

Troubling The Household Of God

Mark Schindler

Given 05-Mar-16; Sermon #1311B

I would like you to please turn with me to Proverbs 11, verse 29. The verse says:

Proverbs 11:29 He who troubles his own house will inherit the wind, and the fool will be servant to the wise of heart.

A footnote in the NET Bible about this verse reads: “He who troubles” refers to actions which make life difficult for one’s family, and he who does this will be cut off from the family inheritance.

I would like you to keep this footnote in the front of your mind, as we go through this sermon today, for reasons that should become apparent to you as we go along and how well this ties in with everything else you heard today and you heard last week (which is just kind of incredible). But, you have got to remember, God is putting these things together to warn us.

For Nancy and myself, today, the 5th of March, marks the anniversary one of the most joyful days of our lives together. On another March 5th Sabbath, over 30 years ago, on a day that was delightfully warm for Chicago, the two of us—and four others—had the privilege to be baptized into the Body of Christ after services that day. Our friends, Jack and Janet, watched over our four children while Nancy and I were buried with Jesus Christ by baptism unto His death and came up out of the water to walk in the newness of His life. We truly did recognize on that day the incredible blessing God had given, as the apostle Paul wrote that our old man was crucified with Jesus Christ in the waters of baptism that the body of sin might be destroyed, and that from that day forward we should not serve sin. Now, dead with Christ, we firmly believed that we were now given the undeserved opportunity to live with Him among the body of believers where God had placed us.

But we were so awe-filled and myopically convinced that day that from that point forward we would be walking in perfect harmony with all of the physical members of the church of God, consistently walking in His holiness right on into the Kingdom of God. We recognized that we had been baptized into the spiritual Body of Christ but, with the limited understanding of children. We also thought perfect unity and harmony was a given from that point forward through the return of Jesus Christ and, as I said, into an eternity with God.

Our one body, perfectly united in a physical organization, did not quite come out that way—the way that we thought—as all of us who have been given this privilege find out through the years. But what a blessing it has been because the farther down the road we go, the more we get to see a little more clearly our great God carefully planning and perfecting His saints, as Charles [Whitaker] kind of alluded to before in his message. But hopefully we are all striving together to see things as the apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:

Ephesians 2:19-22 Now therefore, you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built un the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.

I would like to tell you a little bit today about someone who shared their watery grave with us that wonderful day over thirty years ago. I want to share this with you because of two things that he did during our time together in Spokesmen's Club that really struck a chord with me. This happened soon after we were baptized. We were both members of the Spokesmen's Club. And hopefully, by the end of this sermon, you will see the relevance for today's message.

During one particular Spokesmen's Club meeting that included invited guests, my mild-mannered friend Gary was assigned to be Topics Master

that evening. Among the news stories at the time was something to do with the labor unions. So Gary posed it as a topic to be discussed: Labor Unions: Good or Bad?

One of the guests that evening was a long-time church member. And although older, he was a man of impressive physical stature. As soon as Gary posed the question about labor unions, the man's hand went up and Gary recognized him, giving him the opportunity to speak his mind on the subject. And speak his mind he did. When he stood up, he literally bawled at Gary "I have been a union member for forty-some years." Realizing the intensity of the man's feelings on the subject, Gary proceeded to crouch down and duck behind the lectern. His self-deprecating cowering on the podium brought laughter to what had the markings of a passion-driven response.

I always remember that incident because it was a vivid reminder of all the different points of view we hold and come from our own life experiences in this world. Under the right circumstances, Satan will use those experiences to divide and conquer (or think he conquers) within the body of Christ, if we are not constantly striving to put away the old man. Because ultimately, all of our life experiences that are not governed by the Word of God, follow the pattern of deciding for ourselves to take from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and they end up in sin. All Satan needs to do is see that crack to break the dam wide open.

We need to always keep in mind that simple things—even the unions, non-unions—are products of a world system and its ways of handling perceived injustice. Living in this world, each of us may have benefited or been deprived by mankind's solutions to problems. But we must remember they have all been part and parcel of carnal solutions to men's spiritual problems and they will never ultimately produce the truly positive and eternal results of living by the Word of God.

The second Spokesmen's Club moment with Gary that forever implanted itself in my thinking occurred at the end of one speech that he had been assigned. Gary gave an impassioned speech regarding family. By the end of the speech, he told us something I did not know. Gary was a young man in his 20s when God called him. But his wife, whom he loved, wanted no part of it and it drove a wedge into their lives. That very day their divorce was

finalized. And at the end of the speech, he took off his wedding ring that he had always worn and he placed it on the lectern. He did not do it for theatrics. He did it because, he said, he felt he needed to do it in the midst of the family that God had given him.

Please turn with me to Matthew 19. We will pick this up in verse 16.

