

Leaders Will Change but the Word Remains

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[0 : 0 0] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfredo, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word.

All right, take your Bibles if you would and turn with me to the book of Deuteronomy chapter 31. Deuteronomy chapter 31, and I'm excited to share with you some wonderful things from the Word of God. Before I do, I would like to remind you we're asking God for a half a million dollars in the bank before we build our building.

And we're at \$429,900. So we're like \$71,000 short. That means we can pray about \$71,000 short. Amen? And then after that, we'd like another \$200,000 so we can have some chairs to sit on.

So \$271,000 and we can sit on chairs. How many of y'all want to sit on chairs? Say amen. Amen. How many of y'all are going to pray about a chair? Say amen. You can bring one from home if you want.

No recliners, though. But anyway, be praying that the Lord will raise that up and get us ready because, Lord willing, in just a handful of months, we'll be breaking ground and starting to build a church.

[1 : 0 8] And I'm so grateful for how you give and how you have thought about what's going on with our church and how you work so hard. You are definitely a great church. You give to missions. You give to support the ministry.

And I am just so privileged that you take care of the pastors that work with us. It's just a wonderful thing. Well, we're in Numbers 31. We're getting close to the end of Numbers.

This is kind of an exciting time. It's kind of a sad time. It's exciting because they're almost ready to cross over the Jordan River into the Promised Land. That's exciting. But it's kind of a sad time right now for old Moses because Moses is about to die.

And he's been told he's going to die. In fact, as in the Scripture tonight, again, the Lord's going to say, Now, Moses, time for Joshua to take over, and you're about to die. That would be an unusual way.

You know, usually you get real sick and you just hope you'll get better. Moses is in great physical shape. He could still. He has got all these teeth in his head. He's in good shape.

[2 : 0 8] This is no babbling, old man. And he's just in there one day, and the Lord just says, Okay, Moses, time's up. You're out of here. And so that's where we are tonight.

So I want you, if you take notes, to write something there. In the Margie Bible, write this down. Leaders change, but the word stays. Leaders change, but the word stays.

And that's what you're going to get out of this passage of Scripture as we walk our way through it. So the first thing you might note is this. Every ministry must come to an end. Every ministry must come to an end.

Read with me Deuteronomy 31, 1 and 2. The Bible says, Moses went and spake these words unto all Israel. And he said unto them, I'm 120 years old this day.

I can no more go out and come in. Also the Lord has said unto me, Thou shalt not go over this Jordan. He's really going out and coming in pretty good, except he just got some alarming news that would kind of make you not feel like going out and coming in.

[3 : 09] Thou shalt not go over this Jordan. So I want to talk to you about us and how we look at what God's doing in the nation of Israel and how we look at Vision Baptist Church and how we look at the future.

If Jesus doesn't come back, let's suppose the rapture doesn't happen. Let's suppose 10 years go by and 50 years go by and 100 years go by and God lets Vision Baptist Church still be in existence.

And we're not going to be able to do much about 100 years from now, but we should be able to do something about the next generation. And by the way, you are the next generation because I'm a lot older than all of you.

And so that means we're going to have to work on learning some lessons here. Here are some things you might notice as we walk through this. I hope we will learn to make the transition with dignity and grace.

Dignity and grace. He said, I'm 120 years old. I can't go in and out anymore. And the Lord said to me, you don't get to go over to Jordan. You'll know from another passage of Scripture that he angered the Lord when he struck the rock the second time.

[4 : 13] You'll know from another passage of Scripture that he went to the Lord and he said, now come on, Lord. You sure have been good. And you sure have showed me a lot of stuff. And I've watched a lot of great miracles. And, hey, just wanted to check with you one more time.

What about it? Can I go into the land? And God said, nope. I told you you're not going in and you're not going in. So I want to learn to move over with dignity and grace.

He's 120 and he's not going over. Check out chapter 3, Deuteronomy chapter 3 and verse 25. He said, I pray thee, let me go over and see the good land that's beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain in Lebanon.

But the Lord was wroth with me for your sakes and would not hear me. And the Lord said unto me, let it suffice thee. Speak no more unto me of this matter. Go up on the top of Mount Pisgah and I'll let you use some binoculars and look over there and see what it looks like.

