

Lev 05-07-03a

This is Sunday, July the 3rd, 2005. We continue our worship this Sunday morning by taking a moment at the outset to clear our minds and prepare our hearts, recognize the ministry of God's Holy Spirit which is essential at every stage of our living before God in the light of His Word. We need the Holy Spirit to help us hear and understand the Word.

We need His help to store it in our souls and we need it to bring it to mind, see its application and apply it by faith in our daily circumstances. This first stage is just as important though no more important than each of the others and so we pause to go to the Lord in prayer. Father, we are grateful as we celebrate the 229th anniversary of the independence of our nation, the freedom that we enjoy in the United States.

We thank you for our government, for our liberty, for the opportunity that we have to pursue our life before you without harassment, without persecution, without oppression. We thank you that we have godly men in our government in all of the branches and those men and women are the core, the remnant representing those of us who share the faith and are in the body of Christ and because of them and because of faithful believers in our nation you continue to bless us in so many wonderful ways. We thank you that we have the opportunity to assemble this morning under the umbrella of that freedom which is secured by those in the military and those in the law enforcement and in the various branches of government that ensure our safety and security.

We thank you for them. We pray for those who cannot take the opportunity to worship and assemble this morning who are believers. We pray that the Holy Spirit will bring to their minds the word of God that is already resident in their souls so that your word can comfort, encourage and strengthen them.

We ask your blessing on us as we fellowship and study together. We pray that our time will be well spent, that our souls will be fortified for the days ahead so that we can avail ourselves of the time that remains in this life to prepare ourselves for the next. We pray these things in Jesus' name.

Amen. Psalm 147, this one is subtitled in your New King James, Praise to God for His Word and Providence. Psalm 147.

We won't do a lot of detailed exegesis. This psalm speaks pretty clearly about those subjects but it is a great one and I think fitting on this occasion. Psalm 147 says, Praise the Lord for it is good to sing praises to our God for it is pleasant and praise is beautiful.

The Lord builds up Jerusalem. He gathers together the outcasts of Israel. He heals the broken hearted and binds up their wounds.

He counts the number of the stars. He calls them all by name. Great is our Lord and mighty in

power.

His understanding is infinite. The Lord lifts up the humble. He casts the wicked down to the ground.

Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving. Sing praises on the harp to our God who covers the heavens with clouds, who prepares rain for the earth, who makes grass to grow on the mountains. He gives to the beasts its food and to the young ravens that cry.

He does not delight in the strength of the horse. He takes no pleasure in the legs of a man. The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear Him, in those who hope in His mercy.

Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem. Praise your God, O Zion, for He has strengthened the bars of your gates. He has blessed your children within you.

He makes peace in your borders and fills you with the finest wheat. He sends out His command to the earth. His word runs very swiftly.

He gives snow like wool. He scatters the frost like ashes. He casts out His hail like morsels.

Who can stand before His cold? He sends out His word and melts them. He causes His wind to blow and the waters flow. He declares His word to Jacob, His statutes and His judgments to Israel.

He has not dealt thus with any nation. And as for His judgments, they have not known them. Praise the Lord.

This of course is a celebration of God's grace in a national setting, specifically for Israel in Old Testament days. You can see a lot of application of the blessing of God on our nation, although God has not dealt with any nation as He did Israel. It says so right here.

But we do have those principles and the dealing of God with the nation of Israel applies very specifically to the individual believer in this age. He begins by saying, Praise the Lord. It is good to sing praises to our God.

It is pleasant and praise is beautiful. If you remember your Hebrew word for beautiful from our study of Ecclesiastes, it's the Hebrew word rafi, good that is beautiful, tov that is rafi. You have the pleasant singing of praises.

It's important that we remember Thanksgiving. We tend to rush to God with problems, with concerns, with intercessory prayer, with requests on our own behalf and we forget to stop and thank Him. The level of gratitude in our soul is a direct gauge.

It's like a barometer for humility. The more humble the believer, the more praise and thanksgiving is going to issue from that believer's soul. One of the first signs that we are not functioning in humility is we lose a sense of gratitude, a sense of appreciation for what God has

done.

So when we are not thankful, we need to start looking for that which goes before a fall. Anna, could you take her and close her in her room please? It goes on to say the Lord builds up Jerusalem. He gathers together the outcasts of Israel.

He heals the broken hearted and binds up their wounds. Who gathers the scattered and heals the broken hearted and binds the wounds in our nation? We have all kinds of charities. We have foundations.

