

How to Be Content in Every Situation

by David Wilkerson

David Wilkerson teaches that contentment is a rare jewel that requires effort to attain, and it's not something that God drops into our lives, but rather something we learn.

Duration: 48:24

Scripture: Philippians 4:11

Topics: "Contentment"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the importance of learning how to be content in every situation. He emphasizes that true contentment does not come from acquiring material possessions, but rather from being weaned off the desires of this world. The speaker also addresses the question of why God allows difficulties and challenges in our lives, reminding listeners that God is always present and patient with us. He encourages believers to examine their hearts and trust in God's promise to never leave or forsake them.

Transcript

This message is one of the Times Square Church pulpit series. It was recorded in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. Other tapes are available by writing World Challenge, Post Office Box 260, Lindale, Texas, 75771, or by calling 903-963-8626.

None of these messages are copyrighted, and you are welcome to make copies for free distribution to friends. Philippians, the fourth chapter, read two verses. Philippians fourth chapter, verse 11 and verse 12.

Not that I speak in respect of one, for I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content. I know how to be abased. I know how to abound.

Everywhere in all things, I'm instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me. My message this morning, learning how to be contented in every situation.

Learning how to be contented. I have learned in respect of one, I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content. Heavenly Father, I need you.

Holy Spirit, I pray for unction and anointing from heaven. I can't begin to deliver my heart unless you help me. Spirit of the Living God, I've not come to scream a message.

I've not come to accomplish anything other than to get deep into the hearts by your living Word. Lord, we want to see a people that are brought into this realm of contentment in Christ, fully contented in these troubled days. So anoint me, give me fresh oil from heaven, give us ears to hear what the Spirit has to say.

In Jesus name, Amen. Learning how to be contented in every situation. Let me share with you a prophecy of Jeremiah Burroughs.

And I quote him, the hour of temptation has already come upon all the world to try the inhabitants of the earth. In particular, this is the day of Jacob's trouble in our bowels. These are sad and sinking times.

Now that prophecy was made 350 years ago by Jeremiah Burroughs in 1645 or thereabouts, by a very godly pious Puritan preacher, Jeremiah Burroughs. In fact, in 1645 to 1650 especially, it was a very troubled time, a time of bloodshed. There was economic chaos in England and around the world.

Multitudes were dying of plagues. The rich were becoming poor overnight as states were being lost. Suddenly, Christians were losing their homes on all sides.

All their assets were being diminished. There was grievous poverty and unrest everywhere, especially among Christians. In fact, it was so bad and things were sinking so fast, most of the prophetic preachers in those times, like Jeremiah, believed that they were entering the time of the end, that they were truly in the beginning of Jacob's trouble, the beginning of the tribulation.

Even though it was against some of their theology, they believed that it had come, that they were in that last time. In such times, the Christians in Jeremiah Burroughs' time were in panic. They were being swept away by despair.

There was fear, discontent. Christians were in total disarray, and it was in such troubled times that Jeremiah Burroughs, in prayer, said, I've got to hear from God. And he brought forth a series of sermons in two of the churches that he pastored in England, Stepney and Cripplegate.

And out of this came a book, The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment. And some of my thoughts this morning have been borrowed from Jeremiah Burroughs' book because it's one of the most powerful revelations on contentment that I've ever read in my lifetime. And it came to me just at the right time.

Now, believe me, please, folks, that a revelation of contentment is needed in these days. A revelation to the Church of Jesus Christ, what it means to learn how to be contented in troubled times and in every situation. If Jeremiah Burroughs believed that he was in a time of Jacob troubles, what would he think if he lived today? What would go through his mind? I think one thing he would recognize that Christians haven't changed, that we still panic.

There is still fear. We still respond to crisis like they did 350 years ago in 1645. Now, folks, I'll tell you something.

It's not going to get any better. It's going to get worse. The economic condition is going to worsen.

Crisis will worsen. There are going to be Christians all over the United States, just as they are now. They're losing their businesses.