No binoculars. That part I added. God loves him very much, but none of that's changed. But sin, mistakes, anger, errors have their consequences.

[5 : 19] Before we move on, what would it have been nice if all Moses could have got over to the other side? I mean, honestly, you get this close. I mean, you're like, he's on a hill and he can look over and say, man, check out where y'all going to be living.

Look at all the houses. There's a trailer parks over there. That's for the Baptists and there's for the Presbyterians living in those really nice houses. You know, he's looking over to the promised land and he's seeing all that. We ain't living in trailer parks.

That was a joke for you people. But anyway, so he looks over and he sees it. He's that close. He's just got to get across the river. The river ain't any bigger than the Mississippi. Just not that far across and he's not going to get to go.

Can I just remind you that God loves you even when you mess up? And he won't quit loving you though you mess up. And he'll love you while he doesn't let you cross the Jordan River.

He'll love you while you come up just short of some of the blessings you could have enjoyed. You'll go to heaven when you die. He still loves you. And none of that's changed and you're still accepted.

[6 : 17] But if you don't understand, you don't just play with the things God wants or you'll miss out on some of God's blessings. And God's children can do really dumb stuff and hurt for it. And I think Moses is probably thinking, if I could do it over, I'd speak to the rock this time.

If I could do it over, I wouldn't get angry at the people. If I could do it over, I wouldn't show myself. Because that day I was mad and I wanted to show them how tough I was. And I struck that rock. I bet he'd do it different.

Here's, I think, the truth. The first truth I think we ought to look at here. There's sooner or later all of our ministries will come to an end. And by the way, I just thought I'd throw this in.

I ain't just talking about me. I'm talking about you. I'm talking about our deacon was up here just a little while ago. His days are numbered. I love saying that. I wish Chuck Littlefield was here.

I really like saying it about Chuck. It's always a pleasure to say that about Chuck. Sunday school teachers, your days are short. Hey, every one of us, every one of us need to know we're going to be moving on.

[7 : 21] And so who's taking your place? Who is God preparing? And what goes on in so many churches all across the world is that the generation that's doing so good. Boy, there's a generation that built great churches and sent missionaries all over the world.

And it did great evangelism. They're all old and dying. And their church is dying with them because they haven't learned this lesson. So we want to learn it tonight. Amen? Sooner or later, all of our ministries come to end.

So number one, train somebody. Write that down. That's why you've got foundations going on. That's why. By the way, if you're an usher, you ought to be training an usher. And if you're a deacon, you ought to be training somebody to do some deacon.

And if you're a Sunday school teacher, you ought to be training somebody to do some Sunday school work. And whatever it is you are, you ought to be training somebody because sooner or later, God's going to say, you're 120, buddy. And you ain't going into the promised land.

We need somebody else to lead this group. Then we need to be gracious as we turn over the ministry. And in the story, you're going to find out old Moses is very gracious.

[8 : 25] How about this for us older people? So you know who I'm talking about. If you're 40 or above, I'm counting you as older. Okay? If you're under 40, you're escaping.

If you're between 30 and 40, you're real close to old. If you're under 30, you're all right. But listen to this. We've got to be willing to accept change and make others a success.

Now, listen to what I want you to. I want you to. Do you have any idea what it must be like for Moses? He's been running the show for 40 years now. He's been running the show for 40 years.

Moses has been the one who gets up in the morning and says, get up, boys. We're moving out. Everybody listen up. Got a word for the Lord. Me and God have been talking. Y'all better listen up. One day, he wakes up and God says, no more messages for you except this one.

Climb the hill. Time to die. That'd be rough. Amen? I'm ready. Take me on up the hill and put me out of my misery. I mean, put me out of their misery.

[9 : 21] But we need to know that we're going to move over and let some other people take our job. We need to all be preparing for the day that God's going to move us out. We should be looking for other ministries.

Did you know the more you know about doing the work, you can find other things you can do so somebody else can be doing some of what you're doing so we could have more stuff going on and not less stuff. I have so many preacher buddies that are going to hold on to their church until it dies with them.

Because there are 150. They won't get out of the pulpit. They can't preach anymore. They've lost their excitement. They've lost their enthusiasm. And the church is dying. There's so many churches with deacons that need oxygen and a wheelchair.