We have the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer folks. We have the innumerable foundations. Theresa Hines has got a foundation that funds a bunch of things.

You have many altruistic organizations that operate in the realm of charity, helping to cure disease, helping to feed the homeless. McDonald's has things that they sponsor in our nation. What is the application of this truth of building up, gathering, healing and binding up? In the modern day, once again, this is God working on behalf of the individual believer.

There is a feeling, and it has seeped in from our culture and from our society, that there are problems that God really is not set up to handle. He is good for morality. He is good for spiritual things.

But when it comes to actual problems of the heart or problems of the mind, God really is not able to heal that. There are relationship problems. There are dysfunctional homes.

How many times have you heard somebody say, well, I come from a dysfunctional family? Every family is dysfunctional in some way. No household is perfect. There is no ideal father, ideal mother, ideal son or daughter.

There are strengths and weaknesses because we are all conceived in iniquity and born in sin. We have areas of strength and areas of weakness. We have various levels of commitment, various levels of maturity when it comes to spiritual life.

There is no household that is going to fully reflect divine prerogatives, divine priorities. We are all dysfunctional to some extent. What fills those gaps? What mends the cracks and breaks? What enables us to emerge as children from a household and overcome whatever the shortcomings were of our parents or whatever our own shortcomings were in failing to yield to good training and responding to bad influences whether inside or outside the home? It is a fallen world, and every part of the world has problems.

So everybody and everything and every family and every household, every church has some area of dysfunctionality. It is just built in. For believers, there is a power.

Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. God's grace is sufficient for every need. And believers tend to be subtly and unconsciously sucked into the modern view that says, well,

there is a lot of problems that you really need to go see a doctor.

You really need to get a prescription. You need to go into a program. We have a therapy.

We have outlined a set of steps and a set of ways, and oftentimes this is going to involve some sort of medication that is going to fix what is wrong in your mind and fix what is wrong in your heart. Now, there are physical problems that can affect your mind, no doubt. And if you go into a doctor and you are diagnosed as having a low level of something or a high level of something, if they have a test, they take a sample of your blood or they hook up a probe to your brain and they find out that there is, in fact, some actual malfunction of the human body.

Your thyroid has gone out or your levels of lithium or something are just off the chart wrong. Obviously, it is a good time to avail yourself of modern medicine and get that restored to normal. However, for conditions for which there is no physical test, if they can't measure your blood or measure your EEG or take an X-ray or find a lump or a tumor or an aneurysm or a contusion or some other problem, fluid on your brain or whatever, if there is not a clear physical diagnosis, people still will take medication.

And it is pure guesswork. Well, I think you are depressed. From what you tell me, you sound depressed, so let me give you some uppers.

You sound manic, let me give you some downers. You sound like you can't focus your attention, so let me give you something that is going to quiet down your erratic brain waves. And a lot of this is no different than the witch doctor throwing herbs and boiling leaves to make tea and trying whatever you can think of to make a change in your condition.

And a lot of times the cure is as bad or worse than the problem in those situations. But this has become accepted. People, I mean, there is legal liability if somebody points out and says, you really ought not to be taking drugs for your mental attitude.

For believers, that ought to be a last resort. And if you have not exhausted the possibilities of your spiritual life, if you have not prayed, if you have not studied the word of God intensively, you are on very dangerous ground going into the chemical world. Pharmakeia is the Greek word used for the consultation with powers that are not God.

And that is exactly what we have going on today. Look at this verse, God gathers together the outcasts. He heals the brokenhearted.

He binds up their wounds. With God all things are possible. People say, well, but you know, doesn't God work through doctors? Well, sure.

Of course he does. If I break my arm, I will go see a doctor. If my fillings fall out, I go see a great dentist.

But in the area of spiritual things, in the area of mental attitude, what goes on in the mind and

what goes on in the heart, the first and primary recourse for a believer needs to be spiritual life. And if you have not availed yourself of the power of God's word, if you have not availed yourself of the power of God's spirit, if you have made a shallow attempt, if you are the seed in the shallow soil where the plant sprung up in a day and then a little bit of sunshine hits and it withers and dies, and then you go running off and start popping pills, you will have a lot to answer for at the judgment. I am just telling you like it is.

God claims sovereignty over the human heart. The word of God is alive and powerful. The word of God cuts to the very quick of the soul and the spirit and the joints and the marrow.

The word of God parses and teases out and separates and critiques the thoughts and intents of the heart. Be diligent to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. It is the word of God that makes us thoroughly equipped for every good work.

