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Campbell Chapel Free  
Will Baptist Church

Bob Bradley

# Following the Recipe

*for a great new year*

**CAMPBELL CHAPEL FWBC - SERMON**

**Following the Recipe  
for a Great New Year**

*December 30, 2009*

Bob Bradley

**Philippians 3**

***13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,***

***14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.***

Paul is writing to the church at Philippi. He has a lot of great things to say here in this chapter about a lot of different things.

What Courtney said here a few weeks has got me to thinking about what we are going to talk about tonight with the Lord being our helper. She got up, stood, and talked about that she was going to bake something. She got the box or whatever it was that had the recipe on it. She read the recipe and it called for two eggs, but she only had one. Therefore, she thought that would be fine. The recipe said not to grease the pan. She went ahead and did that. She thought this is what you needed to do. She mentioned a few things there. She said that when she was done she had a mess.

Our lives are like that many times. Our lives get that way many times. We know what the recipe says and we know what it says not to do, but we go ahead and do it anyways. We just automatically think “abra cadabra” we are going to wave our hands over it and there is going to be a puff of smoke and it all is going to be just the prettiest cake, pie, or biscuits. If we do not follow the recipe, it is going to be a mess. Our lives are the same way.

To bake a cake that is going to be presentable, and that is going to be something that is good to eat then we need to follow directions. Lord willing, tomorrow night, in a matter of hours from now, tomorrow night at midnight we will be starting another year. We will be starting a new year. We thank God for that. If we are going to have a Happy New Year then there is a recipe that we need to follow. It is very plain. That is what we want to talk about tonight just for a few moments.

Our God is a great God. He gives us so much. Not only does He give us so much, but also He gives us so many new things. God gives us so many new things to His people. One thing I thought about—God gave us a new birth. If we are here tonight, God gave us a new birth. If we are saved tonight, we have been born again. We have a new birth. God gave that to us. If we are saved tonight, we have a new nature. I am not the same old person that I used to be.

The fellow mentioned that God saved yesterday, in 24 hours, God can make a great change in our nature. The things that we do. God gives us many great things, not only that but He also gives us a new heart.

There were things, years ago, that did not bother me. It did not affect me. People could scream, holler, cuss, carry on, and steal but that did not bother me a bit. After God gave me a new heart, a heart of flesh then I got feelings for people. God gave that to us. Not only that but also God has given us a new life. We have a new life tonight. We have eternal life tonight. That came through and by Jesus Christ. He has given that unto you and me. Not only that, but I have a new hope tonight. We have a new hope tonight.

Back before we got saved, we were hoping that in some miraculous way, we were going to go to heaven. After we got saved, we got a hope that we know is real tonight. We have a hope that is alive and it is a brand new hope. That is something that is brand new. Not only that, but He also has given us a new job and new responsibilities. He has also given us new tasks that God has given us to do. Before we got saved, we would not have thought about coming to church. We would not have thought about giving anybody some money. We would not have thought about taking somebody some groceries. We would not have thought about inviting somebody to the house of God. We would not have done those things. However, since we have been saved and God has given us some new tasks in our lives. God does that.

We are so blessed. Again, God gives us all these new things and I think sometimes that we do not think anything about them, but Lord willing, God is going to give us a new year –to start a new year tomorrow at midnight. We should thank God for that. Many of us have not done so well in the past year. Do you know what God has given us? God has given us an opportunity to be able to start a new year and to forget about that year and to move on. Has He not? God has done that. It is just because of the grace of Almighty God. He is giving us a new year. Some of us have had dreams and those dreams have not come to pass like we thought. We have dreamed about things and we have all kinds of things that we want to see God do. God has done many great things in 2009. However, there were some things that I wanted to see happen that did not happen, but I have not given up hope because God has given us a new year. He has given us a new year to look at and to anticipate what He is going to do. We should praise God for that.

Not only that God is giving us a new year to maybe see some dreams and some of the hopes and some of the things that we have been looking for to come to pass. Again, there are things that we might need to say, “Hey, I have not done so hot. I have messed up. I have had many failures in the past year. I need to put these things behind me.” It is great that God does that for you and me. It is great that the first time we mess up, God does not write us off. God does not throw us away. Does He? No. We are human and God knows that we are human. I am not advocating sin. I am not saying that we should go out here and sin with our eyes wide open. However, we all do mess up. It is great that God gives us a chance and a new beginning.