I'm all for them having the oxygen in the wheelchair. But maybe there's a deacon who could walk in under his own power. Amen. So we want to learn. Boy, y'all mad at me now. This was a good message. I was excited about telling you all this stuff.

But man, all the prune face. Brother Deacon, quit looking at me like that. We must always be moving forward and never quitting and never hindering those that come behind us.

[10 : 26] If we keep things growing, there will always be enough for all of us. So let's keep people involved. And you do such a good job of that. I'm so excited. When those little girls, young girls, I guess they're 12, 13, 14, they come up here and sing.

And the Morgans have been working with them. And some people have been playing on the piano. And we're training up that next group. That can never quit being our culture. We can never, ever leave that. We have a five-minute preacher up preaching.

We have young girls that Christians help and learn how to play the piano. And we have a culture of us helping somebody else do it. We can never stop that. That's where Baptists say amen and Presbyterians are quiet.

Say amen. Amen. Or cross you. No, don't do that. We don't want God forcibly removing us, nor do we want to kill the ministry because we won't step down. So number one thing, I hope you wrote it down somewhere.

Every ministry must come to an end. You know, that's a very sensitive thing for me because I'm 61 years old. And I have in my head, man, when's it time to move out of the way? When's it time to move on?

[11 : 28] But I think you ought to have it in your head. I went to Prue and I was only 32 and I told them I ain't staying. It wasn't any shock for them when I left after 20 years, though they probably thought it was.

But I told them all the time, I'm not going to be here forever. You've got to learn how to do the ministry. You've got to learn how to do the ministry. Number two. Go with me if you would. 31.3. Deuteronomy 31.3.

Moses encourages Joshua. With his new ministry. Encourage the next generation. Encourage the next generation. Look if you would at Deuteronomy 31.3. The Bible said, The Lord thy God, he will go over before thee.

He will destroy those nations from before thee. And thou shalt possess them. And Joshua, he shall go over before thee. And that's what the Lord said. Look what he wrote there.

Look what he wrote. Look at the verse. Reexamine verse 3 with me. And notice what he says. God is going to destroy the nations. The pressure's not on you, Joshua. The pressure's not on you, Israel.

[12 : 28] Because God gave his promise. The Lord thy God, he will go over. Jesus said, I will build my church. We got a good strong promise. Amen. I know everywhere I've gone, everywhere I've stood behind a pulpit, and every time I've held a Bible, I've had something in mind.

He's going to get it done because he's going to get it done because he's going to get it done. Amen. It's his work. And he said, hey, just get up there and stay out of my way, and I'll take care of things. The Lord thy God, he will go over before you.

Look what it says. He will destroy. I love this. Can you imagine being a young guy and getting this instruction? Thou shalt possess. Underline that in that verse.

Yep, you're going to get it. Yep, you're going to win. Joshua, he shall go over as the Lord has said. God's going to go with them. Look at chapter 31 and verse 5, if you would.

And the Lord shall give them up before your face, that you may do unto them according to all the commandments which I've commanded you. The Lord shall give them up before your face.

[13 : 29] It's not going to be how smart you are, how good a swordsman you are, how many weapons you got. The Lord's going to make them lose. You're winning. You're going to win. You're going to get the job done.

He clearly stated that they were going to win. And then he calls on Joshua to believe God. Look at chapter 31 and verse 6, if you would. Be strong and of a good courage.

Fear not, nor be afraid of them. For the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go with thee. He will not fail thee nor forsake thee.

Now check out the verse, would you? Joshua, you're going to go into the promised land. God's going before you. You're going to possess. God's going to whip your enemies. So go in there and be strong.

I don't know. Let me show you something. It has nothing to do with physical strength because he's going to win. So what's it talking about when it says, be strong and of good courage.

[14 : 26] Fear not, nor be afraid. What are you saying? You got all the promises of God in the world, buddy. All the guarantees you're going to win. All you got to do is believe God.

It's going to happen. So the strength wasn't how many muscles he had. It wasn't how far he could run or how far he could chuck a spear. It was trust God. He's going to do great stuff.

And it was when you see and hear stuff that scare you, be strong. Just say, I'm holding on to the word of God. So a young preacher steps out to go do the ministry.