You find no analog in the word of God anywhere for someone who is feeling down, smoking something, drinking something, popping something, shooting up with something. You have got people in the word of God that have a lot to be depressed about. You think about Joseph.

You think about Daniel. You think about Moses and Midian. Talk about post-partum depression of a sort.

Here is Moses who was a prince in Egypt, probably lined up to be the next Pharaoh, a general of the armies who won tremendous victories. There are monuments that have been recovered where his name has been obliterated, but it is very clear that the time is right and the place is right. He seems to have been the general that effected these great military victories to be cast out, to run away, to live for 40 years in Midian.

He lost a lot in a human sense. Many individuals, you look at Naomi who lost her husband and her two sons. She comes back and says, you can call me bitter.

Well, you might call her bitter, but she didn't take something for that. The list goes on. So I emphasize this because there is a great insensitivity to what the Word of God says about the power of God's Word.

What a tragedy that believers underestimate the power of the Word. They give it a fleeting try. They study for a few weeks.

They get a few shallow sermons. They pray a little bit. They don't see results and they fade.

They fold. They wither and wilt and then say, well, that's not the answer. I need something.

I want an answer now. I like the quick fix. I like my problems solved in the space of the 43 minutes that it takes on TV plus my 17 minutes of commercials where my problems get solved in 60 seconds or less.

Get your clothes whiter. Get your teeth whiter. Get your headache taken care of.

You've got your Prilosec. You don't have acid reflux anymore. Cholesterol is fixed.

Lipidore. Everything in the world is being ballyhooed on television to fix our problems. For a believer, the first place to look is God.

He is our Father. He gathers together the outcasts. He heals the broken hearted.

Now this is a big statement to make. You think about being broken hearted. How can you heal a broken heart? The BG sang a whole song about that.

How can you mend a broken heart? Well, in the human realm, you cannot, but God can. Believers have abdicated their responsibility to go to God. They have ignored and disrespected the power and the promise of God in going to human solutions and dealing with problems the way the world would.

In what way is God glorified if you seize and lay hold of the same solution as some rank, pagan, homosexual unbeliever? I say homosexual. I just throw that in gratuitously because they've got their own channel on cable now. Not only did I hear about it from other sources, but I saw a commercial for it last night.

It's the Logo Network. The two O's are these blue circles. It's MTV, which is owned by Viacom.

It has branched out and given the homosexuals their own TV channel. But one of those guys, if he gets depressed because he lost his boyfriend, he can go take one of these drugs. He can go engage in some sort of a program.

It's just ridiculous. God heals the brokenhearted. God binds up their wounds if you are the people whose God is the Lord.

We ought to be in pretty severe extremis to be looking outside the provision of God for help when it comes to the heart and to the mind. It says in verse 4, God counts the number of the stars. He calls them all by name.

You immediately think, well, this must be talking about the angels. But it's not. Context, context, context.

What is the psalmist speaking of here? It's the nation of Israel, isn't it? Can you think of a place where stars and the nation of Israel are associated? What did God tell Abram to do? Walk outside your tent, look up in the sky. Your descendants will be as the stars for multitude. And here it says God counts the number of the stars.

Even though there is an innumerable assembly of the offspring of Abram, God knows every single one by name. And this is important for a couple of reasons, some you might not immediately suspect. One, does God have an individual plan for our lives or just kind of a

general plan? If you read, I've mentioned this before but it's been a while, Gary Friesen's book *Decision Making in the Will of God*, very big on the whole idea of divine guidance and was thought by many to be sort of the definitive work on what the Bible says about divine guidance.

In his view, there is no specific will of God and he argues very strenuously throughout his book that there is a general will of God. It's sort of like the tabernacle enclosure. You get within the white curtains, you can walk around and do whatever you want.

As long as you don't break any commandments, but in terms of where you live, where you go to school, who you marry, what you choose to do with your time, just stay within the white curtains and you're good. Just form your own plan. This is false.

It is wrong. God has a specific plan. God has designed a person for you to marry.

God has a geographical will. God has a personal will. God has opportunities and tasks each and every day.

God knows exactly. Did you notice on down in this psalm where it says that God's knowledge is infinite? Great is our Lord, the next verse, and mighty in power. His understanding is infinite.

There's nothing he does not know. There's nothing he has not allowed for and planned for. The problem with the walk inside the curtains view is that you can decide that a lot of your problems are probably just consequences of your own decisions.

You're just kind of on your own. You're wandering around. You trip over something, bump into something.