We have Christians losing their homes. We have Christians that are in despair. There is fear.

When you look into the future, there's nothing but anxiety for many, many Christians. Not just those that are heathen, but those that are Christians. And just like the New Testament Christians, we too are going to suffer the loss, many of us, of all things.

And I wonder if we're going to take joyfully the spoiling of our goods as they did in the New Testament Church. Have you yet learned to be contented in Jesus Christ, so that you can face any situation that comes down your pathway? Or are you going to be in panic, fear, unrest, disquietness, especially restlessness, emptiness, and restlessness? Paul said it is possible, and he set the standard, it's possible to be contented in any and all situations that you face in your life. He said, I have learned in whatsoever state or condition I am in, therewith to be content.

He said, I know how to be abased. I know how to abound. Everywhere and all, I'm instructed.

Now you hear this, I've learned, I've been instructed. Contentment is not something that God drops to you in your sleep. It's not something he gives to lazy Christians.

Contentment is something you learn. It's something you go after. It is a rare jewel.

It's something you have to hunger for and desire as much as anything in your Christian experience. Lord, I want to be contented. I want to have this quiet inner peace that I can face any and all situations that come into my life.

It's something that you must learn. In fact, the word that Paul used here, instructed, has a connotation of mystery. It's a mystery.

And folks, this mystery is not revealed to the carnal Christian. It's not revealed to the lazy believers, those who seek after it with all their heart. God will teach you.

God will instruct you. And folks, I've been learning the hard way, and I think I've learned a few things I want to share with you this morning. Now Paul infers that you can be holy and still not be contented.

Because he said, godliness with contentment is great gain. And if you follow his logic through, what he's saying, if you have sought godliness and holiness, and you have not come into the realm of contentment, then you've missed the mark. There's something missing.

Godliness with contentment is your goal, or your great gain. Paul said, I gained something in my walk of holiness. I have learned something with my walk with God.

When I have learned the heart of Jesus, and I know what his heart is like, I have come in to a spirit of contentment. I am a contented man. Paul was contented.

Now Paul's godliness brought his soul great gain. Now in the original Greek, it does not say, in whatever state I'm in. It just says, in whatever I am.

In whatever I am. In other words, any condition, anything that concerns me, any situation I find myself in, whether I'm being blessed, or whether I'm suffering, whether I'm bound, or whether I'm abased, it doesn't matter to me. My emotions don't change.

I am a contented believer. Hallelujah. Now, the contentment Paul is speaking of here has the meaning, it's interpreted really as self-sufficiency.

Now, I know the Bible says that we are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything is of ourselves. We're not sufficient in ourselves. But the word here really means independence or self-sufficiency.

And what Paul is saying is, when you have learned to be wholly dependent on the Lord Jesus for every source, every resource, to meet your crisis, you become wholly independent of man. You don't look to man to meet your need. You don't look to conditions to meet your need.

And this is what Paul's saying. I have become satisfied in myself. In fact, there's a scripture that I found in Proverbs 14, 14.

A good man is satisfied from himself. It doesn't mean that, that he has anything of himself that satisfies, but he has a measure of Christ in him. He knows so much of the heart of Jesus.

The Lord has become so much everything to him. He says that I don't really have to look to man anymore. I am satisfied with this relationship I have with Jesus.

I am truly satisfied in my soul. I have peace with God. I'm contented because of what I know Jesus has done in me and through me and for me.

I know Christ. I know his heart and I'm satisfied with it. Now, I'm not talking about Stoicism.

Now, the Stoics, this was a philosophy that stated that man should be free of all passion and calmly accept everything impassionately as the divine will of God. In other words, you don't show any emotion whatsoever. In fact, this philosopher Socrates was said to have shown no emotion, whether it was good news or bad news.

His face was expressionless. He never changed expressions. In fact, someone asked him where he got such power, and he said that's the power of over my emotion is the power of my morality.

