

Lookout mtn.conference 1973-08 the Apostle Paul

by Stan Ford

Stan Ford's sermon highlights the Apostle Paul's resilience and joy in Christ despite his imprisonment, emphasizing the importance of community support and gratitude in the Christian life.

Duration: 42:26

Scripture: Romans 8:11, Romans 8:23, 1 Corinthians 16:2, 2 Corinthians 4:10, 2 Corinthians 9:6, Galatians 5:16, Philippians 4:10

Topics: "Christian Stewardship", "Spiritual Pilgrimage"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the letter to the Philippians and discusses the theme of caring for others. He begins by diagnosing the troubles faced by the church and then provides a prescription for overcoming them. The preacher emphasizes the importance of giving and supporting God's servants, using the example of the collection taken on the first day of the week. He also reminds the congregation that they are pilgrims on a journey and encourages them to remember their ultimate goal of being with the Lord. Throughout the sermon, the preacher references various verses from the Bible, including Philippians 4:10 and 2 Corinthians 16.

Transcript

He delivered him from this body of death, yet he rejoiced in it all. And as we saw him rejoicing there in prison, we thought indeed of how that tremendous victory that from the hours was, first of all, manifest in his bonds. For three times he cried, my bonds, my bonds, my bonds.

We saw how it was manifest in his body. Then we saw how it was manifest in his boldness. Isn't it grand that we can turn a prison into a palace? Isn't it wonderful we can turn our bonds into that which will enable us to rejoice? Then you remember we thought of him not only as a pastor and not only as a prisoner, but then we saw him as a preacher, and he was requesting, let this bond be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.

We saw that as a preacher writing to those that had made up his congregation many a time in Philippi, he first of all dares to encourage them to bring harmony amongst the saints. And after encouraging harmony amongst the saints, then he exemplified humility in the Savior as he tells of he who laid aside his glory. And then you remember he brings before us that that reminds us that he expects holiness in the and

establishes helpfulness in his servants.

He is the preacher demanding of his congregation. Brethren, sisters, may I suggest this, to you brethren who think to say a word for the Lord, to you sisters who minister in your women's meetings and girls' Bible classes, never forget that as a preacher you have a right to expect from those who listen to you a reaction to what you say. And then we saw him, you remember, in the glorious third chapter, not now as the preacher, but now in the third chapter we see him as the pilgrim, reviewing the land.

We saw how the chapter starts and how it finishes with the glory of the coming of Christ, who shall change our vile bodies. And as he reviewed the pilgrim journey, oh what glorious things he brings before us. He tells us of what he learns about his enemy.

He tells us how he's going to live by the Spirit. He tells us how he longs, how he longs for the Lord because he's left his past. And eventually we see him looking for the Savior, who shall change his body of humiliation.

Oh brethren, sisters, that you and I in our Christian experience may realize that we are the pilgrim. You know, sometimes when we look around, we'd almost think that we're here forever, wouldn't we? But we're only pilgrims passing through. And then you remember we thought of him as the physician in chapter four, and as that physician he is resolving.

He's resolving the troubles that have come to that church. First of all, we see him here diagnosing that trouble, and then prescribing for that trouble. Now we've come to the last section of this very wonderful epistle.

And I would like you please, having borne with me as I have repeated much of what we have said, I wonder now would you turn with me to the tenth verse of the fourth chapter, and we will read the remaining verses of this lovely letter. But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again, wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want, for I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content.

I know both how to be a beast, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I am 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, notwithstanding ye have well done that ye did communicate with mine affliction.

Now, ye Philippians, know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity, not because I desire a gift, but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and to bound I am full.

Oh brethren, this is a man who's in prison. He's in prison. He says, I have all, and to bound I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.

My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory. By Christ Jesus, now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

I wonder, I wonder whether he read the epistle to some of the Christians at Rome, and having read it to them, I wonder, I don't know, but I wonder, having read it to them, they would have said, oh don't forget to

send our salutation, Paul, because having said Amen, then he says, salute every saint in Christ Jesus. I won't be passing any comment about it, so let me say it now. This is the only time in the Bible when the word saint is used, in the singular.

Every other occasion it's in the plural, it's saints. But is it wonderful, it still is in the plural, because it puts everyone in, all the saints. Salute every saint in Christ Jesus.