It winds up being subjective. How did I get myself into this mess? What did I do? How can I work myself back out of this? You say, well, I haven't broken any commandments, so I'm good with God. Now I've got to deal with this.

Instead of recognizing that every circumstance, every test, every challenge is known by God. It is allowed by God or ordained by God to be in our circumstances for a reason. He screens out a lot of things.

There are criminals running all over Dallas, but each day that a criminal does not attack us, does not break in and thief around in our house, does not buy us or bodily assault us, doesn't vandalize, doesn't siphon our gas or paint on our fence or whatever it may be, it's because God has ensured that they don't come in. You could spend a thousand years in the millennium just finding out all the things that God did not permit that were headed our way because He does not think we're ready for that. It's not a part of His plan.

It's not a part of the training program. Maybe later. Maybe next month somebody will paint my fence or siphon my gas or break a window or do whatever.

But God has a specific will. His understanding is infinite. He counts the number of the stars.

He knows every star by name. Every descendant of Jacob, every descendant of Abraham is known by name. Secondly, this tells us what a great study you can have in the genealogies because if God knows them all by name and puts those names into His eternal word, it means something.

You may smile, but one of these days we're just going to have a study and call it genealogy. We saw a little bit of that in Genesis though, didn't we? So then he says, the Lord lifts up the humble. He casts the wicked down to the ground.

He lifts up the humble. James 4.6, God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble is a reference back to this idea. The Lord lifts up the humble.

Well, we want to be the humble, right? He says in the New Testament, humble yourself under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time. Now we think the due time is now. Well, okay, if God lifts up the humble then I would say maybe by 3 o'clock this afternoon I should be lifted up or by the end of next week I should be lifted up.

I've got a job. Well, I should be promoted. I'm in a situation.

I should be elevated. I should be recognized. I should be vindicated.

I should be justified. I should be recognized. People ought to be thanking me and sending me cards and letters and forming fan clubs because God is going to lift me up in due time.

Do you want to be lifted up now or do you want to be lifted up later? There is a great principle of patience. Samuel comes and anoints David. David waits years before he is lifted up to the throne of Israel.

He has the promise, but he has a lot to go through ahead of time. The more humility that we learn, the more perseverance under pressure, the more patience under trial, the more qualified we will be to be lifted up. To not be lifted up and have it destroy us.

There is a gift that God can give that would destroy us. Too much material wealth can destroy the wrong people. Too much recognition can destroy the wrong people.

God preserves us by denying us promotion. God preserves us by denying us material things. God preserves us by denying us an easy road.

An easy road would make us weak. An easy road would make us flaccid and slack and puny and unable to cope. It is the challenges, it is the resistance, it is the weight and the circumstances that oppress us that build us up and make us strong.

This is why over and over and over, how many times have we seen it? You have need of patience. You have need of endurance. After you have suffered a while, you will receive the promise.

The inheritance goes to those who hold up under pressure. I was running in the heat the other day for some goofy reason known only to God. I like running in the afternoon.

It's cool in the morning. It makes every kind of sense to get up early in the morning and run. I just don't do it.

I like running in the afternoon. It's always in the 90s. Here of late, it's been as high as I ran the other day.

It was 97. As I was tootling down the path and I reached my turnaround point, I was coming back and I was about 80 or 85 percent of the way through the run. I started feeling really bad.

For various reasons, I was food wise and so on. The last mile or so of that run was really just every step was a big effort. I thought to myself as I do regularly in that circumstance, this is where you make your money.

This is why you got out and run. You don't get out and run for what you get out of the first mile. The first mile is easy.

You got resident stored energy in your muscles. A little bit of adrenaline maybe is running. The first mile doesn't do you any good.

The first mile, you're there. You're set for the first mile. The second mile, you start feeling a little more.

The third mile, the fourth mile. By the time you get into, depending on how far you run, but when you get into your last mile and you have to push and you have to strain, that's your money mile. That's what you went out to run for.

That's the one that gives you improvement. That's the one that stimulates your body to build itself up. It's the hardest mile.

It's the longest mile. It's the most tedious mile. It's the one where your body is screaming at you, stop, you fool.

That's your best mile. That's the one you want. That's why you went out there.

You went through the first 40 minutes of running to get to that mile. Now you're here. It's no time to quit.

The Lord will lift up the humble. Humility is self-control. It is strength under control, under pressure.