And he's like, I don't know if God will ever give me my support. You just really messed up. I told a young man today in a discipleship time, I told him today, I said, why don't you quit calling God a liar?

And he said, boy, that sounds awful intense and hard when you say that. And I said, well, when God says he loves you and you say he don't, somebody's lying. So would you tell me who it is? And he said, well, now that you put it that way.

[15 : 23] Amen. Well, I don't think I can raise my support. I don't think I can start a church. I don't think I can see people saved. I don't think my Sunday school class can grow. Oh, be strong. Oh, be strong and be of good courage and fear not, nor be afraid of them.

For the Lord thy God, he's the one that does go with you. And he will not fail you. And he will not abandon you nor forsake you.

You know what being strong is about? It's about keeping your heart and mind focused on what God said. That's all he had to do. It was not allowing circumstances to take control of his life.

It was believing that God will really do what he said he would do. It was knowing that God wouldn't abandon him. It was believing God. That's the hardest thing in the world sometimes, by the way.

Amen. It's the hardest thing in the world to say, I know God said it, and I'm going to believe what God said. But that's where he said, be strong. Don't consider the circumstances. Don't let your mind and heart be pulled away.

[16 : 25] There's going to be all kind of fears run through your mind, Joshua. When you get over and see the walls of Jericho, you're going to be terrified, buddy. I'm just going to tell you, it's going to seem like an impossibility. No one could bring those walls down.

But you be strong and keep believing in me. And don't you be afraid, because I'm with you. Be strong and of good courage. In private, it seems that Moses was willing to encourage Joshua.

He lovingly challenges him to trust God and expect God to do great things. So let me tell you what I've got for you, for us.

We must be in the ministry of preparing new people. We must teach and train. You know, I think maybe I learned a lot about trusting by reading the books about all the other guys that God did such great stuff with.

But I think I learned a lot about trusting God. But listen to my old grandmother, who was 150 when I first met her. I mean, I don't know. My mother was the 10th child. And my grandmother had a child every two years.

[17 : 30] So that means my grandmother was already married 20 years before my mother was born. And my mother was already old when I met her. Just so you could do the math here. So my grandmother was probably like 60, like somebody in the room on the front row.

Amen. Amen. That's wonderful. Amen. And you know what? She loved God. And she used to talk to me about how great God was.

And I'd sit there in her lap and she'd push my hair back and tell me all that she'd seen God do. The little old lady helped me learn to trust God. That's what he's saying here. Be strong and be of good courage.

We must encourage the young people. We must believe in them. They must know we believe in them. As a church and you and leaders, we must believe in them.

We know that God's work must go on. So let's get busy getting other people involved. Never think it ends with you. God ain't through when he's through with me.

[18 : 31] When he gets through with me, he's going to say, Austin, you weren't even that good. I brought in the first string now. I'm moving the third string out of the way. And you need to say amen right there. Because the truth is, God is going to really, he's going to take them across the river.

They're going to conquer the promised land under old Joshua. He might not write five books of the Bible, but he wrote the most exciting one of them. He wrote the one where they won. Every evening when they came home, it was, how'd it go today?

One to one another game. What's that mean? We've got a whole other city on our side. Got new houses for all the guys. And God's just racking her up for us. Number three. Chapter 31, verse 7.

Moses publicly encourages Joshua. Verse 7. Moses called unto Joshua and said unto him in the sight of all Israel, Be strong and of good courage, for thou must go with this people of the land which the Lord has sworn unto their fathers, to give them, and thou shalt cause them to inherit it.

I want you to underline in the verse. Look what it says. It says in the sight of all Israel. So they got everybody together. Hey, y'all all come. They got everybody together.

[19 : 42] And Moses, you know, it would be a scary thing. When the only leader you've known is Moses. I mean, your mama and your daddy are dying. And everybody who was 20 years old and above was dying.

We're to the point now where almost all of them are dead. Because we're just about to cross into the promised land. So now all we've got is a bunch of young people. And the only pastor they've known is Moses. The only guy who knew where to get the water.

The only guy who knew how to talk to God is about to die. And so they could have been a little nervous when he walks out and said, My number's up, boys. I'm about to die. But he said, hey, let's get everybody together.

