

Little is Better

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[0 : 00] Bible, then please open them up to the book of the Psalms, and that will be Psalm 37 this morning. And I'd like to, we're going to read about four or five verses here, but I think five places.

I'm going to have you turn here quickly, just pulling out a few verses or a few, a line almost in each spot, and I think you'll quickly get the theme from the verses that we read.

And after we read these handful of scriptures, I'll take you through a little thought, and I won't keep you long this morning, but I'd like to try to reinforce something from the scriptures that we, on our own, we would not believe, we would not think, or we would be completely opposite of this, actually.

And the proof of that is the world is completely opposite of this thought. And so my message this morning is little is better. Little is better. Let's look at Psalm 37 and verse number 16.

The Bible says, a little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked. A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked.

[1 : 25] Let's go to Proverbs 15. I have a handful of scriptures here, and they're all very close together. Proverbs 15. Little is better.

Proverbs 15, and look at verses 16 and 17. The Bible says, better is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith.

Better is a dinner of herbs where love is than a stalled ox and hatred therewith. Next chapter, chapter 16 and verse 8.

Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right. Better is a little.

Look at the next chapter, 17 verse 1. Better is a dry morsel and quietness therewith than a house full of sacrifices with strife.

[2 : 35] One more, and that's in Ecclesiastes, the next book to your right. Ecclesiastes chapter 4. Ecclesiastes chapter 4.

And look with me at verse number 6. Better is a handful with quietness than both the hands full with travail and vexation.

A little with a little with a little with a little with a little with a little with a little even six verses that we read, they really say a very similar thing, a very similar theme to them.

And we'll comment and try to conclude with some of that later. But the word little showed up here a few times. And the very first phrase is that a little that a righteous man hath is better.

A little is better. Depending on the circumstances, of course. I ran through some of these passages and I looked up the word little in the Bible this week and found out that it's approximately 230 times the word shows up.

[3 : 44] And the majority, well I shouldn't say the majority of those 230, but the most common of all has to do with little ones, little children. That phrase little ones shows up all over the Bible.

And that's one that I've heard all my life. It comes from people reading their Bible when they say the little ones. And that's the most common. But there are several requests in the Bible for a little water or for a little food.

There's mention of little ships following Jesus Christ when he took to sailing in a big ship. There's little rivers, little hills. There's little flocks, little houses, little cities, and even a little lad.

And here's a trivia question for somebody or for all of you. There was a woman who made her son a little coat and brought it to him from year to year.

Does anyone know who that woman was? Hannah. Made it for Samuel. Correct. There was a king's son who tasted a little honey and was enlightened after the slaughter of the Philistine garrison.

[4 : 46] Anyone know who that king was? Nice. I tricked you by saying anybody knew who the king was. Saul. Yes. Jonathan was the son. Israel's military looked like two little flocks when they went up against the Syrian army.

You may remember Elijah asking a widow for a little water. And then he asked her to make him a little cake from what was, the Bible says, was the little oil that remained in her cruise.

Later, Elijah identified a little cloud. And it was said in the Bible that it was like a man's hand.

Looking out across and seeing something the size of a fist.

Identifying that and said to Ahab the king, you better make haste. You better get home because the rains are coming. The Bible says the heaven was black with clouds and wind and there was a great rain.

It started with a little cloud. In 2 Kings chapter 4, there's a great woman of Shunan. And she made and she furnished a little chamber for the prophet Elisha for when he came by.

[5 : 55] In chapter 5, there's a little maid that suggested that Naaman visit the prophet in Israel to be cured of his leprosy. Solomon in the Proverbs warns the dangers of a little folly.

He warns of a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep. In Ecclesiastes, he warns of the little foxes that spoil the vines.

In Proverbs chapter 30, there be four things which are little upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise. The ants, the conies, the locusts, and the spider.

Which king foolishly declared that his little finger would be thicker than his father's loins? Yes, sir. In the book of Daniel, Daniel gets a vision of the future tribulation where he says a little horn waxed exceeding great.

In Ezekiel, he gets a vision of the future temple in the millennium describing the many little chambers and their dimensions as he gives them. The Lord Jesus Christ rebuked his disciples for their little faith.

[7 : 10] He used a few little fishes to feed thousands. He received the little children. And he stopped to speak to a man that had climbed up in a sycamore tree because he was, quote, little of stature.

He even promised his disciples that they shouldn't fear or worry because he would see them again in, quote, a little while. Paul warns of the danger of a little leaven and even allows for a little wine for Timothy's stomach's sake and his oft infirmities.

James warns us of the tongue being a little member and how great a matter a little fire kindleth.

James then continues to say that life is a vapor that appeareth for a little time.

