

2 Samuel 11 (Stephen A. Rule) 206261

Michigan Family Camp: 2017, Gideon's Two Sons

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Let's let's begin this evening with just the first stanza, a #150. This is the first stance of a #150. Add on my heart earlier today. And uh, brother happened to mention it during the day and said we normally stand for this one. So I guess we'll do the normal just stand, we'll sing the first stands only of #150. Umm, I'm doing a lot. I'm going to have a while. Let's pray. Your Lord Jesus, we just do ask. And, uh, minutes do we have together here now that we would each have a clearer sense of the greatness and, uh, deeper desire, Lord Jesus, to live in a way that's pleasing to thee. We do ask it. 9:00 AM Martesa, Amen. Turn with me for just a phrase from Revelation 5. Revelation chapter 5. Just a phrase from toward the beginning of verse 12. Worthy. It's a lamb that was slain. I don't mean to mislead you by the opening hymn and the opening verse. I want to explain why we sang that to him for a moment and why this phrase from the verse when I woke up this morning. It's been bothering me the last few days that there was something missing from the message I believe the Lord's put on my heart and the first thought I had this morning when my alarm went off. Was this phrase from this verse worthy? Is the Lamb that was slain. I think that's the missing piece of context for the message of the Lord's laid on my heart this evening to share with each one of you. And it's a word of warning and a word of warning. The word of warning comes first. And I felt that that particular verse sets the proper context for a word of warning that is necessary for my own soul and I believe, necessary for various ones here. I have no idea who the examples I wish to give this evening are personal ones, but the word of warning. I believe is one for perhaps many that are here. But we wanna end on that note. There's a word of warming as well. The proper attitude. So would you turn with me to the message that's on my heart and judges Chapter 8? At least we'll begin there. With just two verses. Such as chapter 8 and verse 22. This is after Gideon's wonderful victory over Midian the Lord. It works. And Gideon's heart raised him up as his deliverer for his people. He worked. He brought out his faith. He'd acted in faith in the power of God. There'd been a wonderful deliverance for Israel. And this follows on verse 22 of chapter 8 of Judges. Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both, thou and thy son, and thy son, son also, for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian. And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you. The Lord shall rule. Over you wonderful statement, isn't it the Lord? Shall rule over you. Beautiful expression and a message on my heart is there's nothing wrong with that expression. It's a good one. The Lord shall rule over you.

In fact, got a little stained when I was working with it. Most of you won't be able to read it, but somebody in the front row read that for us, OK? The Lord shall rule. Beautiful statement, and I put a nice perfume in here. I'd like somebody who considers himself an expert on that to identify it for us. The Lord shall rule anybody here with a decent nose and one of the front couple rows that wants to take a guess what kind of perfume we've got in here? OK, so Savannah, see if you can tell us. Garlic. You got it, garlic. Nothing wrong with the words. There's a problem with the content. And. That's my burden. There's nothing wrong with the words that Gideon had. There was a problem with the content for a period of time in his life. Look down to one verse, just a little bit further down, and it says in verse 31, uh, Speaking of, well, maybe I read from 29 for the context. And Jerebell, the son of Joash, that's Gideon went and dwelt in his own house and Gideon had three score. And ten sons of his body begotten, for he had many wives, and is concubine that was in Shechem. She also bare him a son, whose name he called Abimelech. You can tell me what abimelech means. My father is King Abimelech, my father is king, said He said I'm not your king, my son's not your king. My son's son is not your king, but he names this one of his sons. My father is king. I'd like to suggest and at least use it in the application this evening as a representation of a spirit or an attitude that we can have that will affect our personal life, our family life and the assembly life. And whatever sphere we act in this spirit, it's going to come out as an odor in our life, and it's not a pretty one. My father is king. The words written on the cover. The Lord shall rule. The words hidden in the heart. My father is king. You know, in Ephesians 5 it gives, I'm sorry, in Ephesians chapter 6, we're given the whole armor of God and it's to protect us against what? Many of you probably have memorized the verses all from the beginning. It's to protect us from what? So that's a while of the devil, isn't it? The sneaky craftiness of the devil. So I want to give you 2 examples. These are very personal. They directly relate to myself. They're not intended to point a finger at anyone here, but I would ask that you would consider, when you hear them, the application through your own personal life. Umm, some of you have heard this first example earlier. But when I was in college, I had a set of things I, I thought and started into training in physics. And then my somewhere in my first year, I wanted to decided the Lord wanted me to become a physics teacher. And one of the reasons for becoming a teacher, as I told the Lord, was that it was a portable skill. Lord could take me anywhere in the world with that skill and. So if the Lord wanted me to be a missionary someday, then he could use me in that way. Somewhere further down the road we felt, my wife and I felt the Lord had wanted us for a particular reason and the country of Ecuador, and we lived there for six years toward the end of the time. There in the fall of 2004, over the Christmas break there, we really had wondering whether the Lord wanted us somewhere else, and so we set aside some time to pray on a Saturday during the Christmas break that I got from school. And over the course of that, sometimes in major decisions in our life, it's been our habit to read through a book of the Word of God and watch for the Lord's direction in it and read it again if there's a need to read it again, and so on. I'm not suggesting some magical way to know the Lord's mind. That's something the Lord's used in my own life. The Lord gave us the book of Acts to read through, and I was reading through the book of Acts became very clear to me what the Lord's direction was.