I'm a moral man. I'm a clean man. I have nothing to hide, so I show no emotion.

It was Stoicism. There are other Christians, there are other people that are not Christians who have a good strong constitution. They're just cool.

Nothing bothers them outwardly. I mean, you can you can tell them the worst news and they just stand there and nod their head and you get to thinking, wow, what a cool person. Cool, calm, and collected.

That's their nature. My mother would tell you when I was a boy, I'm very emotional except when there's a crisis and then I was able to act and move in that crisis. But then when the crisis was over, I fell apart.

But there are some people that are that are able to look at almost any crisis and they can handle it on the outside. The only trouble with it is cool as they are with their crisis, that's how cool they are with God. They could look into the very bowels of hell with that same coolness, that same emptiness.

That's not what I'm talking about. That's not what the kind of contentment I am trying to bring to your attention this morning. The contentment Paul is speaking of is a sweet quiet attitude and it's birthed out of an assurance that no matter what trouble, no matter what comes into your pathway, somewhere God has his hand in it.

Somewhere God is at work. And that it brings this great calm and peace because you know that God has not forsaken you and it brings a quiet calm peace to your soul. Now in the school of contentment, I'm still in the first grade.

Some of you are still in kindergarten, some of you haven't even tried to go to school yet. How many of you sitting here this morning, balcony downstairs, would like to learn how to be truly contented in every crisis? Everything that comes to your life. So it doesn't sweep you away.

You don't panic, you don't fear, but you're contented. There's a calm, quiet attitude and spirit from the Lord in you. All right, let me share with you just three or four things the Holy Spirit's been teaching me and it's really been helping me.

First of all, godly contentment is totally an inner spiritual work and does not depend on any outward thing whatsoever. Now let me put my finger right on the cause of most of our discontent. We've overlooked some very special commandments of the Lord and I give you two of them.

One of them, having food and raiment, let us therewith be content. Having something to eat and something to wear to protect us from the elements, be contented. How many of us have learned to be content with just food and clothes and shelter? The scripture says, furthermore, let your conversation be without covetousness and be content with such things as you have.

Oh, we're never content. We never have enough because we're all into the American dream. The American dream is the cornucopia of more and more and more.

That's the dream. People come from all over the world to partake of the American dream of getting more things, adding more things, because the concept is the more you have, the happier you will be. There are hardly any Americans, especially even in the church today or in the church, that have ever learned what enough means.

Enough has never been enough. We've always wanted more. You dear wives, you look at your furniture, then you go to somebody else's house, and then you go home and compare, and you look at those ward marks, and then you start talking to your hubby about it and the friction.

You know, it's always this desire. I need to mention the men also, the hunting equipment, the fishing equipment. You know, men who hunt and fish, you know what a fish costs a fisherman by the time? He's paying a hundred dollars a fish.

He's paying a hundred dollars a fish. I know my wife likes to have a little garden, and we get any tomatoes. It's ten dollars a tomato by the time you figure it out all.

You see, we have two presidential candidates, and they both, I've heard them both be among the fact that our children are not going to be able to live according to the lifestyle of this present generation, and they say our children are going to have less and less and less. And the implication is they're going to be less happy and less contented because they're not going to share the great American dream of being saturated with all kinds of stuff. Houses and cars and lands and estates and everything else because our kids can't have it.

They're not going to be happy. Poor future generations. They forget that past generations that had far less than we do were far happier and contented than this generation.

This generation has more garbage, more junk, more stuff than any other generation in history, and we're the most restless, uncontented, discontented generation in all of history. Right or wrong? You know that it's right. Total discontentment in the land, even though we're baptized with things.

We've got teenagers right now in this city, even pre-teens that are stabbing and even killing, murdering for jackets that they see on somebody else that they can't afford, and gym shoes that are overpriced, \$150 pump shoes or whatever they call them. They're killing for gym shoes. Why? Because this thing has been planted in their mind.