In the book of Revelation, the prophet John has to eat a little book that he received from the angel. And Satan is loosed for a little season. And even in that book, martyrs that have been martyred for their testimony of Jesus Christ are given rest for a little season as well.

Now, all the verses we read earlier at the beginning, they place the emphasis on little being better than much. And what the world says is more is better.

[8 : 27] More is better, implying that the more you can get, the more you can have, you'll have a better shot at happiness. You'll be able to have peace. You wouldn't have to worry about these things if you had that kind of money.

If you had these things, you'd have joy. You could have security. But then the world even comes up with a few other phrases like less is more. And you've heard them say this, more money, more problems.

And so it seems as if the world has experienced that their mantra, the more is better, doesn't actually work. They've come to realize that it's not what they expected it to be.

Now, according to the word of God, what we've read here is possessing little, possessing a simple dinner of herbs or a dry morsel or just a mere handful, that these things are better, but they're better first when there's the fear of the Lord, when there's love, when there's righteousness, and as we read two times, quietness.

So how is it better to have little? Well, I'd say it's not the little, but rather the experience of peace and the feeling of love and living righteously and fearing God, those are the qualities that are far better than having the wealth and having the material things.

[9 : 49] In Proverbs, look back at Proverbs 23. The Bible warns us not to seek those things. Christ told him to seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

Proverbs 23, and look at verse number 4. We're warned against chasing after material things and riches. 23 verse 4, Solomon writes, Labor not to be rich.

Cease from thine own wisdom. Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings. They fly away as an eagle toward heaven.

If you don't have riches, why will you set your eyes on that? Because you don't even have it. And if you did get it, you can't keep it. It's a foolish thing to chase and to fall in love with and to devote your life to.

And so the message this morning is little is better. Now, does the world teach you that? Does your own nature teach you that? He says, cease from thine own wisdom. In your heart, in every single one of your hearts, mine included, is I would enjoy having a little more.

[10:54] Of course I would. I would enjoy an upgrade or two or three in life. I would enjoy not having to deal with certain things. But you know as well as I do, if you're grown at all and experienced any kind of life, you know that you'll never be satisfied with just one upgrade.

He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver. It doesn't work. It never does. The world and even your flesh and carnal nature will never be satisfied.

The eyes of man are never satisfied. You don't know how to stop. You don't know how to tell yourself, no, enough's enough. You don't have that in you. But when you possess the fear of the Lord in your heart and in your mind, and when you have love at the dinner table, and when you live your life according to righteousness and actually seek with your heart to trust what the Word of God says and exercise faith in the words of God, it really doesn't matter how much money you have.

It doesn't matter how many toys you have in the garage and how much goods you possess. You might even sit here today and look on all your goods and all your net worth and say, it's little. It's not much at all.

I really don't have much. Maybe that's your place there. Maybe you think that way. But let me tell you, if you have the fear of the Lord that we're reading about and have these other virtues in your life, you're better off than any billionaire tycoon that has given himself to gaining the whole world and is going to lose his own soul.

[12:36] You're better off than every billionaire and millionaire in this county that doesn't have the fear of God in their life. You're better off. And yet something inside of you doesn't want to believe that.

Something inside of you says, yeah, but. Yeah, but if I could, I mean, come on. Think about how good it would be. And you fantasize inside of your heart, your wicked, deceitful heart, of that more is better.

If I could get more, it would help. It would help and then I would, you would be satisfied? No. And so the word of God, thank God, the Bible steers us away from thinking the way we are, the way we would normally believe it to be and assume it to be.

The Bible tells us, no, if you have these things, you're better. If you have the fear of God, if you'll walk in righteousness, you're better. Just be satisfied with that. It's better over here than it is having the wealth of the wicked.

But some of us don't believe that. And I'm trying to draw you to walking by faith. That's what that is. As you read it in the Bible, you believe it. You say, God, my creator, knows more than me.

[13:47] What he writes is truth. And if I'll adhere to this and I'll set my compass toward following this, it'll be better. It'll be right. Instead of your own wisdom and your own heart's deceitful lusts.

You're better off than those that have wealth. Some of those people that have all that money, they don't have any love in their home. Some of them, you think they do? You're kidding yourself.

You think the tabloids and their pretty faces means that there's love and peace in their home? No, there's not. Some of those wealthy people have been divorced and divorced and divorced.

And not only are they just divorced, their former spouses are suing them because they want their money. Because they're not satisfied with the fear of the Lord and doing what's right. They want that money.