The yesterday is over. That is past, I cannot change that, and you cannot either. However, with God it is great that He can do some things that can erase all the things of the past and all the sins of the past. He can forgive us of those things and we can move forward. Isn't it great? It is good.

Not only have some of us not done so hot in the past year, but also in this New Year, some of us are going to have some new obligations. There are going to be some things that are going to take place in the New Year that are going to be new for us. We need to take on some new obligations. We just do not need to sit around idle and dormant. God wants us to be extraordinary people. He does not just want us to be ordinary people. God wants us to be extraordinary people. We can be if we will just listen to Him and follow Him. We are going to have some new obligations. Some of us are going to have new jobs. Some will work in a different place. Some will have different jobs here at the church. That is great. Isn't it? God is giving that opportunity.

I thought about this today. God is going to allow some of us to have some new additions to the family. That is great. That is wonderful that God is doing that. God is also giving husbands and wives a time here of new beginning, a time that if they have not fulfilled their responsibilities in 2009, whether you are a husband or a wife; God is giving us an opportunity to start fulfilling our responsibilities to our mates.

You might say, "Preacher, I don't like that." I do not care whether you like that or not. I could care less whether you like that or not. We have responsibilities to our families. I have a responsibility to my wife. She has responsibilities to me. I have responsibilities to my children and grandchildren. I have those responsibilities. If I am not fulfilling those responsibilities, then shame on me; and if you are not fulfilling yours then shame on you. If we are in that category, then God is giving us the ability to start all over.

Many people will not give you another chance. Many people will write you off. If you mess up one time, they will throw away the book and the key and they will want to put you in jail and lock you up forever. However, God is not like that. I am thankful that our God is a great God. He loves us. He cares about us. It is time for us; all of us—there is not one of us sitting here tonight that have no room for improvement in your life. In other words, everybody sitting here tonight has room for improvement in their life. Everybody sitting here tonight—I am not saying that you are not saved. I am not saying that you are not spiritual. I am saying that you can do better than you are doing. Every one of us can do that.

It is time. God is giving another opportunity. God is giving us a time to turn over a new leaf. God is giving time here. God is giving us opportunity to start writing on a new page, to do things better this year. God is doing that. We should be doing that. If you think that you have it all worked out and if you think that you know it all, if you think that you cannot get any closer to God then you probably cannot get any further away from God. That is really where you are. Everybody listening to me, there is room for improvement. God is giving us an opportunity with this New Year coming to say, "Hey, let's start a new page. Let us take the page of last year—we cannot change that. The great times we have had, the poor times we have had, the sad time we have had, and the sorrow times we have had—that is all in the past and let get a new page. Let us start writing down new things on this new page. Let us turn over a new leaf. Let us look at things in a different way. If we will do that, then God will do some great things.

In what we read to you tonight, Paul was looking backwards...

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Do you know what Paul was doing? Paul was looking backwards to all of the sufferings that he had suffered, all the things that he had went through, all the things that he had accomplished and maybe a lot of failures that he had. He was also looking forward...

***13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,***

***14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.***

Paul not only was looking backwards, but he also was looking forwards.

I do not care what we have done last year. It does not matter what we did last year. Whether it has been good, whether it has been bad, if we have had great success, if we have failed, and whatever we have done; yesterday is gone. 2009 is almost gone. Let us turn a new page and look forward. 2010 can be the best year of your life. I do not care if you are 85 years old. I do not care if you are 185 years old, or whether you are twelve years old; 2010 can be the best year of your spiritual life. Here is the thing about it. You get to choose. God is not going to do anything for you that you do not want Him to do.

When you got saved because God stirred you and God drawled you but you chose to be saved. God did not make you get saved. God did not give you salvation beyond your will. God did not do that. You got saved because you accepted His free gift. For you to be spiritual, for you to grow up and for us to grow up and get closer to God in 2010 it will be because you choose to do that.

### **The Recipe for a Happy New Year**

Since that is the case, if we are going to have a happy new year then we need to have a recipe. For us to be able to accomplish what God wants us to accomplish and for us to be able to have the best year of our Christian life then there is a recipe. There are some things that we must put into this. There are some things that you and I must do.

Three R's and it is not "reading, writing, and arithmetic" either.