Humility doesn't really evidence itself when everything is great, does it? Humility comes out when it is tested, when there's a temptation to be proud, when there's a temptation to fight for what you think you deserve. Well, recognize me. Acknowledge me.

Gratify me. Assign me my place. Listen, that's the money mile.

That is the time to pull back. That's the time to be quiet. That's the time to bridle the tongue.

That's the time to run as hard in the last mile as you did in the first mile and don't let the flesh pull you off the trail. God will lift up the humble. Maybe not today.

Maybe not in this life. But God resists the proud. God gives grace to the humble.

Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God in order that he may exalt you in due time. I don't get the benefit of that hard mile right away. I came back in and thought I was going to die.

I felt bad all evening. However, after some time passes, after your body responds and says, okay, well, obviously I have not been storing sufficient strength in these muscles. I have not been giving sufficient priority to the cardiovascular system here.

But this stress tells me I need to build it up. The body goes to work. Two days later, four days later, a week later when I run, I am going to be better for having run that mile.

I am healthier. I will live longer. I will have less crud built up in my arteries and so on.

It's all good. But you don't see the benefit right away. In the immediate short term, it hurts.

But it's the best mile. That's the one you want. If you are interested in excelling, if you want to be approved by God, if you want to be lifted up by God, run that race with patience.

That's the message. He casts the wicked down to the ground. Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving.

Sing praises on the harp to our God. He covers the heavens with clouds. He prepares rain for the earth, grass to grow on the mountains, gives to the beast its food, and to the young ravens that cry.

This is confidence in the provision of God. Animals don't know where their next meal is going to come from. Happy is swimming around in his tank over there.

He doesn't know when somebody is going to remember to drop flakes in. He swims around and he is at the mercy of his human cat doors. God knows our every need.

To the extent that we are dedicated to Him, to the extent that we genuinely trust Him, not as the genie of the lamp, but as our God and as our Father, as our Provider, He is going to bring the rain. It doesn't always rain, does it? Rain is periodic. We don't want constant climate of clouds.

In their season, when the time is right, God brings clouds, God brings rain. It's periodic. Rain is not on a schedule.

The sun comes up and sets pretty much on a schedule. The moon goes around on a schedule. Rain is not on a schedule.

For a lot of us, we don't know exactly how our provision is going to fall out, but this is a statement of God's provision. He covers the heavens with clouds. He prepares rain for the earth.

He makes the grass to grow. He gives the beasts their food, the young ravens that cry. He doesn't delight in the strength of the horse or the legs of a man.

Why these specific things? What do you do with your legs? What do you do with a horse? These are symbols of movement. He doesn't say the ox for plowing. He doesn't say the chariot for warfare.

The strength of a horse, this is moving. I can't stay here and I want to go. Most of the time, people would get in a caravan, they might use camels, they might use other beasts of burden, donkeys and that kind of thing.

Horses are rapid transit. I don't have time to puddle along with the caravan. I'm going to get on the horse and I'm going to ride.

Messengers rode horses. A king would send an emissary to some other place on a horse. This is rapid transit.

God doesn't delight in the strength of the horse. He takes no pleasure in the legs of a man. They also had runners who would just run and run and run like Asahel, like the guy that ran to marathon and he had the 26.3 mile marathon.

God doesn't take pleasure in that. The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him. It's not a matter of sending a message.

It's not a matter of rapidly going from one place to another. It's a matter of respecting God and what he says. It is a matter of hoping in his mercy.

Praise the Lord, oh Jerusalem. Praise your God, oh Zion. This is what he began the psalm with, isn't it? Recognizing the glory and the grace of God.

He has strengthened the bars of your gates. He has blessed your children within you. He's talked about provision.

Now he's talking about security. Now he's talking about prosperity. He has blessed your children within you.

He makes peace in your borders and fills you with the finest wheat. Three different kinds of prosperity here. Relationship prosperity, children, freedom from oppression, freedom from attack from the outside.

This is sort of national security, if you will, civil security, and fills you with the finest wheat. This is provision in the physical realm, but for us, when you go through the interpretation application, what is the finest wheat for us? What is the bread from heaven that we partake of? It's the word of God. It's the Lord Jesus Christ.

And we have access to the finest wheat. It's something to be grateful for. We meet in security.

We celebrate Independence Day. What a great nation we have. What we can study as we see fit.

Nobody's going to come in here and burn us at the stake. Nobody's going to excommunicate us. Nobody's going to imprison us.