When we got to the 10th and 11th chapter, but I didn't want to hear it. I did not want the direction the Lord had for me in that 10th or 11th chapter. So I kept reading to the end of the book, got to the end of the book, was out of time for the Saturday, out of time meditating, thinking through it as you read. Doesn't take that long to read the book of Acts. The Lord say there's other activities, spent more time in the afternoon. I already knew what the Lord's answer was. I didn't want the Lord's answer. Came to Monday, had Monday off from school, spent time meditating and reading, and finally somewhere during the day. I threw in the towel and I accepted with Gideon like fleeces the Lord's

mind in the matter, and the Lord more than fully, precisely and exactly from Acts 10 and 11 fulfilled to the letter what he laid on my heart, and I ended up a Bible truth publishers. Now I'm ready for the key point. I would have told you. I would have looked you in the eye and I would have been honest, fully honest that. I just wanted the Lord's will, and in fact, I had a verse for it. He that put his hand to the plow. Turning back is not worthy of me. I probably misquoted that, but that's the sense of the verse. And the Lord had given a work and I was turning back from that work. So, Lord, you can't take me away from where I am. We can take scriptures and use them as fig leaves to cover self will. We can take the very word of God and use it in a way to argue with the Lord. And that's what I did after starting work at Bible Truth Publishers. It was probably 9 or 10 months into working there. Sitting alone in my office feeling 100% incompetent for what I was doing. Having left a profession that I've done for 14 years and absolutely enjoyed, the Lord brought home to me at least a route that had made me kick against the ***** and refuse what He was directing for multiple days in perhaps some period of time prior to that. And that was that. I loved the profession that I was in. I love teaching. I enjoyed it. It was something that I got up in the morning and creativity. I enjoyed interacting with the students. I like working with them and all of that. And it was buried in my heart and I didn't know it was there. I did not know it was there. I would have looked you in the eye and said that is not the reason. I'm totally open to what the Lord has, but it would not have been true. And I would suggest that that Abimelech attitude was in my heart because what I wanted I was twisting the circumstances around me to get. And that could do it as the. Husband in the home with no objection, no scriptural reason why there was anything wrong with that profession or the way it was being carried out or anything like that. There could be the using of it as an excuse for what was really self will. And I would suggest to you that that Abimelech attitude may not be some of you sitting here listening, may not be the voice of the Spirit of God to you in the thing, but there may be that attitude. That hides what's really going on in the heart. We give you another, shorter example to make the point rather. Spend a little bit of time, you know, first I said we begin with warning and finish with warning. The pattern in the Word of God, as I understand it, is to refuse the evil and then choose the good. So I don't want to belabor the negative side. I want to begin with a sense of who it is that we need to yield to the worthy one, the Lamb of God. But I want to illustrate again, so the point goes home clearly, I'm not talking about if you're going on with something that's known sin. That's an obvious thing. That, the word of God clearly says, is wrong. That's not what I'm talking about here. If someone is going on with. Many things drunk in this ***** etcetera, they're clearly condemned in the word of God. I'm not really addressing that this evening. It's not the burden on my heart at least. It's rather the attitude of the heart that takes self and twist the circumstances around to make self the center.