They want to get it from them. Then their kids become adult children and they sue. And they get a lawyer because they want money. They want to live wealthy as well. There's no love. If you have the peace of God in your heart, if you don't have to drink yourself to sleep at night, you don't have to pop pills, you don't have to visit the doctor every week for therapy to talk it out, if you're not addicted to what people are saying about you online, because you have peace and quietness in your spirit, you're better.

[15:08] You're better than they are. These people get a taste for fame. And then they get stressed out because now they're so worried about what people are saying about them. And now all

they do is check their pages, check their pages, check online to see what are they saying?

What are they saying? Are they talking bad about me? Did they like what I wore? And now they're consumed, completely consumed with this life. I wonder who's better off.

The Bible says, if you have love at the dinner table, you're better off no matter what the food is. If you have quietness in your spirit, in your household, you're better off no matter how much money is coming in the door.

Amen. Amen. You can drown your kids with material things and it's not going to cause them to love you. And it's not going to teach them to love God either. In the news this week, I saw Tom Brady. Tom Brady has been called the greatest quarterback of all time. He's in his 40s. He's still playing. He's still at a very high level. Still one of the best to ever do it, even currently. And Tom Brady has this perfect image.

[16:18] He seems like a nice guy. His teammates say he's the best teammate. He's so encouraging. He's always reinforcing positive things in us. He's the picture of health. He's filthy rich.

He's a good looking man. I couldn't even tell you how many women in this world would just, if they had a shot at marrying Tom Brady, they'd take it in a heartbeat. He seems like he's everything they'd want.

Successful, driven, healthy, a mega star. You'd think it'd be great to be married to Tom Brady, but according to his name in the news this week, not so much.

Not so much at all. Because there's something missing in that home. And it's not money. Plenty of that. It's not more than one home. There's plenty of them. It's not things and cars and attention.

Plenty of attention and fame. What's missing? For one thing, the fear of the Lord is missing. And there's misery in that home.

[17:23] While on the outside, everyone would expect it's all wonderful. I was reading this week a list of celebrities that have taken their own lives, committed suicide.

Celebrities. These are models. The most beautiful people in the world. They have looks. These are musicians. Talented, talented people.

Authors. Actors and actresses. Athletes. Famous people. All of them stars. And as I read through the list, I remember some of them from when I was a child.

I remember as a kid, seeing these people on television or in the different sitcoms or in sports. And I saw them on TV. And at one time, I would have thought, man, it'd be pretty cool to be them. It'd be great to be them, to live that life.

And at the time, maybe it was pretty good to be them. But not so much after all. Not so much after all. It turns out they hated their life. The glamour.

[18:29] The parties. The money. We see that. We think it's, oh, it's got to be so good. We don't see the depression. The emptiness. The drugs. The alcohol. The pain.

The suicide. They're miserable people. There's a hole inside of them that their money can't touch. And the only thing that has touched it was that feeling of fame.

And some of those actors and actresses, musicians, they get on top. It's been so good. The ride was such a rush and a high that they start to lose it. And it slips.

And the world doesn't care as much about them anymore. And they're not getting as much money and as much attention. Their name's not in the news. They get out of the car and there's not a ton of people screaming their names and shouting at them.

And they start to slip. And they're emptier. They're void. They're missing. They're miserable. And you could offer them Jesus Christ and say the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and Christ died for your sins and he can give you peace inside.

[19:29] And they think, yeah, but you know what they really want? They want that rush back. They want to get in the spotlight again. They want to get that feeling again.

That lust for that excitement is what they want. And they can't get it and it's getting too far away and they won't humble themselves to trust Jesus Christ so they take a gun or they take a bottle of pills and end their life.

Turns out that life wasn't so great after all. Some of them would trade the travail and the depression for true peace. They just can't seem to find it.

And I wanted to look at these scriptures this morning and consider that theme that comes through those few verses. Lest ye be tempted to envy sinners. Lest ye see what they have and tempted to covet thy neighbor's house or thy neighbor's wife or his ox or his ass or anything that is thy

neighbor's.

And lest you are tempted to grow discontent with what feels like little that God has given you in your hand. And what you do is you overlook the true riches that he has blessed you with.

[20 : 48] And I'll just mention a few this morning. A few of the true riches that God has blessed you with. Things that can't be bought. Things that can't be earned. One of them is in Lamentations you've been blessed with mercies that are quote new every morning.

Every morning you can wake up and live in the mercy and know the mercy of God on your life poured out upon you undeserving filthy sinner. And you can through his mercy have access to him and not be suffering and paying for your sins.

His mercies. That goes far beyond your sins. The mercies of God. You can you've been blessed with the grace of God. The grace that God bestows on your life sufficient for all your trials every single burden every ounce of depression and guilt and feeling in your soul he gives you grace. Grace to suffer through it and endure it and be okay. You don't have to blow your brains out because God gives you grace. He's easing the burdens of this life.