The brethren which are with me greet you, all the saints salute you, chiefly those that are of Caesar's household. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Amen. The Lord will add his blessing to the reading of his own precious word, I'm sure. When the first day I told you what I was going to tell you, afterwards someone came to me who'd been writing very fast to write down the headings, and said to me, Mr. Porter, I didn't get the last one.

Well, said I, I thought I made it right. Then in the last few verses we were going to think of all the thankful. Well, she said, that doesn't begin with P. No, it doesn't begin with P, but it's still there.

And I'm going to ask you that you will consider with me now one of the most wonderful descriptions that's given of this man. All the thankful. The thankful.

Brethren, sisters, if you were to turn with me, I'm not going to ask you to, but if you were to turn with me away into the second letter that pulled right to the church at Corinth, you will remember he gives to us a long list of the things that he endured. He tells us how he was beaten with rods, how he was tossed into prison, how he was shipwrecked, how he suffered hunger. He brings it to the close and says, and above all this, the terror of all the churches, and yet through it all, through all that he endured, there rises to heaven a spirit of thankfulness.

He has let the Lord thank him. I don't regret you, but I confess in my own life that this sometimes is a pain, that one is not always as thankful. Do you know the old hymn is still a good one? Count your many blessings.

Name them one by one and it will surprise you what the Lord has done. It seems to me that this is what Paul does in the last verses of this very wonderful letter. First of all, you see how Paul is encouraged by the support given by the saints.

It's wonderful to be encouraged, isn't it? Is it glorious to meet a Christian who may feel that they have no opportunity of preaching, they have no gift for any of the outward-seeing ministries, and yet they are an encourager of God's people? May I say what I find myself continually saying, and if you forget everything I've said during the past evenings, but remember this, I'll be glad that you remember this, because I believe this is important. The church of God is not made up of a few brilliant individuals. The church of God is made up of members of the body of Christ.

May I say the humblest, the fittest brother in the assembly is as important in that assembly as the most brilliant minister of the word that's ever been. Now, I know we don't think that very often, but that's true. I want to say here and now a big thank you to every Christian I've ever met that has encouraged me in my ministry, that has come and just given us a word of encouragement, enabled us to press on, and study more, and serve, I trust, the harder because someone has come along and encouraged.

The apostle Paul was a man like us, you know, and although he had received this vision of the bitten Christ, although he received his commission direct from the bliss of the blessed Lord, yet he needed encouraging, and here, praise God, he's encouraged by the support given him by the saints. He says, your care for me has flourished. Your care for me, verse 10, but I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at the last your care for me hath flourished again, wherein you were also careful, but you lacked opportunity.

I wonder if you and I could think just for a moment of one of the most difficult things for any preacher to talk about, the ministry of giving. Would you turn with me into the 16th of Corinthians? I think I could do nothing better than open my Bible to those verses. The 16th of Corinthians.

Now, let me make a confession to you right away that I am fully aware of the fact that the collection in the 16th chapter of Corinthians was a collection for the saints. Now, it is not the collection of the saints, it's the collection for the saints. There was tremendous need in Jerusalem.

Dire poverty had come to many of God's people, and there was a collection for the saints. I wonder if this is what happened in Philippi. There was collection for the apostle Paul.

I only know this that there are so many things that I'm told in these few verses, and I believe they lay before us the principle of collections among God's folk. Would you notice first the period of that collection? Now, concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. So, it wasn't just here in Corinth, was it? Upon the first day of the week, that glorious day of buried tears and risen hopes, that cross on the diary of a new week, that Lord's Day, the first day of the week, if there is one thing that you and I need ever to remember, that our giving is associated with our worship.

The apostle dares to write to the church, or the Christians, who are included in that list of Hebrew. He dares to say that this is the part of our holy priesthood, to communicate and do not forget not, for with such sacrifice God is well-placed. So, I am always thrilled when of a Lord's Day morning there is found upon the table not only the cup, and not only the loaf, but there's found on the table the bath, for I believe our giving is as much of our worship as our remembrance of the Lord.

I'm often thrilled, it doesn't always happen, and I'm glad it doesn't, or that we just become vain repetitioners, but I'm often thrilled when the bread has been broken, and the wine has been partaken of, when one of the elders of the fellowship stands and says, we will continue our worship of the Lord. In our offering to communicate and do good, forget not, for with that sacrifice God is well-placed. Our God is not poor.