Get them all together. Let me say something. In the sight of all Israel. Look at what the verse says. Be strong. He's already told him that. But now he's telling him in front of everybody. And all he's saying is, I need you to trust God, Joshua.

In front of everybody, you listen. Everybody's listening now, Joshua. Be strong. It's like an ordination service. It's like a blessing service. It's like sending them off service. It's like doing everything we can to encourage them.

[20 : 42] He said, be strong and of good courage. Thou must go with this people. Well, underline that. God wants you to do it, buddy. Thou must. It's up to you. Job's on your shoulders now.

And then look what it says. Under the land which the Lord has sworn to your fathers to give them. Underline that, sworn. You see, the God of creation swore.

He put his hand on a Bible. Not really, because he wrote the Bible too. But he put his hand on a Bible, raised his right hand, and said, I swear, this is your land. I'm giving it to you.

You can trust me. I'm the God of my word. And he said he'd give it to them. And then look at the last phrase. You notice this last phrase in the verse? Thou shalt cause them to inherit it.

In front of everybody, Moses goes, hey, buddy. I'm leaving. It's all over for me. But I got everybody listening, so I want you to hear something. Are you ready, buddy? Are you ready? Trust God.

[21 : 41] Trust God. Cause you're the man. God's picked this hour for you to be the man. And you're gonna go in there and you're gonna take the land. Cause God's gonna give it to you. That's what the verse says. Amen?

So the third thing is he publicly commended him. Moses spoke to Joshua in front of all the people. These are the same words, but Moses needs everyone to see how he feels. There's something about us as we get older.

We forget that we were younger. And we see a 19-year-old. I got married when I was 18. Three days before I turned 19. And now when I see one of these 19-year-olds, I think to myself, if my father-in-law had any sense, he'd have shot me on the spot.

If my father-in-law, if my parents had had any sense, they'd have chained me to the house and said, no, you're a kid. But they gave me a chance. And 42 years later, I'm still married to the same woman.

Never been with anybody else. Been in the ministry all these years. And God's done great stuff. But you're gonna forget that now. 42 years ago, when I started, when Betty heard me preach the first time, she came to Tennessee.

[22 : 51] And I preached in this little free will Baptist church. And after it was over, my dad said, buddy, that was great. That's the best I've ever heard you preach. And Betty said, she thought to herself, oh, my soul, he must really be bad.

She didn't even know what preaching was. She went to a Methodist church. Amen. But it was better than old Dad Austin. Say amen right there. Anything she'd ever heard. So, but you know what? Somebody had to believe in a young kid when he was 18 and 19.

And we got a bunch of young'uns running around here, don't we? We got a bunch of young'uns running around here. And they need to know that we believe in them publicly. You don't need to say it in your heart. You need to say it to their face.

You need to walk up to some young kid in a training center wanting to be a preacher. You have no idea that in 20 years he may be the guy God is using. You got young missionaries that come up here and give their little spiel.

I mean, if I was you, I'd be saying, buddy, I love you. I'm praying for you. Take five bucks. Go get you a Happy Meal. I mean, I've been figuring out. I'm just telling you, you don't know who you're dealing with. And that's what Moses is doing in the story.

[23 : 53] He said, you guys only know Joshua is the guy that carries my suitcase. You guys only know Joshua is the guy that pours water on my hands. You guys only know Joshua is the servant boy around here.

But I'm just going to tell you, he's the man. Thou must carry him in. God said you're going to do it. You're going to cause him to inherit the promised land. Joshua is the man.

Trust God. He goes before you. Let's publicly make much over the young people that are following us in the ministry. Let's encourage them.

Let's challenge them to believe God. Let's show them how to live out their faith. Let's show them how to do it. There are some young missionaries that kind of think of me as a mentor.

And yet, some of them are just now the age I was when I started. And they've already about caught me. Where will they be in ten more years? You serve a great God who uses people.

[25 : 22] Let's help them know we believe in them. Say amen. Well, the leaders are going to change. And that's what we've seen so far. Moses is moving out and Joshua is moving in. And that can be a scary time.

But the word of God stays. Go with me if you would to chapter 31 and verse 9. He said, get the word into the people and the people into the word. Look at verse 9.

