stands out here is obviously the word counsel. This takes us back to Psalms 1:1—*Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly.* **Getting bad or wrong counsel in your life will always lead to problems.** It's just that simple. You've got to ask yourself, whatever your struggle is or whatever your problem is, where are you getting your counsel from? People are seemingly like your grandmother who has got a homespun remedy for the common cold which usually doesn't work. Everybody you talk to as a Christian, if you tell them your problem, is going to have some remedy for it that usually has nothing to do with fixing anything, and most of them have nothing to do with the Bible. The only thing that will stand will be the counsel that God gives you.

*Proverbs 19:21. [There are] many devices in a man's heart; **nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand.***

God's counsel will always go back to the pleasant line of God's word which I just gave you; His principles—Isaiah 28:10. Several Thursday nights ago, somebody asked a question out of Proverbs Chapters 1-7 dealing with the aspect of *my son*, and I walked you through the first seven chapters showing you the counsel that Solomon gave his son to stay close to God. Incredible! Each one of the seven chapters starts with *my son*, and then he gives you a key to building your wall. Solomon's boy didn't listen; there's a lot of that going around lately.

God has a principle for every issue in life that we're going to face, but with God's people, it's just too much work. It's easier to listen to somebody over here or to take a pill than to really get into the Book and fix the problem.

- Your Emotions are the Reins of your Life

Look at the next part of the verse, *my reins also instruct me in the night seasons*. Let's talk about the night season. **The night season is going to be when nighttime comes in our lives, our own personal trials and tribulations.** *My reins* will be your emotions, and yet it says here that the emotions are the instructions of a man.

Proverbs 25:28. He that [hath] no rule over his own spirit [is like] a city [that is] broken down, [and] (you guessed it!) without walls.

Our emotions are the #1 problem that most of us have. Women, I get this and it's not a slam because it's the way God made you, have a tougher time emotionally many times than men do. Having said that, I've met men who are emotional basket cases and fall apart about everything. It goes back to that security issue. They're not secure in anything. They're not secure in their own personal relationship with the Lord, they're not secure in their marriage, or in any other relationship. Somebody can say something to them or put a negative thought in their mind, and immediately, because they're not in control of their emotions, they make bad choices.

You see the reins are likened to the reins on a horse here. You put a bit in the horse's mouth, and you have two leather straps that come up that are called reins. You get the horse to go and do whatever you want by how you handle those reins. **Your emotions are the reins of your life. They will instruct you which way you're going to go and how you're feeling about something.** If it's not based on the Biblical principles and being secure in who you are, you'll never build a proper relationship with anything in life or with the Lord because the devil is always going to be whispering in your ear or have somebody whispering in your ear. If you're not secure in who you are and what you believe, and you don't have that wall around you to keep it out, you're like that city broken down without walls. The devil will just play you like a cheap fiddle.

Man's emotions can be the number one problem that feeds all the issues of life. Just so you know, **your emotions are your spirit. Making emotional decisions in life will always lead to a disaster.** You have to know who you are; you have to be secure in who you are, and you can't let anybody talk you out of anything in your life that God wants you to do, or the direction God has given you. That itself becomes a stronghold. All it takes is a wall of Biblical principles.

You're going to find in life, and some of you probably already know this, as you get older in the Lord and have to deal with people, circumstances, relationships, whatever the case may be, you're going to find that whatever decision you make, somebody is going to criticize you for it. In my life of 50+ years dealing with circumstances and people, and I've had to make some hard decisions, there were many people that didn't like the decision I had to make, and I got criticized for it. This is not a woe is me; this is just the way life is. I'm telling you that you're going to have to deal with it, too. My point is this—you're going to get criticized no matter which way

you go, so make sure the decision that you make that you get criticized for is a Biblical one. You must be secure in yourself to do that.

It comes down to building a wall of Biblical principles that you, through those principles, control your emotions. Your reins do instruct you, but they instruct you the right way because you can make an emotional decision that will wreck your life forever. This is the importance of building a wall. This is the importance of getting control. Bad counsel will always lead to emotions out of control that will always lead to bad choices which will lead to strongholds sooner or later.