Oh, blessed be God that we have a God who can supply our every need. Why, you would expect on an occasion like this for me to tell an English story, wouldn't you? And you would expect me to tell you the story of George Muller, coming with a proposal here. Why, what a man of God he was! You remember the story of Herd of the Legion of Time, how when they were building number 10 out of the orphan homes, how one day George Muller went down to the market in Bristol, and saw the farmer who owned the field that he needed to build number 10 house on.

And he goes to the farmer and said, sir, I need that field, would you sell it me? And the farmer said, yes, how much will you pay me for it? And he said, I will give you 300 pounds for it. And that was a lot of money in those days, and the farmer laughed in his face. 300 pounds for that field! Don't be ridiculous, you couldn't have it for 10 times that amount.

George Muller wasn't a bit to stir. He just said, well, thank you, sir. Thank you, sir.

The farmer walked through the market and met one of his friends, and he said, you know, I met that old man Muller. He wants to buy my field. Do you know what he offered me for it? He offered me 300 pounds for it.

Said his farmer friend, did you take it? No, I didn't. It's worth 10 times that amount. Listen, he said, you better take after him, and take his 300 pounds, because if you don't, he'll pray to God, and you'll have to give it to him.

A true story, and he got the ground for building number 10. I say this because my God's not poor, is he? But my God gives to you and me the privilege of sharing and encouraging his servants. Here, it was the first day of the week, this was the period of that collection, and then would you notice the persons that gave to that collection? Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you, here are the persons that gave, let every one of you.

Why, when that gift was received by the Apostle Paul in prison? But he gave that gift. What did he do? He did what I've seen many a missionary do on the mission field. They began to think of the folk who contributed to it, and I've been in many a mission home, and seen a dear brother and sister who's serving God in the mission field, when the mail has come, and someone has requested that they thank God for that gift, but I see them with tears in their eyes as they remembered people that they met when they were home.

Encourage. But would you notice not only the period and the people, but would you notice, please, the prominent hands that lie behind what they gave? I don't know whether you have them in your country, but in my country, they have prominent associations. What it is is that they distribute cards.

It's a saving group, you see. You put so much in each week, and they're teaching you to be thrifty. Most important, isn't it? Especially you young fellows that'll think about getting married one day.

You be careful now. I remember when I asked a girl to marry me, I had it all worked out, you know. I said she'll say no the first time, that'll give me time to save up.

She'll say no the second time, that'll give me a bit extra. Maybe the third time she might say yes. She said the first time.

I was in a mess. Oh, whatever you are, let's be thrifty. And when it comes to the things of God, let's be thrifty.

Let's be thrifty in the things of God, for this is what he dares to say upon the first day of the week. Let every one of you lay by him in store. There's one thing I can't stand, and on occasions I stood up and disassociated myself with it.

It's when they gather together a crowd of God's folk, and then one of the brethren stands up and starts pleading. Brethren, sisters, this is not our Christian giving. We do not give our Christian giving on that brave crutch of an emotional meeting.

Whatever else we do, let's lay aside in store. This is God's portion. This is God's portion.

And then would you notice not only the period and the people, not only notice the providential act, but would you please notice the proportion we have to give? I tell you what, it doesn't say that, but I tell you what it does say. I tell you what it does say. It says, let's give as God hath prospered him.

I wonder, oh please, it's imagination. But I wonder, the apostle Paul lying there in prison, and suddenly Luke comes in, the beloved physician, and he is receiving the communication. Maybe a paparazzo desperately sick is there arm in arm with Dr. Luke.

But Dr. Luke has said to a paparazzo, now you mustn't tax your strength too much now. You must be careful of the paparazzo's hands over the gift that they've given. And the apostle Luke, he thought of the saints, he thought of a dear sister there with so little, and yet she put her own life in.

He thought of a brother so wealthy, and remember, that even if he's wealthy, he's not profitable. And I've got a feeling I'd love to have been in that cell that day when Paul prayed as he went over the saints again. An encouragement, isn't it? Would you notice then, please, encouraged by the support of the saints.

But then we go down, and verses 11 to 13, I'm back in Philippians when I can find it. Jumped out of my Bible, here we are. From verse 11 to verse 13.

Now it seems not that he's encouraged by the support of the saints, but he's educated by the satisfaction of the Christ. Educated? Well, isn't that what it says? I have learned, says verse 11. I am instructed, says verse 12.