I'll be happy. I'll be contented if I get that. And that's been implanted in all of our mind, whereas the Holy Spirit says it's not by addition that you learn contentment, but by subtraction.

It is by being weaned from the things of this world. It is by desiring the things of this world less and less. It's becoming disentangled, disattached to the things of this world.

Folks, I look back over my wife and I, over our marriage and our time together, and we have moved quite a few times. Probably the happiest time in our life was when we moved down to East Texas into a trailer. From a big house in Dallas to a little trailer.

It wasn't a little trailer, but it was a trailer. A mobile home and just a dirt road, and we were probably the happiest there. We had the least of material things, but we were happier there with that.

And you see, we have this idea that if I can just reach this financial goal, if God will just open this door, if God will just do this for me, and I can get this career, I get this job, I get this raise, I'll be happy. I'll be contented. But when you get there, and it's like you put a stake out in the future, and you lasso it with the rope, and you pull yourself up to that stake.

And if I get to that stake, that's my goal. I'll be happy. And when you get there, it's empty.

So you drive another stake for that. You're always pulling yourself farther and farther out, reaching, and you get more and more empty. Because true contentment has nothing to do with anything outward.

Has nothing to do with things, with material. It has to do with the work of the Holy Spirit, the work of Jesus Christ inside your soul. It's in here.

It's an inner work of the Holy Spirit. Hallelujah. I'm beginning to see that more and more.

You know, Hebrews 10:32 says, you endured, speaking of Christians, you endured a great fight of afflictions. You were reproached. But you took joyfully the spoiling or the losing of all your goods, knowing in yourself that you have in heaven a better and enduring substance.

Listen, a truly contented Christian is one who is learning to become satisfied with less and less of the things of this world, and more and more of the heart of Jesus. And I'll tell you what, the more you are weaned from worldly things, and the more you become disentangled with your possessions, and the more you turn to seeking the heart of Jesus, the more contented you're going to become. That's the pathway.

That's how you learn contentment, to disengage yourself, where you draw a line, say, that's enough. I don't need any more of these earthly things, and be ready to lay them all down. And I'm telling you there's some of you don't realize it, but you could live in a tent.

If you had love with one another, you truly loved one another as a husband and wife, and you had the love of your children, and your heart was full of the love of Jesus, you could be just as happy in a tent as you are in a palace. Now some of you don't believe that, and you just as soon opt for the palace. But you go to the palaces and see how many happy people you find.

Paul was contented because he was no slave to anything of this world, anything that was material. He didn't even have a place to live. Even to this present hour, we hunger, he said, and thirst, and we're naked, and we're buffeted, and we have no certain dwelling place.

He said, I don't have a certain dwelling place. He said, in hunger and thirst, and fastings often, in cold and nakedness, whatever estate, whatever condition I'm in, I'm contented. Paul, in fact, was in prison when he penned these words to the Philippians.

I have learned in whatever condition I am therewith to be contented. He was in prison! I wonder how you're reacting to your present condition. Some of you here are in a dire crisis.

Some of you here this morning are just barely making it. You seem to be stuck in the middle of some kind of a delay, and you cry out to God, Lord, when are you going to answer? And others of you have had your hopes so high, and they've been dashed. You have a letdown.

And some of you are thinking, if I can only get through this one crisis, if God could just answer this one prayer, this one desire, if just this one thing would happen or change, if God would just do this one thing for me, I'd really be happy. I'd really be contented. No, my friend, you wouldn't, because you're depending on something outside of your soul.

You're depending on something other than your spirit to bring you happiness and bring contentment. I tell you, if you reached it and God did it, he answered every prayer, he moved every mountain, it would still be you. You'd still have that discontent.

Because there has not been that change, that total dependency on the Lord, that self-sufficiency in Christ. Take loneliness, for example. Many of you here are Christians that are alone, and you're alone, and you say, I really believe if God just sends somebody in my life, God just give me somebody to talk to.