Matthew 19:16-19 Now behold, one came and said to Him, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” So He said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.” He said to Him, “Which ones?” Jesus said, “‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not bear false witness,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ”

Notice Jesus Christ mentioned the commandments dealing with relationships between people in general.

Matthew 19:20-22 The young man said to Him, “All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?” Jesus said to him, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

For the purposes of this sermon today, I would like you to expand your thinking about riches beyond the tangible assets (to whatever it is that you may be holding on to) to the intangible assets as well—those intangible assets held on to from the old man—things in your life that may have affected your personal life for better or for worse, in or out of your control, but still solutions developed in this world’s system of things (even things which may seem to be good) that have shaped our thoughts apart from God.

It is like the man who stood up in Spokesmen’s Club Topics session and was ready to blast Gary because he knew how beneficial the labor union had been in his life. This was a fine man with good values and had found the unions to

be a solution that have worked well for him and his family. And he was ready to stir things up, among those called out of the world, in order to defend his position. Gary defused that situation. And I am not advocating never having an opinion, but how many other situations in our lives may leave brethren to be divided because of opinions that have been molded and shaped by our own circumstances of life, good or bad?

Labor unions were the answer to a very despicable labor practice, but they were an answer developed in a short-sighted world of men. Although serving some, they hurt others. And as typically happens in the world making decisions apart from God, power and carnal man corrupts, unless it is under the sovereign and absolute power of God according to His purpose.

I am not here to push any political or social agenda today or even to tell you what you should or should not be doing to cope in this world systems while remaining faithful to God.

What I would like us to seriously consider, as we come barreling into this time of Jacob's trouble and especially as we prepare for the Passover, is that Satan has us in his crosshairs. He has deceived the whole world and is the accuser of the brethren, as God tells us in Revelation 12, and we cannot allow the old man to continue to dictate how we think and act, or we will trouble the household of God and inherit nothing but the wind. We are living in a world that becomes more divided every day, as we heard so many times in the last two weeks, and we have a very strong tendency, because of everything that has made us what we are, to hang on to things of this world which may do nothing but divide us from one another and from God the Father and the Son.

Let us continue in Matthew. Because God tells us just how difficult this life of the new man of Jesus Christ must be. Back to Matthew 19.

Matthew 19:23-25 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." When His disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, "Who then can be saved?"

Keep in mind these were men that were not all rich. So what were they talking about? They realized that what He was talking about was not just the riches of wealth; it was the intangible things.

Matthew 19:26-29 But Jesus looked at them and said to them, “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” Then Peter answered and said to Him, “See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?” So Jesus said to them, “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife [like Gary did] or children or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit everlasting life.”

Brethren, are we willing to give up not only our tangible riches but those intangible things that we hold dear, like our opinions, that seem to be good but were formed apart from a world of truth—of God’s truth and His Word?

We live in a more divisive world that is more fractured every day. II Timothy 3 is not something off in the future, but a reality formed and shaped by a satanic world with the promise of self-centeredness as its goal. It is a worldview that has been circumstantially developed in every member in the Body of Christ. It is our perspective on life that must be overcome if we are to be fitly joined together.

These are the last perilous days. These are the perilous days when men are lovers of themselves and their own way of doing things rather than lovers of God; lovers of money, proud, boastful, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers (as we have seen so much in the Republican and Democratic debates), without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty; lovers of the pleasure of doing things according to what seems to be right within the empirical evidence gathered from experiences in this world’s system and the knowledge gathered from exposure to the knowledge of the Tree of Good and Evil. Brethren, this only leads to disaster.

I am a 65-year-old white man who was raised in a large, Catholic, middle-class family, in a very comfortable environment, by parents devoted to each other. Within those circumstances, along with many others too numerous to mention, both good and bad (maybe more bad than good), I learned to think and act in a certain way.

Nancy and I came from very similar set of circumstances. And ever since we were in high school, we have shared a lifetime of experiences that have shaped our thoughts and actions together. Yet we still see things differently in many areas of life. And these could easily cause friction and an exploding relationship if we do not remain steadfastly loyal to the vows that we took in humility with love, self-control, forgiveness, and most importantly God's direction at overcoming our own circumstantially developed self-centered nature that continues to try to make it 'My way or the highway'—the same kind of vows that we took when we were baptized. This is an incredibly hard thing to do. As we stumble along the way, just ask Nancy who has spent 46 years married to a stumbler.

Brethren, how much more difficult is our battle to come out of the way of life (described by its fruits in II Timothy 3) within the physical body of Christ? In this body, God has purposely gathered together people from incredibly diverse circumstantial development grounds. He has gathered people who went through the 1950s in perfect comfort and ease, as I did as a young boy. There were black people that went through the 1950s being chased (Emmitt Till was killed just for whistling at someone). But the point is, so many diverse backgrounds and we have all come in to this body at God's calling with one major instruction from Jesus Christ, and that instruction is to be found in John 13: To love one another as He has loved us, and by this that all men know that we are His disciples.