➤ Principle #4 – Making Christ the Center of Everything in Our Lives

*I have set the Lord always before me: because [he] is at my **right hand**, I shall not be moved.*
Psalms 16:8

Now when we get to this stage of coming back to God, we all know the importance of the right hand. **Christ sits on the right hand of God the father. That's where we should be.** In the Bible, God called Jesus His right arm. We use it in the phrase, "He's my right-hand man" or "I'd give my right arm for that guy!" Every child of God ought to be God's right-hand man. It's simply making Christ the center of everything in our lives, and this is where we've got to get to get out of the stronghold. He's now #1 in everything. Everything we now do, everything we think, everywhere we go, we base on His opinion of it. Too many of God's people are operating on their own opinion, and that's going to get you in trouble.

Back in 2 Samuel 5, in the story about breaking strongholds, you'll remember in verses 9 and 10 that when David finally took the city of Jerusalem back from the Philistines (picture of the world that has us captive), he did three things. You might know it was three!

- ❖ First, he built a fort (there's your wall).
- ❖ Second, he changed the name of the city (taking personal responsibility for it now). **Jerusalem was its official name, but he changed it to the city of David.** In other words, he took the city of God and took ownership of it. In your life and my life, when you look at your temple, all that God has given you, and your inheritance, you have to take ownership of it. It has to become yours personally. **You have to see the inheritance that God gave you as a personal thing.** You have to change the name of New Jerusalem to "New Bob"—change it to your life realizing that you're now taking ownership of everything that God has given you.

I want as many of you as possible to be part of my ministry, but for us to be successful in what we do, we have to take ownership. I have taken ownership of this and when you become part of my team and work with me, you too need to take ownership of it, too.

- ❖ The third thing is that he built inward. Too many of God's people don't bother building inward; they're always building outward. That will never work.

○ I Shall not be Moved

Then he says because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. There's your stability. In a believer's life, there are two kinds of security. There is eternal security that once you're

saved, you're eternally sealed and can't get unsaved. There is also a personal security. That comes because you take ownership. **There will always be people that will try to talk you out of what God has given you.** You know what keeps that from happening? You take ownership. In the ministry, you take ownership. In a relationship, you take ownership. In a marriage, you take ownership. With your children, you take ownership. I mean, come on! You took ownership of your car and your house. Why can't God's people take ownership where it really means something?

Ownership means responsibility. If you don't take ownership of what God has given you and don't become steadfast and secure in who you are—if you can't do it now, forget about doing it later in the ministry. You have to know who you are, and nobody can talk you out of it. You have to be secure in who you are, what God has given you, what God has brought into your life, and I shall not be moved—knowing who you are in Christ.

➤ Principle #5 – Your Ability to Rest in the Hope of God's Principles

Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. Psalms 16:9

When you begin to follow God's plan, you make Christ the Lord of your life. In time, it should bring an aspect of God into your life that most of God's people never experience, and that is your ability to rest in the hope of God's principles.

○ Two Rests Found in the Bible

There are two rests found in the Bible. Israel's rest will be in the millennium; that's Hebrews 4:9-11. The rest of the believer, the child of God, will be in the church age. This is the security that you have in the hope of the word of God. That nobody talks you out of who you are or what God is doing. A lot of times people will do that because they're jealous of what God is doing in your life. You fall for that because you're not strong enough to stand on your own. You're insecure. You don't have to be that way. You can take ownership of what God has given you—your inheritance.

Rest for the child of God in the church is His rest based on the principles of the word of God, that no matter how dark the night, your reins (your emotions) will instruct you based on the pleasant principles of the word of God and the counsel God gives you.

➤ Principle #6 – He will Never Leave us or Forsake us in our Time of Trouble
Just Like He wouldn't do it to Christ

For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Psalms 16:10.

This is a quotation that you'll find in Acts 2:27. This verse will be a reference to Christ dying on the cross and His trusting God in His faith to resurrect Him from the grave and not let Him see corruption, i.e. rot in the grave or decompose. But in our context here, he throws this verse in as a promise for us, as God's people, that **He will never forsake us or leave us in our time of**

trouble (our nighttime or our tribulation) just like He wouldn't do it to Christ. It's a great promise.