The time perhaps? I don't know, 7-8 years ago? When my son was quite a bit younger and was active and wanted to uh. Sorry, Paul. One thing he asked me was I not tell stories about him. This one was only in the last half hour I felt I should, so I apologize ahead, Paul. Love to play, do stuff and I like to read. So he won the wrestle to get down on the floor and wrestle. And so I'd wrestle about 5 minutes kind of trying to hide it a little bit. I was out of breath and uh, there's no good reason for that. I said OK, now that's, that's enough. I'm tired this evening. Let me read you a story. And at some point after several weeks or months of this. I realized that, you know, this is a pattern here. Something's wrong. There's a pattern here and something's wrong. Lord used it to help me pause and reflect and realize that I lacked complete self-discipline. My lifestyle had changed and moving from Ecuador to the United States and I changed from I can give you all kinds of natural reasons why I was significantly. Lacking in self-discipline and it was affecting my family. So. There was need for repentance again and. Moving forward, better self-discipline so that I could wrestle with Paul now. He wouldn't ask me to do that. The point I wanna make is this, it's really easy to have an outside that says the right thing, that's perfectly legitimate and have an inside that has an attitude that's wrong, that's cover for self will. And if you're a father in the home, it's going to affect your wife and your children. If you're a father or have a place of leadership in the assembly, it's going to affect the assembly. If you're an individual, you're a young person, you don't have the family in the home yet. It'll affect your personal life. But the important thing to recognize is God gives us the details here with Gideon and then in the next chapter, let's turn to it. It gives us the results. I want to read the 1st 5 verses of the next chapter. Most of them. First one and Abimelech the son of Jerobe, went to Shechem unto his mother's brethren, and communed with them and with all the family of the House of his mother's father, saying, Speak, I pray you, in the ears of all the men of Shechem, whether it be better, whether it's better for you, either that all the sons of Jerobe, which are three score and 10 persons, reign over you, or that one reign over you. Remember also. That I'm your bone and your flesh. His mother's brethren spake of him in the ears of all the men of Shechem. All these words. And their hearts inclined to follow Abimelech, for they said He is our brother. They gave him three score and 10 pieces of silver out of the House of Bail Beerus, wherewith Abimelech hired vain and light persons, which followed him. And he went unto his father's house at Oprah, and slew his brethren, the sons of Jerobeal being 3 score and 10 persons upon one stone. Let's stop there. What was his appeal for the men of Shechem? This is Abimelech. That at least in figure or an application I would like to apply My father is king as an attitude that Gideon had in his life at the time when Abimelech was born and apparently through some period of time and it affected this child and he brings an attitude with him and verse two and it says weather is better for you. Either and he goes on. He sets before them a motive of what's best for you. What's the best way for you? Where's God in this calculation? It's not there. It begins with Himself and looks for what's good for Him, and then he offers to the men of Shechem that same motive. Now down to verse 15. This is in the parable that Joseph is speaking. It gets to the point where he's going to speak about. We'll come to the beautiful part we're skipping over later, but he comes down and he says in verse 15.

The brambles said unto the trees, If in truth you might make king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow, and if not, let fire come out of the Bramble and devour the Cedars of Lebanon. How many of you have gone on a hot day and looked for shade and the shade of a BlackBerry Bush? Or Bramble. Fantastic shade, right? First class. You can sit down in the shade of a farm and there's some shade there, right? And then the sun shifts a little bit and you got to move over a little bit. The parts that got hot is now in the shade again. And the part that was in the shade is now in the sun. And in a little bit you're uncomfortable and you move again and again and again, and you never are going to be settled. That's the world's wisdom. That's the attitude of Abimelech wisdom. When things are twisted around self and when we're resting in the shadow of what the world offers, you get a little bit of comfort for a little while that works out a little bit better, and then something else. Is out of whack. So you shift over a little bit and find a little bit more wisdom from the world and a little bit more wisdom from. Abimelech attitude, my father's king, something here for self. What's better for you? And now it's a little more comfortable. So circumstances change a little bit and you're always on the move. Get settled. Beautiful, fantastic. It's great. Almost let me shift again. That's the message that Jotham brought to Abimelech. Now I'm going to assume, in the interest of time, that most here know the story, so I'm going to tell it very, very quickly. Abimelech goes out, There's a process he made. There's a prophecy, verse 20. Maybe I should read just verse 20. But if not, let fire come out from Abimelech and devour the Menishechem. And the House of Millow and that fire come out from the men of Shechem. And from the House of Millow and Devour Abimelech, and the prophet Jotham runs away. There it is. There's the end of the Abimelech attitude. My father is king. It's all about me. Not all about me on the surface, but all about me under the surface. And so the end of it is there's the prophecy. It's going to be mutual self destruction. Abimelech, with your attitude, the men of Shechem who would say what's

