

I Am Instructed

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[0 : 00] The last two Wednesdays that we were studying the Apostle Paul's I Am's, we were in chapter 1 with I Am set for the defense of the gospel, and then last week it was I Am in a straight betwixt two.

And here we're going to kind of start to wind down the Apostle Paul's I Am's, this study. There's not going to be too many left. But here's one more in chapter 4, and I hope this comes across. I hope God helps me to convey this thought and material accurately to you, that you can receive it, and that it's beneficial even more so.

So let's pray together before we even read. Lord, it is again, it's my prayer that you'll help in this time, that you'll minister your words, and that they'll have power, and that they'll edify your people, that they'll strengthen us, that they'll change our minds and transform our thoughts.

Your word says that you'd renew our minds, and that you'd fill them with knowledge of you. We pray that that would be the case here this evening, that you'll adjust our thinking to the word of God.

[1 : 08] And please help me to be clear and to be able to say and articulate these thoughts. And may the word of God have a real effect in our hearts this evening, and free course among us. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

So we're in Philippians 4. I just want to read three verses with you. That's verse 10, 11, and 12. So if you would follow along in verse number 10, where Paul says, But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me having 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 abased 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. Now, the Apostle Paul makes a real interesting, I think more than that, a convicting statement here about, if you want to just call it his financial status or his situation in life, which was a life that was completely given to the ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ, when Paul surrendered to the Lord God to fulfill his will and his calling for his life, he surrendered his aspirations for any kind of carnal success, and he surrendered any kind of thoughts of lavish living, not saying that that can't come with it.

He mentions he knows how to abound, and that can be part of it, but he surrendered that that was what he desired for his life to be. And this is going to slap some people in the face tonight a little bit, because you're programmed and really just, I don't know if it's more than that, but you're so bombarded and it's infested our natures in this land to have this lust and drive and desire for things and for more, and it's more than an appetite, it's become an expectation, to where you're an American, you deserve to have some things, you feel that way, right here tonight, some of you feel that way, whether you know it or not, whether you would articulate, say it or not, you inside, you've been trained to think that way.

[3 : 26] And you get blasted with that all year round, really, but when the holidays come, it's really hardcore, that you need more, you need this, the ads are constantly in your face of something better, you have one, but there's a better model, and now you want that one, and just praise on your lust and on your covetousness.

And so when the Apostle Paul surrendered to Christ, he laid down these drives and lusts and desires for things or for a position in life, and his comment back in chapter 1 was, for to me to live is Christ.

And that's all I'm seeking, he is all to me, and I'm content with Jesus Christ. His affections were set on things above. In chapter 3, the prize that he strove for was called the high calling of God in Christ

Jesus.

It wasn't a house in a specific neighborhood, it wasn't a position at a job, it wasn't to top this number in his salary and to top that the next year, it was the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

That's all I'm going for. That's all I'm pressing toward, is to be a pleasure to God and fulfill his will.

He said that he wanted to know him in chapter 3 and verse 10, and that he was okay with getting a taste of the sufferings of Christ and being made conformable unto his death.

[4 : 45] And now in this passage here, in Philippians 4, in a nutshell, he said, I'm content in whatsoever state I'm in. It doesn't matter if it's great, if it's not so great, if it's easy, if it's hard, I am content.

And that is not a place that too many American Christians find themselves in, is being content. I am content in whatsoever state I am. Content with whatever God has for me in this life.

I've surrendered to him, so that's what I'm going to do for the rest of my life, is whatever he has for me, whatever direction he leads me, whatever he puts on my plate, I'll take it and say, thank you, Lord.

You're a good God. And I'm not going to be set on other things. And so the Apostle Paul says that I belong to Christ, I'm going to serve Christ, and if that means I'm full and I'm abounding, then praise his wonderful name.

But if that means I'm hungry, and I'm in need, well, praise his holy name just the same. Because for me to live is Christ. He said in chapter 4 and verse number 4, rejoice in the Lord always.

[5 : 54] And again I say, rejoice. Always. Always. Whether it's abounding, or whether it's being abased, whether it's being full, or whether it's being hungry, whether it's abounding or suffering need, the Apostle Paul was content in whatever state he was.

Now this Christian position, here's a point that we, you've already heard the introduction a little bit, now this is crucial. This position the Apostle Paul stands upon, this conviction, or this belief that he's proclaiming to us, it did not come naturally to Paul, and likely it's not going to come naturally to you. It had to be learned. And that's where we're going to land right here in Philippians chapter 4. Notice again that he said that very word in verse 11, not that I speak in respect of want, for I have learned. I learned something. I learned to be content in whatsoever state I'm in. I learned to be content if I'm hungry. And I learned to be content if I'm full. I learned that.

Also in verse 12, notice that he says, I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound. How's that Paul? Well, because he's experienced both ends of this spectrum. So it's experience there.

[7 : 09] It's not just learned. He learned from experience. He's been there. And then finally in verse 12, everywhere and in all things, I am instructed.

I am instructed. And if I was going to nail this down just to stick with the series, that's the I am tonight, is I am instructed. In the context of learning, in the context of the experiences he's been through, that the Lord, serving the Lord, has brought him through, he's instructed, and he had to learn some things, some things that just didn't come to him, and they're not going to come to you, unless the Lord God puts you through some things.