#### **Repent of Sin**

The first one is "repentance." If we are going to have the greatest new year, if 2010 is going to be the greatest spiritual year of our life, then it has to start with "repentance." We got on this road by repenting. Again, God saved us because that we repented. The word "repent" means, "we change our mind about how that we think about sin" and "we change our mind on how that we think about God and how that we think about Jesus Christ." That is what happened to you and me when we got saved. We repented. We changed the way that we were thinking about God and about going to heaven. Do you know what God did? God sent His Holy Spirit, He drawled us, He gave us the opportunity to repent and come to Him and we believed Him by faith and we are saved. That is what put us on this road.

Nothing else. Being baptized did not put on the road of salvation. It did not do that. What got us here is that we repented. We know that we were saved by grace through faith. We understand that. Again, it gets back to our choice about changing our minds about how that we think about things. Here is something here that we need to remember.

If we are going to have a great new year then the first thing that we are going to have to do is that people are going to have to repent. Some people that may be listening to me tonight may have never repented. They have never been saved. They have never been born again. I promise you, you will not have a good year if you do not repent and make things right with God. The best year that you will ever have is the year, the time that you take and repent of your sins and accept Jesus Christ as your Savior. That will make a great year for you.

Do you know what? We think about unsaved people repenting. We think sometimes that is all that we need to do. Listen. Christian people need to repent. Christian people need to repent. Every one of us here tonight, there are times in our life that we need to repent. There are times in our life that I mess up and you mess up. There are times in my life that I sin and times in your life that you sin. We need to repent. We need to find us a place that we can get on our face before Almighty God and say, "Lord, I have messed up. I have sinned. Lord, please forgive me." If I will do that and if we will do that then that is a great way to start and New Year.

Do you know what sin does? Sin robs us of fellowship with God. When we sin, then we cannot have fellowship with God. God is a Holy God. God is a very righteous God. God has no place with sin. God shuns sin. He stays away from sin. Do you know what sin does in my life and in your life? It separates me from the love and the fellowship of Almighty God. We can use the word "backsliding" and that is in the Bible. Some of you may not have read that but it is there. We may not believe that but there are many folks in the Baptist church practicing it. That is very true.

People need to repent. We need to repent. You and I need to repent. There are times in my life and in your life that we need to repent when we sin and need to repent. When Adam and Eve sinned, do you know what happened? There was a time in Adam and Eve's life—I do not know how long they lived in the garden. I know that God put them in the garden. I know that God would come down in the cool of the day and speak unto Adam and Eve and they had a great time of fellowship. They had a great time of communion. However, something happened. When Adam and Eve sinned, God came down one day to speak to them but they were no longer there. The question was asked, "Where are you?" Do you know what happens? In my life and in your life when we sin against Almighty God, it separates us from fellowship and communion with God. Do you know what we need to do? We need to repent. Don't we?

David sinned. His relationship that he had with God was broken. When you read about David's life in the time that he sinned until the time that he repented, there is no doubt in my mind that David had a lot of physical problems. His life was drying up when you read the Psalms. There were a lot of things that happened. Isn't it great that David repented? Do you know what David said? "Lord, restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." Isn't it great when we do sin that there is a God in heaven that still yet

loves me and that will forgive me of my sin, that will restore and He will put within me a right spirit that I can have fellowship with Him. Do you know what I say? I say glory to His name.

If we are going to have a great new year, then first we might need to do some repenting. You might say, "Preacher, I don't need to repent." Oh yeah! Yeah, you do. You might not think that you do, but you do. How would you know?

If you think that you know so much, and you think that you do not need to repent then how would you know? There are different ways... David, even in his praying, "Lord, forgive me of my secret sins. Forgive me Lord, I have sinned and of those things that I do not even know that I have sinned. Perhaps it is something that I have done against you that I don't even realize that I have done against you."

Again, you are not near as smart as sometimes we think that we are. We are not. Job thought that he was a whole lot smarter than he was but he had a conversation with God and God asked him a few questions. Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? If you know so much and you are so smart; where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?

If you say that you do not need to repent, then I am going to ask you a question. Where were you when He was hanging on the cross? Do you know where you were? You were lost, undone, doomed, and damned; that is where you were.

Not only did David sin and he repented.

Repentance, as we enter this New Year, it should be something that we do and take very seriously. It should be something that we do.