best for us, what's in it for us? And it's going to be mutual and total destruction for both sides. And that's how it works out. Go through the chapter and there's an evil spirit that comes along, etcetera. We won't go through all of that, but I do want to note one thing before we turn to the positive side. That's on my heart and that's toward the bottom. And umm. See if I can find the verse here toward the end of the chapter. Vevolek goes to Phoebez. He's breaking his vengeance on those that have turned on him. And it says verse 51, Judges 9, Verse 51. But there was a strong tower within the city, and thither fled all the men and women, and all they of the city, and shut it to them, and got them up to the top of the tower. And Abimelech came under the tower and fought against it, and went hard onto the door of the tower to burn it with fire, and a certain woman. Got a piece of the millstone upon a Vivek's head. And all to break his skull. And he called hastily unto the young man, his armor bearer, and said unto him, Draw thy sword, and slay me That night that men say not of me. A woman slew him. This young man thrust him through, and he died. Draw thy sword and slay me, that men say not of me. A woman slew him. You remember when this gets quoted? You remember when this incident happened one more time in the Word of God? It's incredible, really the the precision of it is amazing. This comes up one more time.

When Joab is sending his message back to David. He sends a little message about Abimelech. And he sends that message back. And it's pretty obvious from the passage in Second Samuel 11 That it was standard operating practice in the War College of Israel, the West Point of the Kingdom of Israel, to recount this story of Abimelech. When you're attacking a city, you don't go up to the wall, because when you do, no word about the sword of the young man, exactly what Abimelech didn't want to happen. Remember that woman that dropped a piece of the millstone on Abimelech's head? Don't do it. Because it'll happen to you. What does Abimelech get from his selfish attitude? Absolutely nothing. But there's more. More in the beauty of Scripture. You know, David. What was his sin that Nathan reproved him for? But Nathan approved him for adultery. So Nathan approved reprove him for murder. No. It reproved him for an abuse of power. A lack of care for those little sheep that weren't as care. You know where that spirit is, The attitude of Abimelech. You know what the Spirit of God brings to David, who had the history could have turned to. He brings to him this story right here, that attitude that had been buried in his heart. And you can trace it out. It's not my purpose tonight to do it. You can go back and look, trace the thread all the way back, back past. In Samuel 11, past the end of the prior chapter, all the way back to the when he became king at the beginning, and you'll see that there was that spirit of beginning to be a Canaanite king. The twisted stuff around what he wanted and not what the sheep that were under his care, what God wanted them to have. If you have the care of a home, if you have care in the assembly, if you have care for friends that you have a spiritual understanding and care for, it has to be carried out. In the spirit not of Abimelech, but of the other son of Gideon. I skipped the good part. I wanted to come to that last. I wanted to put the warning behind us. But if there's something the Lord lays on your conscience, then the warning can stay there. But I want to move to the positive side of the message I skipped. There were seventy sons of Gideon, but two were named. We spent the first half of the meeting tonight on Abimelech. My father is king. Who's the other son? I skipped them. And what does Joseph mean? What does Jotham mean? The Lord is perfect. The Lord is perfect. I'd like to spend the rest of our time together on that attitude. But before we step into it, if your conscience is convicted about something, or if you look back across your life, I want you to notice one more thing before we step into the Jotham's side of what Lord's laid on my heart this evening. Jotham the Lord is perfect. Comes where? In the 70 person birth order? 71 if you want to count Abimelech. I don't think he's in the list of the 70. Where does Joseph come in that birth order? Go ahead. Last. He's the baby. I want to suggest if you're sitting in the room tonight and you're 80 years old, you're not too old to have a baby. Baby Joseph. The attitude every single day that's left to you in your life and every single day that's left to me in my life, that what the Lord does in my life. In the little things. The traffic lights, the spilled milk, the oops tear in the pair of pants on up to the big things. A serious health crisis, the difficult personal relationships.