Just somebody to share my heart. And so what do you do? You get on the telephone. When you're lonely, and you call somebody, you talk to them for an hour and then two hours, trying to scratch an itch in you, you can't even find.

And after two hours of talking to a friend or somebody else, you hang up, it's still there. And often it's worse. Because you're looking for some person.

You're looking for somebody to heal that hurt in you, to bring contentment and peace to your heart. And I'm going to tell you, some of the loneliest people in the world are married. I know many of you are afraid to say amen, because your wife is sitting next to you, your husband's sitting next to you.

I didn't expect any amens there. This city is filled with married people who are lonely. They go home lonely.

They look at each other, and they feel an emptiness. They've talked it all out. Folks, talking it out doesn't meet it.

Only Jesus can meet that need. He's the only resource. No other power.

You know, this, talking about this independence that, this self-sufficiency, this independence that God gives the person who leans wholly on Him, I find it difficult to help those kind of people. I've known people so given to Jesus, so full of Christ, Jesus has become their whole life, and, and I find out they're in need, and I, I send them an offering, or I, they come to my office, and I said, God's moved on my heart. You know, here's a gift, and, and I get hurt sometimes, because they, I'm expecting thanks, you know.

I want to be thanked. And, and, they're kind, but they turn around and thank the Lord, and they give Him all the love. Glory to Jesus! Glory to God! And it's almost, they, they say to you almost as if, well, God used you.

What do you expect? God used you. And, and you get the idea, if, if you hadn't met it, somebody else would meet it, because they're dependent on the Lord. They're not dependent on you.

They're not dependent on any man. They found something. And so when you do give, just like the Philippians gave to Paul, he said, this is a sweet savor unto God.

He went thanking the Philippians. He said, God used you to meet my need. And really saying, I'm happy anyhow, but thank you for what you did.

You get the idea. They could have gotten along without it. I find it hard to give to those kind of people.

They're so independent. That's what Paul said. They're so contented.

And here comes the, I, I'm like the, the man in a, this white horse, his shiny white armor. I've come to deliver you. And they're thinking, God bless you, but I've prayed this to pass.

You're just a vessel in his, I give glory to you. Thank you, Jesus! And that knocks me off my white horse very fast. Now secondly, contentment springs from the assurance that God has his hand in everything that comes into your life.

God has his hand in it somewhere. How can a Christian ever be contented if he thinks the devil is at work in his life and not God? How can you ever be contented if you think that the trouble you're going through now, the difficulty, is that God somehow let go of your hand and he's turned you over to the wolf and the lion? Folks, this is the trick of the devil to bring this, to just bring distrust, to bring discontentment and turmoil into the life of the Christian, that when trouble or difficulty comes into your life, it's some strange thing that's happened. And folks, we have a patient father.

He'll stand by when you get in trouble or in a crisis or a hard time or there's something comes into your life you don't understand and you say, it's not because you were sinning. Job's counselors were wrong. They told him, Job, you're going through all this because God's mad at you.

You sinned! And God's getting even with you, man. He's had to spank you all the hard because you were so blind, you were so dumb, so stupid. God had to do this to you.

God said, no, that's not so. They've given you the wrong advice. And when trouble comes, the enemy comes, and the first lie from the accuser is, I'm, you're going through this because there's some innate sin in you.

There's something so hidden, so deep, that God is getting, he's trying to get your attention. Now, folks, there, the Bible said, you sow what you reap. There is a consequence for sin.

There are consequences for sin. But I'm talking about a repentant Christian. I'm talking about someone who loves the Lord.

Someone who's not out flirting with the devil. Someone who has their heart set on the Lord. Now, they're not perfect, but they really, if you really talk to them, you see them, they're faithful to God.

They pray, they seek His face, they love Him with everything that's in their heart, but suddenly something comes in their pathway. They don't understand, and the first question is why? What did I do, Lord? Where did I go wrong? Sickness, disease. We have a young man in this church that was walking through Central Park, and he was beaten, taken into the hospital.