And Moses wrote this law and delivered it unto the priests, the sons of Levi, which bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord unto all the elders of Israel. So he wrote it down and delivered it.

I've always thought that was great. Moses wrote Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. We call them the books of the law, the books of Moses, the Pentateuch. And he wrote them all down. I don't know if you've ever thought about this.

At the very last of Deuteronomy, it says, write this down. And Moses went up in the hill. Okay. Moses went up in the hill. And there he died. Okay.

[26 : 16] There he died. And Joshua came down. Okay. And Moses didn't. Okay. You say, I just don't believe Joshua could have written that. Well, you don't believe God would have written the whole Bible.

I do. So I'll just take it at that. Amen. So just listen to this. They got the word. God gave Moses the word. Moses gave the word to the people. The law.

That's the law. Look at verse 9. Circle the word law. That's the law. And he told him. He said, give it to the guys that carry the ark. The ark is the center of worship. The law will be stored in the ark.

Every time they come to worship, every time they get around that ark, the law, the word of God, the books of the law, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy are going to be in there.

And then he said, I want you all to read it. I want you to read it. He didn't give you a copy so you can keep it on your coffee table. He didn't give you a family Bible so you could have one where you write everybody's born and died.

[27 : 12] Now you do it all on Facebook or something. But anyway, he didn't give it to that. He didn't give it so you could carry it on the dash of your car or you're a soldier and carry it in your pocket. When you get shot, the bullet doesn't hit your heart. All that stupid stuff in the world.

He gave you a Bible to read it. Look what he says if you would in chapter 31 and verse 10. And he commanded them saying at the end of every seven years in the solemnity of the year of release and the Feast of Tabernacles.

He's going to tell them to read it. So real quickly, let me get you that. You know what the year of release is? The year of release was the year that all the debts were forgiven. So it's a big time. So they're all going to come together.

You say, why are they only going to read it every seven years? They don't all get together all the time. I mean, most of them are in their house. But on this day, this is like big time news. Today, my credit card bills are released.

It's a good day. Today, all I owe on my car paid off. Seven-year loan, done. If I got it three years ago, still done. Because today's the day it's done.

[28 : 10] And so they're all coming into there. And it's a big feast, a Feast of Tabernacles at Solemn. And he says, so when you all get together, we're not just going to celebrate your money's taken care of. We're going to read the book.

So look at what it says, if you would, in 31 11. When all Israel has come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing.

Now, you need to understand how this was read. It was just read to them. We got an idea of that. If you go look in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, and they're going to read the Bible, you got an idea of that.

When you go to Timothy, he said give attention to reading. The whole point was they came together just to hear. Now, they don't have a copy. They don't carry their cell phone around and go, hey, let me pull it out and see what the Bible says in that.

I got 49,000 versions in this thing. I got everything. No, no, no. They didn't have it. They got together to hear it. And so the guy got up there and said, all right, ready. We're starting, boys. In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth.

[29 : 09] And they read five books of the Bible. Everybody stand here and listen. The Bible says they stood there for all day long. They stand, take a break, and they get back up and stand some more. They didn't even have seats.

That's how we can save money on the new building. I just thought of that. Y'all can just stand while we sing and preach and read and go, oh, it ain't that long. We'll just stand up. God had the same purpose for Israel that he does for us.

You know what he wanted to read the Bible? It's not about having a Bible, and it's not about believing a Bible, and it's not about reading a Bible. It's about living what the Bible says. Look if you would in chapter 31 and verse 12.

He said, gather the people together. I want all the men and women and children and the stranger. That's a foreigner. That's them illegal aliens. He said, just get them all in there.

If they're going to be living around here, they're going to be listening to the Word of God. That's within thy gates. That they may hear, underline that. That they may learn, underline that. And fear the Lord your God and observe to do all the words of this law.

[30 : 09] Get them together. I want them to hear the Word of God. I want them to learn the Word of God. I want them to respect the Lord God Almighty. And I want them to do what they hear. All were to come, including the foreigners and the children.

They were to come, to hear, and to learn. They were to fully respect God. They were to learn to do the Word of God, not just listen to it. See, what was happening and what happens in our own lives.

Now listen to me. Okay, hang on. This is about the leadership changing and the Word staying. I really believe you love God. I'll just be honest with you. I think you're a very unique church.