The problems that are in the assembly, even from the smallest to the greatest, the Lord works in each one of our hearts. That spirit of Jotham, the Lord is perfect. What He is doing is going to work for good. There will be no change in the doctrine, but I've got another envelope here. Still says the Lord shall rule the exact same words. Would you help me again, Savannah? Could be I asked my wife for a cheap perfume that she didn't care about. So this name of this brand is cheap perfume that she didn't care about. What matters is that it's perfume. It's got a nice smell, pleasant anyway. Maybe it's not your favorite. It's not garlic. Same doctrine. Same words, totally different attitude on the inside. Set the context for Joseph. I want you to turn back with me to Deuteronomy Chapter 11. I'm gonna make an application. It's all an app. The whole evening is an application with the Lord laid on my heart. Uh, but in Deuteronomy Chapter 11 and verse 10, I'm going to read from verse 10 to 14. Watch carefully what the Lord. Is setting his people up for the end of the land, for the land without goest in to possess it is not as the land of Egypt from when she came out where thou sowest thy seed and watered it. With ifoot. That's a garden of herbs. I'm gonna pause right there. How many of you have seen? A picture of agriculture in Egypt. Unfortunately, there he is. I was hoping you'd be here yet. Where does the water come from, Jim? Denial. They get their lovely crops not from the rain from heaven, but from irrigation, from the Nile. Now I understand and I looked up different things on this particular water. Sit with thy foot. And there's all kinds of different pictures you'll find if you go looking for how they do their irrigation. But one of them, I believe, applies to this verse, and that is there was a kind of. Egyptian Stairmaster and it was attached to a water wheel. And you get on your Egyptian stairmaster and you do your thing and the water wheel works and it hurts the water from the Nile into the irrigation channel. The key part here is that it required effort to keep the thing going. It requires human effort to bring the water, to bring the crop, and that's what they're leaving. They're leaving a place where their human effort was going to bring them. Into a place of fruitfulness. And here's where the Lord is bringing them. Verse 11. But the land, whither ego to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and brink of water, of the rain of heaven. Now who are you dependent on? You children of Israel that are about to leave your land? Who are you dependent on? Now? Is it that good hard effort to bring blessing to my family? And the next morning on the Stairmaster again to get a little bit more water because it's going to run out if I don't. No, this land drinks water from the reign of heaven. You're going to have to depend on me for the blessing, and I'm going to bring it. Now I'm making the application here to us as believers. So I'm going to leave out the last little part of this section because they were under a responsibility to get that blessing. Verse 12A Land which the Lord thy God cares for. The eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it from the. Beginning of the year, even until the end of the year. The Lord is perfect. Who's got his eyes on your family? Who's got his eyes on your assembly? Who's got his eyes on your personal life? He's watching from heaven with a delight and a desire to bring that reign of heaven, to bring the blessing that it would be the delight of his heart to bring. And then they're brought on the ground of responsibility. Now I want to turn and not take that subject up too much further. Turn to Nehemiah Chapter 9. Before we come back to Jotham. We'll get back to him and Judges 9. But I want to read one verse from Nehemiah nine first.

In my 9 actually 2 verses. Agreed to versus 24 and 25. So the children went in and possessed the land. I'm sorry. Umm, yeah. So the children went in and possessed the land, and thou subdued them before them, the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, and gave us them into their hands with their kings and the people of the land, that they might do with them as they would. And they took. Now there are seven

things here I want you to watch, three of them in particular. There are seven things, though, and there's some fascinating details in the other four that we're not going to cover. So if you want to go back on your own, you can really enjoy some of the other details, but here they are. Umm. Strong cities and a fat land and possessed houses full of all goods. Wells, dugged vineyards. Now watch these three vineyards and all of yards and fruit trees in abundance. What brings them in? I'm going to. Pause here for a brief aside. I hope you enjoy it. They got strong cities. I wasn't gonna comment on it. Remember, strong cities was one of the gifts. We were talking about this at the lunch table earlier today. How many cities in the land of Canaan were burned when they entered the land? Can you name any? Name one. Jericho was burned, right? That little insignificant nothing AI was burned. There's only one more hat sore. And the Lord brought them into the land. He brought them in and away. That never happened before that in history, hasn't happened since. And it's an excuse that archaeologists will use today to say, oh, we don't believe that there was some Canaanite invasion. There was kind of a Canaanite infusion. Because in the burn layers, well, there's a burn layer in Jericho, they're about the right spot. There's a burn layer in Hatthord about the right spot. We can't find AI, but other than that. There are no burned cities in the land of Israel. And they took strong cities. Or that everything ready for them ahead of time. It was already move in and enjoy my goodness and I'll keep it going with the rain from heaven. And you know, I'd like to apply that to each one of us. In Christianity, leaving out, since we're making the application here, that part in Deuteronomy that carried their own responsibility and taking it over and applying it to us as believers. A home. That's given to you by God. Let's move in. Ready, isn't it doesn't need any sprucing up and fixing. It's ready to go. Everything has been provided. But I just want you to notice Now we're going to turn back to Joseph and his prophecy. Those last three things that depended on the reign of heaven. What were they? They were the vineyards, the olive yards and the fruit trees. Now let's go back to Judges 9. So I just Chapter 9. And. Verse 6. I'm sorry, I want to go forward verse 7. Chiltham's the youngest son of Gideon, and we gave his name, meaning the Lord is perfect. Verse seven. And when they told it to Joseph, that is the slaughter of all his brothers, he went stood on the top of Mount Gerizim. Mount Gerizim is a mountain, a blessing. It's where when they entered the land of Israel, they were due. 6 tribes stand on that mountain and pronounce the blessing. And on the other mountain, mountain Ebo, there were six that were going to stand and pronounce cursing. Those two mountains look right down on Shechem, the home of Abimelech.