Let us quickly turn to a couple of scriptures, that each of us will be using as a measure of our commitment, that we will be considering over the next seven weeks.

And are we willing to run the risk of blowing away our guaranteed inheritance because we insist on hanging on to opinions formed in this world's system that will only cause division among the diverse members of God's church?

Please turn with me first to John 13. We already referenced it. Of course, this is just after Jesus Christ had washed His disciples' feet.

John 13:12-17 So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, happy are you if you do them."

John 13:33-36 "Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am going, you cannot come,' so now I say to you. A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going, you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward."

John 14:1-7 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know." Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and

the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.”

John 14:19-21 “A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”

Brethren, these are but a few of the covenantal scriptures that we will be meticulously reviewing in our preparations over the next seven weeks for Passover. But they are enough for right now to remind us of the inheritance that is being prepared for us, if we are willing to do everything we can to sell off the comfortable riches of the old man’s thoughts and opinions built in a world that is inimical towards God and that will only bring trouble to the relationship God intends within His household.

So what does it take to make the change?

We already were there once today, but turn with me to Revelation 12.

Revelation 12:10-11 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.”

We already have the necessary ingredients (just as Jesus told us in John 13 and 14—the blood of the Lamb and His example and teaching to follow) so that they become our testimonies, in teaching and example, of putting to death everything else that we have held dear from our circumstantial life within this world.

God tells us through King David about the inheritance He has in store for us—for those of His people—and what we need to do to receive it. So please turn with me to Psalm 37.

But keep in mind that no matter who we are—whether we are Jew or Gentile, free or slave, black or white, rich or poor—we are one through Jesus Christ, the Father and the Son dwelling in us. And God tells us through David in Psalm 37, we will start reading in verse 1:

Psalm 37:1-11 Do not fret because of evildoers, nor be envious of the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. Trust in the Lord, and do good; dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass. He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday.

Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him; do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; do not fret—it only causes harm. For evildoers shall be cut off; but those who wait on the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more; indeed, you will look diligently for his place, but it shall be no more. But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

You know who are meek, brethren? The meek are those who have the power within themselves to do something and they hold back from doing anything about it. Even if we have the power to do something that comes from our own personal experience that seems to be good, maybe we should think about the meek who are going to inherit the earth. In verse 12:

Psalm 37:12-13 The wicked plots against the just, and gnashes at him with his teeth. The Lord laughs at him, for He sees that his day is coming.

Down in verse 18, David continues to write under God's inspiration.

Psalms 37:18-24 The Lord knows the days of the upright, and their inheritance shall be forever. They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied. But the wicked shall perish; and the enemies of the Lord, like the splendor of the meadows, shall vanish. Into smoke they shall vanish away [like the wind]. The wicked borrows and does not repay, but the righteous shows mercy and gives. For those blessed by Him shall inherit the earth, but those who are cursed by Him shall be cut off. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delights in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholds him with His hand.

Psalms 37:34-40 Wait on the Lord, and keep His way, and He shall exalt you to inherit the land; when the wicked are cut off, you shall see it. I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a native green tree. Yet he passed away, and behold, he was no more; indeed I sought him, but he could not be found [because, brethren, he was like the wind]. Mark the blameless man, and observe the upright; for the future of that man is peace. But the transgressors shall be destroyed altogether; the future of the wicked shall be cut off. But the salvation of the righteous is from the Lord; He is their strength in the time of trouble. And the Lord shall help them and deliver them; He shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in Him.

Now turn with me over to Philippians 2.

Philippians 2:3-8 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant, and coming in the likeness

of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

Philippians 2:12-16 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only [Paul writes], but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. Do all things without murmuring and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world [we can only shine together, brethren], holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.

In this perverse and crooked world that is becoming more divided every day, we must hold on to the fact that we are now no more a divided nation, but a new creation whose citizenship is totally and completely in heaven—even though we have to live in this society, this world system of things—and we are now of the household of God.

For a final scripture, please turn with me to I Peter chapter 5.

I Peter 5:5-11 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to the elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for “God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.” Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brethren in the world. But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Brethren, the time has come for judgment to begin at the household of God, as Peter says in I Peter 4:17, and we must be sure we are not allowing the circumstantial development of the old man, in a world apart from God, to divide and trouble the household of God, or we will lose our guaranteed inheritance within that household for the glory of God, only to inherit nothing more than the wind. Keep in mind these closing verses from Jude.

Jude 18-21 how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit. But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.