Think about this. When we sin, when we go out here and do things that we know that we should not do, we remember those things. If you have went placed this year that you know that you should not have went, if you spoke words that you know that you should not have spoke this year, if you have done things that you know that you should not have done this year; you remember those things. Since that is the case then we should be repenting. Sin will make you miserable. Sin will fill your life full of sorrow. Sin will make you weep.

Do you remember Peter? Peter was the Lord's right hand man. He was one of them who right there when Jesus did so many miracles that He did. However, there came in Peter's life that he denied three times that he even knew who Jesus was. The third time he did it with an oath. He began to swear. "I don't know who this guy is." However, when he looked across the judgment hall, and he saw the face of Jesus, the Bible says that he goes outside and he wept bitterly. Sin will separate us from fellowship with God. Sin will separate us from a relationship with God.

If we read John 21, do you know what Peter did? After Jesus rose from the dead, they had been fishing and different things. However, when we get to John 21; Jesus said, "Peter, I need to have a little conversation with you. I need to ask you a question." He asked him, "Do you love me more than these?" Peter said, "Lord, you know all things. You know I love you." It is great that God knows that we love Him. We need to repent.

### **Repent of Neglect**

Not only do we need to repent of our sin, but we also need to repent of things that we have neglected. There have been a lot of things this year that you have neglected, things that you know what you should have been doing, but you just did not do.

We have had duties and responsibilities to different individuals and different people that we have not fulfilled those duties and responsibilities. Some of us have neglected to come to church. Some of us have neglected supporting the church. Some of have neglected many different things. We need to repent of that. Again, that is all gone. That is all in the past. We cannot change what happened yesterday. There are many things that we have neglected.

### **Repent of Listening to the Wrong Voice**

Along with neglect, many of us have listened to the wrong voice. Do you know what happens when we listen to the wrong voice? It leads us astray. It leads us down a path that we get so involved in all kinds of things going on, things that we think are so important; we think that our kids have to do this, go here, or go there. My wife has to do this or husband has to do this. We have to have a dog here or get the oil changed in the car. We have to mow the grass. Do you know what we are doing? We are listening to the wrong voice and we are neglecting some things that are very important for some things that mean nothing.

Since that is the case and we all have done that this past year. Let us repent of things that we have neglected, the things that we should have been doing, and the responsibilities that we have and we have not done those things. Let us repent of those things and let us move on.

### **Repent of a Wrong Spirit**

Not only that but there are some other things that we need to repent of and that is the spirit that we have within us at times—a wrong spirit. I could ask some of you if you have committed adultery this year and most of you would probably say “no.” I could ask if you have drank, lied, stolen, cheated if you did any of these things and probably just asking the question would make some of you mad.

Get this.

If you have a wrong spirit within you, if you have a spirit of envy, hatred, jealousy, or malice towards someone else then you are just as guilty as those that are doing all those other things, that you would be offended if I even asked you one on one if you had done. If you have a spirit of jealousy, envy, hatred, and malice in you then you need to repent of it. If you are going to have a great new year, then you have to get this wrong spirit out of your life.

Again, that gets down to where we live at many times.

The second part of the recipe is this:

### **Resolution**

You could ask most people sitting here, “Are you going to make any new year’s resolutions?” Do you know what many of you would say? “No.” I hope that when I get through here, just in a couple of minutes that you will change your mind. I hope that we will make some resolutions. I hope that we will resolve in our hearts to do better this year than we did last year.

The word “resolve” means, “a position arrived at after careful consideration.” That is what “resolve” means, or “resolution” means.

That means that we have seen things in our life—I can look at myself in the mirror, I don’t even have to look at myself in the mirror just button my pants or put on a shirt then I can come to a conclusion real quick that I am too fat and that I need to lose weight. Can’t you? Some of us could do that. There is nothing wrong with those things. I am not talking about weight, but I will talk about what I am going to talk about here in a minute.

We say, “Well, I don’t want to make a resolution. I probably won’t do it anyway.” Let us make them and let us do them.

**Let us look at some people who made some resolutions.**

#### **Daniel**

If you read Daniel 1, do you know what you will find out? Daniel made a resolution. Daniel purposed in his heart that he was not going to defile himself before Almighty God. Daniel made that. That was his resolution. They took him from his home at a young age. They took him over to Babylon, into a foreign land. The King said, “You are going to eat my meat. You are going to drink my wine.” Daniel said, “I am not going to do that.” He purposed in his heart, he had a resolution. He said, “I am not going to do that.” He did not do that. Because he did not defile himself, Daniel probably lived 70 years in the land of Babylon. He was given great favor with the kings of Babylon. He was a great blessing to that nation. Do you know why? It is because he made a resolution, “I am not going to defile myself before Almighty God. I am not going to live as the world live even though they are going to put pressure upon me to do this; I am not going to do that. My relationship with God means more than drinking wine and eating pork.” Daniel said, “I am not going to do it.” God blessed him because of that.