You look at some of the great men of the faith in the past, Tyndall and Martin Luther and many of these others, John Wycliffe, and countless others who were persecuted and killed just because they wanted to have a Bible in their own language and distribute it to others, just because they wanted to understand and practice their faith in the light of the word of God and not according to man's traditions. So we have blessed children. We have peace on our borders.

We are filled with the finest wheat. God sends out his command to the earth. His word runs very swiftly.

God doesn't need the horse. He doesn't need the legs of man. God's word runs out swiftly.

Notice 16 and 17. He gives snow like wool. He scatters the frost like ashes.

He casts hail like morsels. Now what's good about this? I thought we were in the Beulah land. I thought we were in Bountiful here where you have the wheat and the prosperity and the peace and the secure bars on the borders and all that.

Now he's talking about snow and ice and hail. Well, these are generally perceived to be negative. You don't find people jumping up and cheering, generally, for a hail storm.

Skiers like the snow. That's about it. Why should we be grateful for this? Because these, although they start out as negatives, they are something to endure.

You endure the cold. You endure the ice. You endure the hail.

You endure the snow. But when they melt, there is benefit. He sends his word out and melts them.

He causes his wind to blow and the waters flow. This fresh water that flows in the spring starts the agricultural cycle each year. And there is a cycle.

There is a season. Solomon talks about this in Ecclesiastes. There is a time for every purpose.

There is a season for the things that God has under the sun. And we tend to think, well, I would like to say what the season is right now. I want the season to be fall and the harvest.

When in fact, it's winter and God is sending the ice and the rain and the sleet in anticipation of melting it later and giving that great flow of water that is going to start that cycle later on. God declares his word to Jacob, his statutes and his judgments to Israel. He has not dealt thus with any nation and as for his judgments, they have not known them.

We can reconcile ourselves. We can adjust ourselves to the plan and purpose of God by knowing his word. We can discern the seasons.

Jesus confronted his generation. He said you all look at the sky and you tell what kind of weather is happening. You can judge the seasons.

Why can you not judge the times? Why do you not know what time it is in the plan and purpose of God? He says he has not dealt thus with any nation. As for his judgments, others besides Israel have not known them. Well, this is the same today.

We are a peculiar people. We are a holy nation. We are a holy priesthood and within the body of Christ and within the ranks of the saved, there is a small percentage who actually understand God's word, who actually perceive God's judgments and the rest of the people are running amok.

It may sound a little self-serving to say that but it is true and you are going to run into believers all the time. Why do we have 500 denominations? Why do we have people saying nobody can figure out the Bible? Everybody looks at it and comes out with something different. It is ignorance.

It is lack of diligence. You have to be diligent to rightly divide the word of truth. You have to lift up your voice and cry out.

Those who don't are going to get it wrong and there are a lot of people who do. God has declared his word. God has communicated his statutes.

It is our responsibility to know them. That is what makes everything we have talked about possible. Where does our humility come from? A right understanding of God's plan and purpose.

Where does our strength to endure and to persevere under trial, to run that last mile, where does that strength come from? It is the power of God's word in the hands of the Holy Spirit in our soul reminding us, showing us, giving us a divine perspective on the situation. We don't look at it from a personal point of view. We look at it from God's point of view and it gives us patience.

You can be alarmed. I was alarmed because I was working on a pool yesterday and I saw a bunch of sand in the bottom of it. I thought, oh no, my sand filter has broken and now it is going to be spewing sand into the pool and I am going to have a big repair bill.

Look at all of this sand on the bottom. As I was vacuuming up the sand I worked my way around to the ladder and then I realized we have two little sand bags under the ladder and one of them had burst and spewed its sand out into the pool. There is still sand on the bottom of the pool but my sense of concern about it has greatly lessened because I have an understanding.

I have a fact and that fact tells me this is not serious. There is no cause for concern. Same situation, completely different view of it based on facts.

God's judgments and God's statutes give us the facts and it changes our perspective on the situation. We don't worry. We don't fear.

We don't give up and we don't fade in the stretch. We don't fall short and quit before the finish line. We run with patience the race that is set before us as we saw in Hebrews 10.

Because of this we praise the Lord. What a great song to put our life as Americans, as believers in the context of God's plan and purpose. God has provided for us.

God is in our corner. He wants us to succeed. He wants us to mature.

He wants us to be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Everything is in place. It is a matter of accepting.

It is a matter of claiming. It is a matter of dedicating ourselves persevering in that great calling. Well, this is our nod to the 4th of July which is coming up tomorrow.

We will pause here and take our break. When we come back we will pick up our study in the book of Leviticus.