We have that blessing. God gives us comfort. Comfort for all the afflictions. in this life. Comfort. The Bible says through patience and comfort of the scriptures.

[22 : 06] I don't know if you've done this. You ought to. But when you when you're just stressed and you're not feeling it this book has a miraculous way of speaking to you and of just softening all of the noise and the fears and the things going through your heart and mind.

It's the comfort of God that comes from the scriptures. There's something else God's blessed us with in this life. It's peace. We read two of those verses about quietness therewith.

Even if you only have a dry morsel or just a handful but if you have quietness if you have that kind of peace the Bible says that he's given us peace that keeps our hearts and our minds.

We stay stable and centered in this life because God has put a peace over and in us that these these tough things these trials or these things aren't going right they can't pull us off to where we just can't take it.

He puts peace in us and it's a peace that we can't really explain and it's just undefinable. It says in the passage that it passeth all understanding but there it is God puts it in us a peace.

[23 : 18] He's given us something else a real and a living hope of a perfect future with him. You know what I have that today. I mean right here I have it.

If I would get stormed and attacked I have peace and I know beyond that I have the hope the true hope that if I get killed no matter how it goes down for me I'm going to be with the Lord.

I walk around with that everywhere I go. My wife probably thinks I drive because I have too much of it. I know where I'm going. I have that hope in Jesus Christ.

It's a living hope inside of me. We have his presence. His presence where he'll never leave nor forsake us. We have his word. We've been blessed with the word of God.

It's not a mysterious religious sacred book to me. It's the dearest possession I own. It speaks to me. It cleans me up.

[24 : 17] It comforts me. It fills me. It illuminates me. It directs my path. It feeds me. We have the word of God and thank God by his spirit the ability to understand what God has for us.

There's more. He's been blessing us with daily provisions. He promised he'd supply all your need and if it's just a dry morsel that's all he thinks you need and he's blessed you with it.

But more than that even bigger than those things day to day God has blessed us with the righteousness of his dear son. He has put that righteousness on us.

you better recognize what's different about you than Jesus Christ and then thank God that he has not dealt with us after our sins nor rewarded us according to our transgressions.

He has given us the free gift of eternal life the gift of righteousness undeserved. He's given us complete forgiveness of sins complete washed washed away the past the present and the future tomorrow you haven't sinned yet tomorrow but you probably will and God's given you complete forgiveness of sins in his son.

[25 : 40] There's redemption there's reconciliation there's we've been predestinated to be conformed to the image of his son so saith the scriptures he's given us a few things he's blessed us with some things if you're tempted to envy sinners or you're tempted to think you need more then maybe you're overlooking the true riches that he has blessed you with already.

There's a song I don't know if it's in this hymnal or not it's a song that's it's called or it says God hath not promised skies always blue flowers strewn pathways all the lives through God hath not promised sun without rain joy without sorrow peace without pain God hath not promised we shall not know toil and temptation trouble and woe God hath not told us we shall not bear many a burden many a care God hath not promised smooth roads and wide swift easy travel needing no guide never a mountain rocky and steep never a river turbid and deep but God hath promised strength for the day rest for the labor light for the way grace for the trials help from above unfailing kindness undying love you find yourself needing more than what he's provided you or do you feel like it's just too little it's not enough

I need more maybe you're overlooking those invaluable things that he has filled your heart in your life with maybe you forget what it's like to be lost and to have no hope and to be without Christ and without God in this world maybe you forget what it's like to have been empty just chasing a good time do you remember what it was like when the good time ended and there was that drop and that valley and that regret and that hatred of yourself and the things you allowed yourself to do and the reaping that you have to face maybe you forget what it's like maybe you forgot like Peter said that you were purged from your old sins you find yourself wanting more needing more if you're living a righteous life for the Lord Jesus Christ and if there's fear of the Lord in your heart and you're acting on it you may not have much but you know you're doing all right we've got it pretty good dry morsel and all we've got it pretty good and let me conclude with this thought it's only going to get better it's only going to get better for us this will be pretty much the worst we have this handful that all I have in this life it's just the worst it's the least I'll ever have when the verses and the thoughts we read was that little is better the apostle Paul when he got a glimpse and thought of the other side and he said he has a desire to depart and to be with Christ which is not just better because right now we got this little is better idea but he said to be with Christ is far better and for now it's just better for us to be satisfied with what God's given us to not lust and envy after the wicked and after their supposed wonderful lives for now little is better if there's the fear of the Lord and if there's righteousness in your life if there's peace and love in your home thank God for those things they could disappear but little is better let's bow our heads together