I don't think he asked the question, but the question, the natural question is, Lord, why? Here's a young man just giving everything he has to the Lord. Why? Why did it happen? And it, there's no way you can be contented if you think that suddenly God, what would you think if, for example, if I, I've used this example before, I'm walking through Times Square with, with, say, 42nd Street, and there are pushers and rapists and mad men everywhere, and I've got my little granddaughter by the hand, and I just let her go to find her own way. How can we accuse God of doing something that no godly, earthly father would ever do? How can we accuse God of letting go of our hand? How can we accuse God of not being involved in these things in our life, that God sometimes, yes, there's a rod he allows.

There is correction. That's true. But folks, I'm talking about those who examine their heart, and you say, I know I love the Lord.

I know with all my heart I seek him, and I don't understand why this is in my life. I don't understand. Now, the Lord will, is patient.

Do you believe it? I thank God for what he said. I will never leave you. I'll never forsake you.

I'm with you to the end. You've got to tell, you, you have got to pass judgment. Listen to me closely.

You have got to judge your situation and pass judgment on it immediately. I'm a child of God. I am under the blood of Jesus Christ.

I've confessed my sins. He said he would never leave me. He would never forsake me.

He said he's my keeper. He said he's my shelter. He's my rock, and you can go every one over, over hundreds and hundreds of promises in this book how God keeps, how he loves his children.

And then after you have done all that, pass judgment on your condition and say, no, I don't understand it. I didn't expect it. I don't know where it came from.

I don't, I don't know anything about it. But I know that God is with me. God has his hand and his time and his way.

He will deliver me. But in the meantime, I'm going to be contented. Take it all if you have to, Jesus.

Nobody can take from me what you have done unrevealed in my heart. It takes away bitterness, because that's what the devil is trying to put into your heart, bitterness toward the Lord. So that your heart will always be in turmoil.

So that you get angry in your home with your mate, with children, your friends, and then finally get mad at God. But you see, sometimes God permits these things to simply drive us to him, to open up our hearts. Really, almost everything that's happened in my life has been a magnet of God trying to draw me to himself.

And when I run to him, and I burden my soul, and the the Puritans called it unboosoming. I unboosom my heart. I just give him my heart.

I tell him everything that's there. I go out in the woods, and I cry. Sometimes I scream at God.

I'm not mad at him, but I scream, Oh God, show me! And finally God says, I'm not going to show you anything, but I'm going to give you peace. And folks, it's the peace of God that is the assurance that he's there, that he's at work. Now I've been directed by the Holy Spirit to do something this morning.

God made it very clear to me last night in prayer that I had to stand here this morning, try to speak directly through the Holy Spirit, right into your inner man, right into your soul. Because I believe that there are people here this morning that are greatly confused by your present situation. Now, I don't know who this message is for.

I just obey him. You don't understand the why, or the wherefore, the reason for your present trial. But I'm telling you now what I hear from the Lord.

It's not because you have failed him. It's not because you were doing something very evil. In fact, your heart's been open to God, but you've been asking, Lord, what did I do to deserve this? All I've wanted to do is please you.

I can't stand the thought of failing you, so why this great trial? Here's what God has spoken to my heart. Be careful. Be very careful at this point.

You don't accuse God of forsaking you. He has not turned you over to the mouth of the lion. He's not turned you into the hands of the devil.

God has a wall of fire around about you, and he's still the glory therein to you. And I'm telling you right now, in the name of the Lord Jesus, in the power of the Holy Ghost, that God sent me here this morning and put me in this pulpit to tell you that God knows what you're going through. He sees your trial.

He knows every move, and he said the steps of a righteous man, that's mankind, are ordered by the Lord. He has ordered your steps. Rest in him and say, thank you, Jesus.

I don't understand, but no more questions. No, there's no strange thing happening to you. God still loves you.

I'm going to give you just one more truth that God's been speaking to my heart. To help bring contentment. Contentment can be learned only during your trials and not after.