Psalms will make promises to three different people groups: Israel, David, and you and me. Again, you might know it was three. The end result for a child of God will be in eternity that we will never see corruption because we get a glorified body. Our inheritance, or our heritage as he says in Psalms 16:6. In this life, even though we still have our flesh to contend with (Romans 7 & it can give us fits!), we can through the principles and the promises, making Christ #1 in our lives, building a wall around us to protect us, finding out who we are in Christ, and getting the stability that we're not moved—we can have a life on Earth where we are protected from the corruption of this old world and have the rest that God wants us to have.

○ The Eye of a Tornado

I've never been in a tornado, but they say that a tornado is a great picture of what the Christian life should be because in the middle of that tornado is what they call the eye of the tornado. There it is completely calm, still, and peaceful. Maybe 50 yards on either side you have the destruction of the tornado tearing and killing people and wrecking everything; however, in the eye of that tornado is perfect peace. What a picture of the Christian life. Around us is the tornado, but God's people should rest in the eye of the tornado where there is peace. Even though the world is being destroyed around us, we live in the peace of that eye of the tornado.

- Principle #7 – Choosing the Path of Life, In His Presence is Fulness of Joy, and at His Right Hand there are Pleasures for Evermore

*Thou wilt shew me the **path of life**: in thy presence is **fulness of joy**; at thy right hand [there are] **pleasures for evermore**. Psalms 16:11*

The first thing he talks about is the path of life. **You know there are two paths in life, and you're going to be on one or the other.** One will lead to a life of rest, peace, and joy. The other leads to misery, heartache, trials, and tribulations. You get to choose which path you get to go on. Nobody forces you on it.

Matthew 7:14. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

That is so true. When we started this church over 20 years ago, the name chosen was Old Paths Baptist Church out of Jeremiah 6:16. I chose that name because I wanted everybody to know that in a world where everybody is forging a new path, we're sticking on the old one. We use the same old hymnals, we use the same old Bible, we preach the same old message. We're on the right path; we're on the old path. We follow the path based on a King James 1611 Authorized Version.

The second thing he says is that **in thy presence is fulness of joy**...being in the presence of God. I don't know if you know this or not, but there are six times in the Bible where it makes a reference to somebody leaving the presence of God. You ought to find out what happens to them

because in the presence of God is the fulness of joy. **There's your full cup.** There's your lot in life.

The third thing he says is at thy right hand there are **pleasures for evermore.** Christianity is just about one thing. It's about sitting on the right hand of God, in the peace of God, enjoying the blessings of God, God filling up your cup, and then managing your lot in life. And you have to choose if you're going to sit on the right hand or the left hand. Where are you sitting with the Lord? At the right hand lies the pleasures forevermore.

IV. Summary

Now you can clearly see how out of Psalm 16 verses 1-4 last week were the terrible tribulation that Israel will be faced with. Then today, in verses 5-11, we see how God will deliver them and break the stronghold of Baal worship and the antichrist in their lives. Then for us, as the people of God, what we will deal with in the people we're trying to help. Step by step getting them through the trials and tribulations of life that the devil will bring into our lives to devour us. Sometimes he uses people (even saved people) that for whatever reason, they want to sandbag you and keep you from having everything that God wants for you. God wants to fill your cup, but they keep whispering in your ear and dumping the cup out.

As a child of God you have, after salvation, two basic choices. **You're either going to be a stronghold for God: steadfast, unmovable, secure in who you are, and allowing God to use you, or you're going to be a stronghold for the world, the flesh, and the devil.** One or the other is going to take control of your life. Either the world will be the stronghold, or God will be the stronghold.

We sing the song in our hymnals: *A Mighty Fortress is our God.* In Psalms, you'll find the tower of David. Those are all pictures of the stronghold that you and I should have in our lives being steadfast and unmovable; however, there are plenty of Christians out there that you know, see, have to deal with, and pray for whose stronghold is the world, the flesh, and the devil. **You'll build a fort, a wall, and stronghold to keep the world out or you'll build a fort, a wall, and a stronghold to keep God out.** How many times have we tried to work with somebody who is not where they need to be, and you try to show them? What is the phrase we all use? "Well, I started to talk to him, but immediately a wall went up."