And what has been his teacher? Oh, praise God, it's been just this, that he can do all things through Christ, who strengthened him. He has learned in the school of experience, he has been instructed through Christ, the tremendous act of this Savior of men. You know, I believe that the Apostle, as I said the other evening, was an academic of academics.

I don't really know what letters he had after his name, but I'm sure of this, that he was a master of arts. I'm sure of that. He might have been a D.D., you see, he was never a devil-dodger, it seems to me, when I read the Bible, but he was a master of arts anyway, wasn't he? Tell me this, do not these verses tell us so very clearly that he'd mastered the art of being hungry without murmuring? He'd mastered the art of being full without boasting? He'd mastered the art of suffering without being impatient? He'd mastered the glorious art of abounding, and yet not setting his affections on the things of this world? Oh, he was a master of arts, he'd been educated.

Let's read it again. Not that I speak in respect of want. I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content.

Twenty months mastering that art. Have you mastered that art, brother? Whatever state we're found therewith to be content. I say, we've grown in the Lord if we've learned that, and I'll tell you something, we never will learn it until we know that we can do all things through Christ's strength.

It is only in as much as Christ dwells within us, and we allow him to live his life out to us, this wonderful truth of the hour. I say, he goes further, I know both how to be abased, I know how to abound, and we master that art. He says, I know how, I'm sorry, I know how to abound everywhere, and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and suffer need.

I can do all things through Christ's strength. Now, we cannot isolate that text just to the few verses that precede it, but never forget that these are the verses that make up the context. We are asked to take this verse and put it on a motto, and put it on the wall, I can do all things through Christ's strength of me.

We're permitted our text for the year, and whatever comes our way, we say I can do all things through Christ's strength of me, and, of course, that is quite right and quite legitimate. The apostle was using it in the light of the things that he had mastered in his daily living. Then, would you notice, not only is he one who has been encouraged by the support given by the saints, he is not only educated by the satisfaction that's found in Christ, but it's through him I can live this life of the master of arts.

But, then, it seems to me that he's enriched by the sympathy that's shown to him. Verses 14 to 16, he said, you did communicate with mine affliction. You did communicate with mine affliction.

What affliction was it? Oh, it was the affliction of being cast in prison, I have no doubt. It was the affliction of which he spoke when he wrote to the church at Galatia, when he dared, indeed, to suggest that this was some great trouble that he'd had. It's torn in the flesh that he speaks of in Galatia when he says, I would have plucked out mine eyes, or you would have plucked out your eyes for me.

Now, let us forget that the apostle Paul was no strong, robust man. He was a man that, at some point, I was contemptible of speech. There was time I looked at him and bothered me.

Why? There was nothing attractive about him. Yet, what he did for God. Here were saints who communicated.

They showed sympathy with his affliction. Isn't it a joy to be able to do that? Isn't it wonderful when we see brethren and sisters in need to be able to show sympathy with them? But then he goes further, and it seems to me that there in verses 17 and 18, he is enhanced by the supply of his every need, but he says, I have all and the plan. I don't think it's inappropriate for me just to take a moment or two to look back over some 30 years that the Lord permitted me to be a chaplain of having trusted the Lord for my daily, physical, as well as spiritual needs.

When we felt that the Lord was calling us to his service, our great desire was to go to Angola. He wanted to go out with Mr. Fred Alford and serve the Lord in that country. You will understand what joy I had last year when, 30 years and more after, I went to the very place where once I felt the Lord was calling me.

Of course, we had to have a medical check-up when they found that my wife was suffering with something that made it impossible for her ever to contemplate going there. And I've always felt, in 30 years of ministry, that God gave me his second best. Oh, please, I thank God for what he's given me.

For any service I've been able to do for him, but I could think of no greater joy that could ever come to any man or woman than to serve God in the mission field. No greater joy. Maybe this is the reason I'm always wandering over the world, spending a few months a year, and saving as much as I can that I'm able to get into some mission field and help them there.

I only know that as we look back over these past 30 years, there have been times when there have been difficulties. Now, I wouldn't do this. I'd like to share it with you.

I don't know if I've ever shared it with anyone this time in the world, but I would like to share it with you. I wouldn't do this now. You young men, young women listening, I wouldn't do this now, but God was my

God.