During your trials. It's got to be gotten while the affliction or trouble is still at its worst. The carnal heart says, Lord, I can only be contented when you get me out of this mess.

I'll never know peace. I'll never know joy and rest until everything's settled, until it's all over. And we want God to remove all the difficulty.

Then after everything is settled, then I'll have peace. And we're waiting for God to deliver us so that we can be contented. Where God's plan is not that you run, not that you hide, because that's what most Christians do.

They run, they hide, they panic. But the Lord is looking for these last days, or Christians who can stand up against anything, because folks, I tell you, I'll say it again, it's going to get worse. You and I've got to have to learn to come into this place in the Lord where we start subtracting the things of this world.

Where we quit looking for something outward to bring that inward peace and contentment. And to learn this contentment while the battle is still raging. Not until it's over.

Because there'll be another battle come along after that. And then where will you be? You haven't learned your lesson. You haven't learned how to be contented.

David said, Whom have I in heaven but thee? There's none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. And what David is saying is when my flesh and heart is trembling, and I don't understand what's happening in my life, I don't know why this has come into my pathway, you alone, Lord, have become the source of my strength.

You alone are everything that I need. Who have I on earth? There's no human being I can turn to. And folks, that's the bottom line, pardon the expression, but that's where it ends.

Where you no longer look to man. You no longer look to people. You no longer look to material things.

You no longer look at anything in this world. But Jesus Christ has become your all in all. You look no farther, no other place you run to him.

Christ becomes as he has promised to be your all in all. He's the answer to loneliness. He's the answer to fear.

He's the answer to the spoiling of your goods. He's the answer to everything. But folks, that strength that he has promised is not given to those who don't ask it and seek it.

We can claim those scriptures, through Christ I can do all things. No, not unless you're seeking him. Not unless you're pouring your heart out to him.

He does not give it promiscuously. It doesn't just drop into you in your sleep. You don't wake up in the morning quoting scriptures saying, I've got his strength.

Did you seek his strength? Did you call upon him? Have you trusted him as the source and the resource? Folks, I'm going to tell you something that I am learning and I'm learning it fast, and I hope I learned it for eternity. That when you go through a hard place, our first thing we do is run to somebody. We've been trained that we've learned that.

We run to somebody. We look for somebody. Financial need, we're looking for that miracle.

We're looking for something that, listen, God wants to do something first before the miracle comes, and you can't have contentment until you want him more than you want deliverance. You want to know him more than you want to be delivered from your problem. Are you hearing that in the Spirit? Until you have learned Jesus, I'm after your heart.

Because when you get to know his heart, the outbreak or the birthing, it bursts in you this great, quiet, peaceful contentment that I'm speaking about right now. You can look your troubles in the eye and you can say with faith, God, you're with me all through this. You're doing something in me.

You're preparing me for something greater. It's been no accident because you said my steps are ordered. You brought me this far by faith.

No more tears, Lord. I'm going to rejoice in your faithfulness to me. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. You see, in closing, we get restless because we try to dictate to God how and when to deliver us from all our troubles. We give him dates and deadlines.

Lord, by next week. Lord, I've had all I can take. No, he knows how much you can take and he said he won't let you bear more than you're able to bear.

But he will with the trial, the temptation, make a way to escape that you may be able to bear it. To stay with it till all the lessons are learned. Hallelujah.

Somebody came up to me before the service and said, Pastor Dave, there seems to be a greater calmness in you. Worse to that effect. I would hope that the whole body of Jesus Christ here at Times Square Church would come into that sweet assurance that no matter what happens to this city, no matter what judgments are made against this city, no matter what judgments fall on America, no matter what financial crisis that you're going to face, that Jesus is everything he said he is.

That it's possible to give him everything that you have. And say, Jesus, I'm going to cast myself on your care. Casting all your care upon him because he what? He cares for you.

He's a loving father. He's not mad at you. He's not mad at you.