#### **Jacob**

Not only that but also we can look at Jacob when you read Genesis 28, Jacob sinned against his father. He sinned against his brother. When we get to Genesis 28 He was running away from home. He comes to a place, no doubt in my mind he has a something like a pillowcase on his back and he might have few clothes in it. He may have had a box with a little bit to eat. That is all that Jacob had. However, he is sleeping one night and he has made his pillow out of a rock. God revealed unto him some things. He sees a ladder. The bottom is sticking on the earth and the top of it reaching to heaven and he saw the God of heaven at the top of the ladder. God spoke to him and told him that he was going to bless him and do some great things for him. As you read a few more verses, do you know what Jacob said? As he got up the next morning, he took the rocks and made him an altar. He poured oil upon it. Do you know

what he started doing? He started worshiping the God of heaven. Do you know what he said? He said, "Lord, if you will bring me back to this place then I will give you a tenth of all that I have." Do you know what Jacob started doing? He started giving unto the Lord. Do you know what God did? God blessed Jacob in a great way.

Some of us have never learned that. Do you know what we think? We have by hording. You can horde all you want but the worms will get it. Doctor bills will get it. The car will break down and it will get it. The refrigerator will blow up and it will get it.

Jacob did not have a thing when he said, "Lord, I am going to give you a tithe of everything I have got." He comes back 20 some years later. He was probably a multimillionaire. He had wealth that we could not even count. Do you know why? He had that wealth because he honored God.

In this New Year, we need to make it a resolution that we are going to give God what belongs to Him. We are not going to rob Him. We are going to give Him what is coming to Him. That comes first.

### **Paul**

Paul made a resolution. Do you know what Paul's resolution was? Paul resolved to win the lost for Jesus Christ. That is what he resolved to do. He had made a decision in his life that was what he was going to do. That would be a good one for us to start with too. That will be great.

Let us look at something here.

### **Remember**

Not only do we need to repent and we need to have resolve in our hearts that we are going to change some things and do better, but we also need to remember where we came from. We need to remember that we were lost and undone. We were doomed, damned and hell was going to be our destiny. We need to remember where God has brought us from. People like you and me who are no account. We do not have anything to offer God. God does not need anything that we have. God will be God tomorrow whether I am here or not here, God will still yet be God. We do not have a thing that God needs. However, He has a lot that we need. We need Him. We need to remember where we have come from. We need to remember all that He has done for us. We also need to remember that we cannot repay Him for all that He has done for us. We could work for the next ten million years and we could never repay God for what He has done for us. We need to try. We need to work towards that. We need to be obedient to God.

Do you know what we cannot do? We cannot repay Him.

Do you know what we need to be doing this year? I would hope that we would remember where we came from and do our very best for Him. We need to remember that the greatest happiness and the richest rewards that an individual could ever have comes to those who are faithful.

Men are looking for happiness in drugs, in all kinds of things to try to find happiness today but they are not finding it. Do you know why? They are not finding it because they are not being faithful to God. The greatest riches, the greatest happiness, the greatest joy that is experienced by mankind is experienced by the faithful; those that are faithful to Almighty God, those that are faithful, those that are doing what God wants them to do.

Let us remember that this may be our last year. All of us here are getting older, except for the kids that are in here. We have a few young people. For most of us, our life is 2/3 gone. For all of us it might be all but just that much gone. (Holding up fingers about an inch apart) That is what we do not know. This may be our last year. 2010 may be our last year.

Let us make it our best year. Forget the failures of 2009. Let us forget the successes of 2009. Let us learn from our mistakes. Let us praise God and rejoice with all the victories that we have had, but let us move forward.

### **The three R's**

1. Let us **repent**.
2. Let us make some **resolutions** that we are going to do better.
3. Let us **remember** where God has brought us from.

If we will do those three things, we can have a great beginning and a great ending to 2010 if we will just be faithful to God.

**Come—**