Now there's one son left. Or is he gonna stand? It's got a curse to pronounce. The last verse of the chapter calls it a curse. It was a curse. It's got one mountain to stand on. Where is he going to stand? Perhaps you feel kind of alone. Perhaps everything where you're from is totally messed up. Perhaps in your life it feels like it's a mess at the moment. Or in your assembly, it feels like it's a mess at the moment. Where does he choose to stand? Stand on the mountain of blessing. And he calls out three figures that were God's blessing for them in the land. Let's look at them. They all relate to Israel. We won't take them up in that context. Verse 8. The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them, And they said unto the olive tree, Reign now over us. But the olive tree said unto them, Listen carefully. It's the same phrase every single time. Watch what the olive tree says. Should I leave? Should I leave my fatness wherewith by me they honor God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees. The next one and the tree is said to the fig tree. Come, thou reign over us and the fig tree. Said unto them, Should I forsake this exact same word, the exact same word in the Hebrew? So I'm going to read it as Should I leave? Mr. Darby translates it that way. Should I leave my sweetness and my good fruit and go to be promoted over the trees? Then said the trees under the vine, come thou, and reign over us. And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheareth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? I want to apply these three things. They're all figures of Israel. They're all used throughout the Word of God as figures of Israel. But I'd like to make the application here. The olive tree is where the olive oil comes from, and that oil is a clear picture throughout the Word of God. It's already been mentioned once in this time together to figure the Spirit of God, we're going to take up the olive tree and look at it briefly as God's provision for us in His Holy Spirit given to us. The 2nd is. Of the fig tree, they got fruit trees in abundance. This one is the specific fruit tree, the fig tree, and the fig tree. I'd like to apply assembly fruit for God, the fruit of the Spirit, the Spirit comes first, fruit for God and the fruit of the Spirit, and the third in the vine. Gives its meaning right there. It says should I leave my wine? Which cheereth God and man? I think it's a figure of joy. And so we've got the three the Spirit of God, fruit for God, and joy. Now let me suggest this to you, applying it at the moment to families. If the attitude of the father and the mother in everything and what's hidden in the little things and in the big things of life is the Lord is perfect. His provision for this family is absolutely right. It's full and it's complete. So let's go to him for that provision and our need. The child will have in their life clear evidence of the power of the Spirit of God. Joy and the character of Christ, the fruit that God would look for, the character of his Son. If the child sees those three things and temptation comes, where are they going to stand? Are they going to stand on the mountain of cursing? Are they going to stand on the mountain of blessing and say, should I leave this provision that God's given to me? And if in your heart you're taken up with God's provision. The power of His Spirit to bring in what's needed in your life. The character of Christ that He wants to form in your heart and the joy that He gives to you. If those things fill my heart and they flow out in my attitude, it may not be that there's anything on the outside, the doctrine that needs to change, but the child will say, we'll say in our own heart, and it will be evident in our assembly that the Lord is perfect.