And he's there. You may not be able to see him, but just as I preached the other week, as soon as you step into the furnace, you turn around, there he is. And that fire is not going to scorch you.

It's not going to burn you. You're not going down. You're not going to fall.

You're going to stand because he's going to bring you through. Will you stand, please? Beloved, I have no way of knowing who this message is for this morning. I'm not a mind reader.

But if you had turmoil in your heart recently, if you've been troubled, if your heart, are you asking like David, Lord, why is my heart disquieted within me? Why is this turmoil inside of me? Bring it to him this morning. Lay it at his feet and say, Jesus, teach me, instruct me how to be contented with such things as I have. Is there anybody in this building that could come to the place and say, Lord, help me be contented that I've got something to eat, a place to sleep, and something to wear.

Lord, take the covetousness out of my heart. Take all worldly desires out of me. Hallelujah.

Lord, bring us to that place today of contentment. Lord, I'm contented in Christ this morning because more and more you're becoming all my resource. More and more we're not looking to man, we're looking only to you, Lord, for you're our strength, and you're our helper, you're our keeper, you're everything that we need.

Lord, it has to be more than just a cliché, more than theology. It's got to be a practical truth that has to be worked out in our lives. Jesus has to be everything.

He's got to be our resource this morning. Now our heads about, let me ask, here's the invitation, please, to those who heard something from God this morning. You heard from God.

You're in a crisis. You're in a situation that you don't understand, and it's caused turmoil, and it's caused great turning and striving in your heart, and God wants that settled today. Up in the balcony in the main floor, if that's you, if God spoke in your heart, I want you to get out of your seat and come and bring it to the Lord right now.

I'm going to ask God to baptize you with the knowledge that will begin this instruction on how to be contented in the Lord. It just won't be dropped into you now, but you'll begin to seek God learning how to be contented with him. Up in the balcony and here in the main floor, wherever you may be.

Do you believe it? He's all that I need. All of you that are forward, raise both hands and sing it with us right now. Jesus, you're all I need.

My steps for directing Lord. Hallelujah. We're going to sing just a moment, the steps of a righteous man, the steps of a righteous man.

Look at me, please, all of you that came forward. We serve a God who is so powerful. He's so loving that the moment your heart opens up, he comes rushing in.

The Holy Spirit just rushes in. He's here to lift the burden from you. Look at me, please.

If I feel your burden, how much more does he feel your burden? Will you lay it on him right now? Will you not walk away from this area carrying that burden anymore? Just lay it down right now by an act of faith. Say, Jesus, take, you can take the whole world. You can have everything I have.

Do you mean that? Paul said it. I consider the whole world as dung, everything as refuse. It's garbage.

That I may win Christ. If I have you, Jesus, I have it all. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Lord, help us to subtract. Not add.

We're going to learn subtraction. Hallelujah. Lord, help us to let go of things.

Lord, they're all going to burn anyhow. We're not going to take them to heaven. They're not going with us.

None of these things are going with us. That's all going to burn. The only thing that we have that will last is our relationship with you, Jesus.

Hallelujah. Oh, I believe you, Lord, and I trust you. You're doing some healing here now.

Folks, I believe Lord's healing all through the audience, up to the balcony and here. Will you sing this song with me? The steps of righteous man are ordered by the Lord. How many that are up here have come forward for the first time in this church? You've never come forward before.

Raise your hand, please. It's your first time to come forward. Would you go to exit 7, backstage, downstairs, so we can pray.

You don't join anything. We don't give you a sales pitch. We pray with you.

Just right this way, please. Right through the door and backstage, down into the prayer room. All first-timers.

Lord bless you. Come, make a way for these that are coming through. We need all our counselors here this morning, please.

All of our counselors, if you will, please. Lord bless you. Amen.

The Lord's going to do a very special work in the lives of every one of these who've come forward, these that are going down for prayer. Praise the Lord. All of you that come forward for the first time, God bless you and touch you in a very special way this morning.

Hallelujah. This is the conclusion of the tape.

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