I think the number of people that come on Sunday morning, Sunday night, and Wednesday, or Thursday night at this church is phenomenal. So I believe you love God. But you see, there's some kids coming up after you that aren't going to love God.

They're not even going to know God. And so we're about to read a verse where he's going to say this. You get the kids in there. For some reason, somewhere along the way, we're like, let's have play-play time while we do Bible reading time.

[31 : 06] Let's don't let our kids come. Let's let them stay home and play video games. Let's don't make them listen during church because it's not that important. It's just for old people. And all we need is a babysitter while we have preaching.

That's not what the Bible teaches at all. Look, if you would, at Deuteronomy chapter 31 and verse 13. And that their children. Underline that. And that their children.

Their children, which have not known anything, may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God. As long as you live in the land, whether you go over to Jordan to possess it.

Do you understand? Now listen to me. If you came out of Egypt. And you saw God work ten plagues on that nation. And bring them to their knees. You'd probably be like, whoa, he's God.

I know it. I might not always honor him like I ought to. But he's God. And if you wandered through the wilderness for 40 years. And your shoes never got old. And your clothes didn't wear out. And food fell out of heaven every morning.

[32 : 03] You'd probably be like, yep, I believe he's God. If you crossed over the Jordan River. Saw God open the Jordan River. Bring down all those places. And gave you the promised land. You'd probably think he was God. But there comes a day when you live in Alpharetta.

And you had never even had your prayers answered. Because you don't even need to pray. Man, it just falls whether you pray or not. You live in Alpharetta, glory to God. Hallelujah. Everything's good. Maybe your kids aren't even going to know.

He said, get them together. I need them to hear this book. Get them together. I need them to know how great I am. Tell them the stories about the great God you serve. Or they might just walk away.

Children do not know. So they need to hear. Every children's church worker. Every Sunday school teacher that works with children. All to realize, man, this is important. You've got a very important job. And coloring little pictures isn't your job.

Teaching them about Jesus at your job. They need to learn how great and powerful God is. They need to know the Word of God. Don't be a babysitter.

[33 : 01] Don't do things that cause your child not to be hearing the Word of God. I'm going to say some things that make you mad at me. Which is, you know, that comes with the course. But do you realize how many times you do the dumbest things for your children?

Like, if you don't do your homework, you're not going to church tonight. Your kid's going, really? I ain't doing my homework. Hmm?

Take away their video game. Take their TV away from them. Take away their handheld device or whatever it is they're playing all their dumb little games on. Get them to church. I'll just be honest with you.

Mario Brothers ain't going to save them. But Jesus will. Okay, I know you're mad. That's all right. What part does the Word of God play in your life? It's an honest question.

And, you know, I'm a granddaddy now. I'm scared to death. I want my grandkids saved. One called this week and said he got saved. I want my grandkids saved.