And the simple answer to the call to leave the coming reign. To be the King, To have a place for self. The answer would be, how could I leave this? God's given me what's perfect. He's given me exactly what I need. How could I leave what he's given to me? Let's take them out briefly. I want to take two expressions that get used often, and I've almost exclusively heard them, at least in public meetings, applied to public meetings. But that's not the context. I don't believe in the Word of God. They are for every single day of your life. You may never have spoken in the public meeting. Because the word of God says not to for you. So these verses apply absolutely to you every single day of your life. Let's turn to the first in a season, chapter four. They relate to the Spirit of God. Ephesians chapter 4, verse 30. And grieve not. The Holy Spirit of God. The standard way in which I've heard this used in public meetings is 100% absolutely accurate and good. And that is, if I'm allowing sin in my life, the Spirit will be hindered in using me in a public meeting to speak for Him. I wanna give you a personal application of what it means to grieve the spirit that has nothing to do with the assembly. And again, I'm gonna pull something from my personal life. Very unlikely that it'll touch your conscience, but it touches mine and I ask you to take it and apply it in your own life. I'm going to give you an analogy, a framework to think of it first, and then I'll give you the example. In the mornings, generally most days of the week, I get the breakfast going. Those of you commenting on my, uh, culinary skills cutting up fruit know that, uh, what I'm about to say is not a profession of any grandeur in the kitchen, because you've already seen the opposite and commented on it rightly. But here's the point. I get a kettle going for hot water, for something that Renee needs to use in her cooking later on. I turn it up on high and when the kettle starts to make its whistling sound, I turn it down to low, and when she's ready to do her thing with the, uh, hot water, it's just a simple matter of turning it back up and within 5 seconds it's boiling again. I've gotten it just below the boiling point and it's sitting there. Now also when I get up in the morning. My habit to begin my day with the word of God in prayer and later on move to other things. My personal Bible reading on my laptop at home and. That part is not the relevant part. The relevant part is the laptop is sitting on my lap and it's great to pull in ministry and add it and look at look at it along with my personal reading and so on. But toward the end of that, somewhere along in that personal reading, a

thought may hop into my head and I go to the browser and I pull up the ministry and another thought may hop into my head and I go up and pull up a little bit of technology news. I kind of abandoned the news last August when it got so. That's I don't wanna divert there. The point is I get diverted from where I'm supposed to go. Should have been about 10 minutes, but maybe it's 20 or 25 or whatever and now I'm in a hurry and I'm also irritated. I've got the kettle on. Not quite on boil, but I've cranked it up. I've gone after things. Not evil things, not the kind of things where I would be embarrassed to have you pull up my browser history and go digging around and hunting with forensics and find out what was there. I'm talking about legitimate things.

But whatsoever is not a faith of sin, and instead of the 10 minutes I needed, I spent 25 and somewhere inside my constant new all the way along the way and it's on simmer. And I'm cruising into the bathroom for my morning shower, and I'm cruising, hustling back out to the kitchen, and some crazy person is in the way. So back out and around through the dining room to put a few things on the table, and they're still in the way. And every little thing is now a vexation. What's the problem? Is the person standing in the aisle in the kitchen? No. As I've given in to myself, I've grieved the spirit. It cranked that vexation level up just below the boil. And now when somebody does something. What do they do that for? Whether it comes out of my mouth, it comes out of my face. Thankfully, you know, maybe my back is turned and nobody else sees it. That's grieving the spirit that keeps from having. The fullness of the power of the Spirit of God now in in our life. Now turn to one more. It's a balancing one. You know where I'm headed, It's First Thessalonians 5. Look at the context again. This is general applies to every moment of every life, everyday life. I'm going to give you a figure before we read the verse in First Thessalonians 5, some of you are already looking at it. When we were first married, and still to this day, almost every dinner time there are candles on our table. Now they're the four cent tea light ones from IKEA. They used to be these paper candles. That doesn't matter. I was fresh out of college and physics and you know, it's just fun to experiment with things. So dip my finger in the water glass and a little drop of water on the candle. You know what happens when you put just a little drop of water in the candle? Not much. So especially with those tea light ones, you put another little drop and another little drop and then another little drop. You know what happens? It gets mixed in with that melted wax, It comes up that Wick and all of a sudden there's no more fuel there and it sputters out. Got that image in your mind? Now let's read these verses. 1st Thessalonians 5, verse 16. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing, we heard this morning. Don't give up on the matter we're praying about in everything. Give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Isn't that beautiful? The candles flaming real nice. Burning brightly. Now the Lord wants you to, in His grace and in His. Love and in the power of His spirit. Speak to a straying brother or sister. That's painful, that's messy, that's uh. And we begin to cherry pick versus to build a wall of defense for why we shouldn't do it. What are we doing? We're putting little drops of water there that quench the spirit. That verse 19 says quench, not the spirit. The Spirit's a massive, wonderful, fantastic subject. Let me give you 3 portions to look at and I'm not going to turn to them. Those three things you can look at are we've read one verse already here in the time together in Hebrews 10, Spirit's wonderful and bringing an assurance of salvation. One of the beautiful things that God would bring an assurance of salvation is a wonderful broad topic. You can look into it. You can see that in Hebrews 10. We've got another one and that's in First Corinthians 6 and in many other places where the Spirit of God is the power of holiness. And that too, is going to bring wonderful fruit in our life. And the third? Beautiful one. We'll just read very briefly the verse It's in, umm, Romans chapter 8. And.