But when I stepped out to trust the Lord, I felt no man could trust the Lord, go out in faith, if we use that expression, and have some money in the bank. The little money we had, we sent them all at home. And a few trophies, but I didn't have many, for mine was professional fighting.

I just had a Clayton Lloyd belt and a couple of boxing belts, and we sold them and sent the money back to Bullock's house. We started off the day I started to look to the Lord, we started off with 10 shillings, and that was all. Now, I wouldn't do that now.

I tell you what, I wouldn't do that now. I made my wife suffer things I'd no right ever to make any woman suffer. She had to face the milkman at the end of the week and pay the bill.

She had to make ends meet when at the end of the week there was hardly enough to live. God had permitted me to put some aside, but we did it feeling it was the thing to do, and God on it. The first crusade I was to conduct was in the city of Cardiff, and I didn't have the fare to get to Cardiff.

I was due to preach there that very first crusade. I was due to preach there that night. You know, then there was no good cunning because there was hardly any card going.

We got down and woke up early in the morning, and we prayed. Our postman comes at 9 o'clock, and the train went at 8.45. We prayed, Lord, as you know, if I didn't know how to pray, I would do pray for the first time in a thing like this. And don't ask me why, oh I know why, but God was in it.

But at half past seven, there was a ring at the doorbell, and I went to the door and the postman was there. He had a parcel in his hand. He said, they put an extra two rows on my ramp, and I'm trying it another way to see if I can get it finished earlier.

And he put a parcel in my hand. So I went in, Mary, and he opened the parcel. Do you know what it was? A parcel of trash.

I could have given it back to him. And then Mary said, but where have they come from? We looked through and tucked in the middle of the trash was a letter from George Bourne. Dear, dear ministering brother in my country, the Lord called to behold with him just two years ago.

We opened it in time with a five pound note, and I caught the 8.45 train to Carthage, and my wife had a little bit of money to buy her food and glass. President, oh it happened. God, you can see, Father, that we're in a political mess.

Don't you misunderstand me. God never failed us. But I've seen occasions like that through the years.

I remember working in our own canteen, where in the country, Father, there were no meetings. Had an old bike, you know, used to go from house to house, and in the evening gathered a few folks either on the village green or in the little hall, the little village hall. And on Friday, I came home.

We never had any collections, and we never told a soul about our needs, there were no attenders there. We came home this Friday, and there wasn't very much there. That morning, Friday morning, as I worked the bat in the garden, I was saying, Lord, what a block of hay.

Do you know what happened? You know, it's so fantastic, you'd hardly believe it's true, that I saw this. But God, I ran, my wife went to the door, and there was a sister from our meeting who lived on the opposite side of the road, or did then, same name as ourselves, no relation at all. And there she stood, and there he said, hello, how are you coming? But he had a tray, and on the tray, covered over by a cloth or something, and she said, Mary, I hope you won't be attended, my dear.

But John went to work this morning, and they sent him a fantastic, and he's only just phoned me up, he won't be able to get back till tomorrow morning, and I've cooked the dinner, and it's there waiting. Would you be attended? Look, we not only had our dinner, we had it cooked. And I'll tell you something more, we had it on the plates as well.

Honest brethren and sisters, there are brethren and sisters here who could look back over the years, speak of the faithfulness of our God, our God, you know, whatever else we say. Don't let's get that, don't let's get that up. I have been invited to take up pastorship of more Baptist churches than I would like to mention.

I wouldn't give up what I've got for anything, to know day by day that there is a Lord that meets my need, and I want to thank you. Blessed be his name. He's a wonderful thing.

You'll forgive me using the personal illustration, but I just wanted to tell you this. He's alive! He's alive. You know, when I go into some college, and I see this old nonsense written on the wall, God is dead.

It's a bit daft, isn't it? I mean, God is dead. Well, I mean, if they're saying God is dead, he must have been alive sometime, hasn't he? And if he's gone, and he was alive sometime, he must have, well, that doesn't make sense, does it? You know, some people don't even think what they write really matters. Where was I? Oh, I know.

We were here in the Port of Philippians, weren't we? We were just remembering that we have a God who enhances, who enhances by the supply of our needs, enhances the life of a Christian. He dares to say, I have all in the past. And then he takes us a step further, and he dares to tell us this, that he was enraptured by the sufficiency of our God.