- [34 : 00] I want my grandkids loving Jesus. I want to see my grandkids today. They take a testimony and say, I love Jesus. I want to be baptized and serve Him. I want to see my grandkids open a Bible and read the Bible and learn about Jesus.
- I want to see my grandkids when God calls them into ministry. I'll just be honest. I want God to do something to my grandkids. It ain't enough He saved me. It ain't enough He saved my kids and they're doing pretty good.
- So how faithful are you in the reading and studying the Bible? What attitude are you teaching your children about the Word of God? Oh boy. I shouldn't have preached tonight.
- Here it comes. Do you miss preaching and teaching for little to no reason? I mean, you know, just the slightest little thing. You'll come late because it just ain't that, eh, eh, ain't that big a deal.
- I heard it all already. Your kid's learning. That's your attitude. Do you cause them to think of church and worship as optional?
- [34 : 59] Now work's not optional, son. You must work and study it in school. That's not optional. Now God, He's optional. I'll be giving this ministry to one of these young guys now that y'all fired me.
- Do you lead your family in time with God? Do you read your Bible on your own? Do your children think God's Word has first place in your life? I am over time. It's 8.01. But I'm going to finish and you can fire me afterwards.
- I ain't got a lot of time left. You know what I mean? I just heard that voice. 120 years old, you old man. You're out of here. Deuteronomy 31.14, the Lord said unto Moses, Call Joshua and present yourselves to the tabernacle.
- Now you boys come in private. Let me talk to you. And he reminds Moses that he's going to die. It's time for Joshua to become the leader. So now both leaders are standing in the presence of God.
- Verse 15, And the Lord appeared in the tabernacle, a pillar of the cloud, and the pillar of the cloud saw the door of the tabernacle. God told Moses what's going to happen. Chapter 31, verse 16, he said, Moses, I'm going to tell you, you've done all this work.
- [36 : 05] God's done a great thing through you. You've been used to God. But all these people are really going to mess it up now. Verse 16, And the Lord said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with your fathers.
- That's called rest in peace with your daddy. And this people will rise up and they'll go a-whoring after other gods, the strangers of the land, whether they go and they will forsake me and break my covenant. Here's what he told him.
- And the temptation and the pressure to do what others do around us is so great they're going to cave and do what they have promised to never do. This is why you must be careful to continually soak yourself in the word of God.
- You live in a world that does everything to turn you away from God. This world will force you into their mold if they can. They'll make you do things that you never thought you would and you never wanted to do.
- You might end up doing things that you thought would be impossible for you. When God's people turn away from him, then God stops blessing them in verse 17. He said, I'll get mad and I will forsake them and I'll hide my face and I'll let it get so bad they finally cry out, Are not these evils come upon us because our God's not among us?
- [37 : 13] This is a nation. You don't lose your salvation, but you can definitely lose God's blessing. You don't lose your salvation, but you can definitely get to a point in your life where God says, Okay, consequence time.

He'll hide his face. They'll suffer many problems and evils. But there's a purpose in God leaving them. They will notice that God is no longer blessing them and they'll turn. When they turn to other gods, God turns away.

31.18, I will surely hide my face that day. Let me just give you some real quick conclusion points of mind.

Takeaways. God will always be changing out the leaders he puts in front of us, but his word will always be here until he comes back. I'm going to die one of these days.

Trent and Robert are going to die one of these days and you're going to die, but this book doesn't die. It's an eternal book. It was here before the world was ever formed. It's here after the world's gone. We can trust it.

[38 : 15] We can trust the word of God. It's completely trustworthy. Since we know that we'll be moving on, we should be preparing others to follow the ministry that God gave us. Every one of us.

It's my life's work to prepare other guys to do what I do. It ought to be your life's work. We should be ready to encourage those that are coming along and get ready for the ministry.

As a church, we ought to have it in our heart. I'm not really here to build my ministry, but I'm here to help you build yours. By the way, if I help them build theirs, mine will be built. Works both ways. Amen? Given it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down and running over into your books.

Men will give to you the same measure you gave. Let's remind them of how good God's been to us and that's how good he'll be to them. There ought to be stories going on at your house and when y'all have cake and coffee over at your house to invite some friends, God ought to be the subject and he ought to come up and send those services.

In those times, you're just drinking coffee and shooting a breeze. You ought to be telling them, man, I know God's great, son. You're going to see God do big stuff. Teach them what you've learned. Publicly commend the next generation.

[39 : 20] We must make much of the word of God in church, in our personal lives, in our family. Be careful to have your children involved in hearing the word of God. I warn you as a father, as a grandfather, and as a pastor, big mistake when you do anything to get your kid out of church.

Big mistake when you let your kid play around your preaching and you don't thump his little head. My daddy had fingers about as big around as my leg and when he snapped his finger, every young person in church got scared and then when he used to thump the back of my head, it hit the bench in front of me.

Boom! And we got home, he said, you wasn't paying attention. I said, I am now. I sung the Star Spangled Banner of the rest of the service. Be careful to remember the world wants to force you into its mold and that'll bring great harm to you and your family.

I'll just say, I have known so many good Christians whose children and grandchildren have walked away from God. That's going to be your story unless you make a difference. You've got to be careful.

You can't come to church. You've got to live for Jesus all week long. Seek God and he will be found. God's blessings are worth more than all the world has to offer you.

[40 : 35] Leaders are going to change but the word's not. Let's get the kids in the word and the word in the kids and get the word in me and me in the word and let God's word make a difference. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia.

For more information log on to www.visionbaptist.com where you can find our service times, location, contact information and more audio and video recordings.

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