Verse 26. Likewise the Spirit also helped with our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Don't have time to develop it? Enjoy it on your own. I want to give you 2 quick thoughts on the fruit. Four things on Joy and I'll list them. But the fruit probably didn't notice but back in Jotham's prophecy. He didn't say who the fruit was for. The olive tree was forgotten man. The vine was forgotten man. The fruit just is. I wanna suggest to you this thought the Lord in Matthew 21. He comes to the fig tree and he's in hunger. He's hungry. When he comes to that fig tree, he goes looking for something to eat and there's nothing there. I want to suggest to you this thought. When the Lord comes and looks over your life from today, he's hungry. Wants to see the character. God wants to see the character of his son reflected. In your life today. So in the baby spilled the milk, when somebody was rude to you, when you tripped and fell and banged your knee, when the circumstances, in other words, weren't agreeable, what came out? No one was there. Nobody else thought. But if what came out was that fruit of the spirit. Was that patience? Was that joy? Was that spirit of love? And the Lord found fruit on your fig tree. I want to suggest to you, is it nothing? The world will call that nothing. Nobody saw it. You didn't put it in your diary. You didn't add it to your blog. But if the Son of God could come down and taste the fruit produced by the Spirit in your life today. And he could say that's delicious. That's the flavor we have in heaven. Is that nothing? Is that nothing? Finish with four joys. 4 joys. Let's just give you the verses. They're all beautiful. 1st is in John chapter 15 verse 11. I have to meditate on them on your own. Sum 15, verse 11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. Talking about obedience in verse 10. So there's the joy of obedience. There's a joy of obedience. I'm gonna say this four times as I read the verses. That's all we have time for. God wants your joy to be full. He gives you right here to have your joy full. Obedience is one way to find joy. You can sit under the shadow of the Bramble and look for joy, and you'll get patches of shade, but it'll never fill you. The fullness of joy is just that. It's the fullness of joy. Second one. In chapter 16 and verse 24. The Lord was leaving his disciples. He was going to go away. They couldn't come to Him and ask for things. They couldn't come to Him and ask for the money to pay the tribute tax or whatever it was. And so they come to Him and they say, Lord, the Lord prepares them. Verse 24 Hitherto have He asked nothing in my name? Ask and you shall receive, that your joy may be full. To say there's that privilege of prayer and access. And there's joy that's full there. The next chapter, chapter 17 and verse 13. And now come I to thee. And these things I speak in the world that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. The context is the Lord is taking his own in their hearing and he's setting them down in his place before the Father. He's going to go. He's going to leave them in his place of relationship to the father. There's that joy in relationship and he's setting them down in that place and he's going to go away. And I have to say to you, and if I tried to meditate on these last four.

It's like a circuit breaker and mine trips it 50 amps or something. I can't get my heart around that spot. Can you get your heart around that spot? Maybe you've got a bigger circuit breaker, but it might. It's just I can't. You've been set down in perfect relationship. With the Father in Christ, place here on earth the last one First John four. First John one. Verse 4. This is another one. My circuit breaker is not big enough for it. I hope yours is. After presenting. Well, I'll read verse three and four. Let's just see that readeth. I'm sorry, I'm in revelation. No wonder it didn't make sense. Verses three and four in first John one that which we have seen and heard declare unto you that ye also may have fellowship with us and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. Verse four and these things right we unto you. That your joy may be full. You've been brought into a place where you get to sit down with the Son of God, with the Father, and enjoy the same things together. You know what this you look, I watch young people, various young people that go and they look for a place where they can sit down, or at least they belong to the edge of a group where they feel like they belong. God has taken you and he's made you and he's put you in a place. Where you're sitting down, not on the edge of a group, but with the father and with the son, enjoying the exact same things. If

that's the odor of your heart, it's going to take care of everything else. Let me finish with those words. Jotham was #70. Never too late to say the Lord is perfect. Let's thank him, dear Lord Jesus. Just ask that by the power of thy spirit. We will be done with the things that put ourselves 1st and that we would sit and that we would enjoy, and we'd be thankful for the fullness of hypervision for us. We thank the Lord Jesus in thy name, Amen.

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