Oh, he says, isn't this glorious? Verse 19, that my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Isn't it lovely? Let's look at it. My God, that's where it starts, isn't it? Is there someone here tonight and he's not your God? He can be your God.

My God, my God shall be hallelujah. The shells of the Bible are wonderful, aren't they? Shall not perish, shall supply. I'm glad that the promise has come from God.

I bless his name that this is that which he has promised and he will perform. My God shall, shall. Isn't it lovely to know this? That you and I can have the promise of God and make it happen.

For he says, my God shall supply all your needs. Not just some of it, but all your needs. Please, not all your wants.

I've had lots of things I've wanted I never had, but he promised to supply all my needs. And I'm glad that I can put my hand in his and say as I say, morning, my morning saviour, lead me lest I stray, gently lead me all the way, for I am safe when by thy side I will invite thy love upon me. Oh, what a saviour we have who supplies all our needs.

But would you notice? My God shall supply all your needs according to his riches. Isn't that grand? His riches. Not according to my needs even, but according to his riches.

I'm glad that God has a bank and I bless God you and I can't write a check too big for it. If our needs is a real need, he sponsors the supply and it's according to his riches in glory. I'm glad of that.

His riches down here, the moths get packed and the, and the peat breaks in and still, and the rust comes and corrupts, but oh hallelujah, here it's, it's already there, it's in the bank. No safer bank than this. The gates of hell shall not prevail against this place.

I'm glad of this, that it's according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Oh, the one that gave his life for us, will he not with him freely give us all this? When I think of what Christ has given all brethren and sisters, how one's heart is strangely moved to bless the Lord, to bless the Lord, and then he goes further. He comes down to that which surely should challenge our every heart.

Having bought the epistle to its close, having told us that God will supply his needs, now unto God and our Father be glory forever and ever. Amen. He then sends the salutation of the saints in Rome.

Salute every saint. I like that. You see the gospel's holy, it makes people saint-like.

Salute every saint. In Christ Jesus. The brethren that are with me greet you.

I like that as well, don't you? They salute the saints and they greet the saints. They don't criticise them, they salute them and they greet them. All the saints salute you, chiefly those that are of Caesar's household.

I'm not going back to what I said just to remind you that this was the last of the Roman Caesars. A despot of a man who killed his brother-in-law, killed his wife, kicked to death the slave woman he'd made his entrance, took Christians, cast them in prison, threw them to the lions, dipped them in tar and set them alight, and yet in his very household there was a church. Boy, that's not the soil that brings forth lovely flowers, is it? Praise God, it is.

Oh, the beauty of the church in Philippi. But the beauty of the church in Nero's household. It's no good me saying, oh, it's so difficult in our district, you know.

Well, you see, our town itself is a Mormon town, or our town's a Catholic town, or our town's a Baptist town, I don't know which is worse, but I only know this. Our town is. I don't know better I've never been in a town where it would have been harder to preach the gospel than in the house of Nero, and yet there was a church that took courage and pressed on.

Saints, the gospel told it. In Nero's household, hallelujah, the gospel's powerful. All the saints salute you chiefly those that are of Caesar's household.

Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Oh, we haven't dealt with it very thoroughly, but I think it's an interesting letter, don't you? It challenges my heart. I tell you what it's made me do.

When I came, oh you will understand, over the years I've preached from the epistles of the Philippians a hundred times, but I've never dealt with it the way I've dealt with it. I sought from the Lord something entirely fresh and a new approach to it, and as I've been preparing this day by day, do you know I've been driven to my knees again and again? I said, Lord, make it be real in my life, and may it be so. Shall we

pray? Oh God and Father, we bless thee together for all thou hast done.

What a wonderful God thou art. We thank thee for the quiet that thou canst meet our every need. We look around the congregation like this, and we see some of these teenage young people with life in front of them, with educational opportunities that some of us would have given our arms for.

Oh God, what you could do with these young people if only they would lay all on the altar for thee. We pray thee that your touch would enable them to say, my God, will supply all my needs. We ask for those of us that are older, that have been on the road a few years, sometimes the weariness of the journey lays hold of us.

May we be able to say, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. And for the respective churches, assemblies that we represent, dear Lord, do grant that our meditations in these days may not only have been for thy glory, but for the benefit of the saints, our brethren and sisters in Christ.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/10/SID10437.mp3>

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