And so, tonight it's I am instructed from the Apostle Paul, and let's consider that he's instructed, or he learned, or the experiences, they came from God, ultimately, they were from the hand of the Lord.

But it was also the circumstances of the Christian life, while following the Lord Jesus Christ, while taking up his cross, and following Jesus Christ, here's where he learned these things along the way. And, before we get into them, I got three things to point out from this passage. I think there are many, many lessons to be learned in the Christian life. Like, you don't get saved, and it just clicks, and it's all there, and it's just dumped upon you.

[8 : 24] And it's not all showers of blessings sent from the Father above. There's some tough things that you have to go through, but those things God uses to teach you some things. And when you get on the other side, you can say, I learned, and I was instructed when I went through that, how to trust God, how to walk by faith, how to get up in the morning when I cried myself to sleep.

You begin to learn how to receive comfort from the Word of God, how to take a deeper dive into these holy words and find out they're alive and they can fix and heal your heart. They can do something to you.

It's not just a book. And so, these are things you can only learn from experiences. And from experiences, in a lot of cases, hard ones.

Now, let me say a few things that the Apostle Paul learned so that he could be meat for the Master's use. He was instructed. These are things that didn't come naturally. And the first thing is Paul learned that he could live lower.

He could live lower. Verse 12 says, I know both how to be abased and I know how to abound. I know how to be abased, Paul said, because he's been abased.

[9 : 39] Because the man has been brought low and he knows what it's like to be abased. The Apostle Paul has been humbled in many ways. I'll mention two of them. Number one, that man has been beaten so many times and multiple incarcerations in various prisons.

You don't think that'll bring you low? You don't think that'll change the way you see the world or how you react and just carry yourself? Some young men go into any town and you'll see a couple young men walking together all chins up, cocky, chest out, striving together, just ready to take on the world.

And then they get abased and something happens in their life or they lose a friend or they come across an illness, a disease takes over them and they're not strutting anymore.

They learned how to humble themselves. Paul learned how he could live lower and he got humbled by some of the beatings he got, some of the times in prison.

Paul was not the evangelist that was flying from city to city on his private jet to go to the next stadium that was filled with ticket buyers who he's going to heal or whatever kind of show he's going to put on and then go back to one of his homes in whatever state he wants to go to that day.

[10 : 57] Paul learned to live lower. He wasn't staying in five star hotels. He lived awful low at certain times in his ministry. Lived lower, I'd say, than a lot of us do here today.

There was a lot of times in his ministry that he was pretty abased, like, down there, brother. You wouldn't want to be part of that. So another way he was dropped in a baste in his life was one time, there was a time in his life where he was riding pretty high on this quest to just protect and preserve the Jews' religion and he's doing it with such fervor and zeal that he's trying to control, even eliminate this population of Christians and then later on some 20 to 25 years later he writes in Romans 7, O wretched man that I am.

The man that was trying to eliminate the population of Christians can't even control and eliminate the sin in his own life. There was a time where he would have thought himself to be righteous according to the law and now he finds I am carnal, sold under sin.

The closer he got to Jesus Christ, the lower he got. The more he saw I'm a filthy, wretched man.

The good that I would I do not. I should be doing it and I'm not doing it.

And to him that knoweth to do good, to him it is sin. The apostle Paul found out, boy I thought I was doing pretty good. I thought I was really riding high.

[12 : 26] The closer I got to Jesus Christ and serving him, the lower I really am. And Paul learned that he could live lower. The Bible says that every man will proclaim his own goodness.

every man, no exception, loves to talk about themselves, loves to inform you in conversation of their accomplishments, of their ideas, of the things that they've achieved or the wisdom that they have, their opinions.

Every man will proclaim his own goodness. It's natural to the natural man to exalt himself and to praise himself and to want to receive praises. But the Lord Jesus Christ said, Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased.

And you can look at one after another from Lucifer to Nebuchadnezzar to even as he mentions in Job with Behemoth, a type there, he's lowering them and abasing one after another.

Everyone is lifted up in pride, he's able to abase. And God will do that to a man and Paul learned, he learned it, he didn't have it in him naturally but he learned it by God that he could live lower.

[13 : 37] If a man's called of God to do something for the Lord, if a woman's called of God to live for Jesus Christ and they're lifted up with pride and they're filled with self-promotion and self-worship and self-worth, God will have to abase them.

He will have to drop them down so they can see more clearly just who it is that their life is supposed to be worshipping and just who it is that they're supposed to be praising who alone is worthy of that praise.

God will have to abase a man. There's a Christian man that once said, I was never of any value to Christ until I realized that God did not intend me to be a great man.

What he was saying was I learned to live lower than the original estimation of myself. I learned to live lower and sacrifice those ambitions on the cross of Jesus Christ and took up my cross and followed him and when I took up my cross and followed him it was going this way and my heart and my ambition was like, no, how about up there?

I want to be up there lifted up where all men can see me but Jesus Christ takes a man a different road and he abases him and too many Christians have never sacrificed the estimation they have of themselves and of their own value and of what they bring to the table in a church in a family at a workplace at a school or institution feel like they're somebody and because they're somebody people should listen to them and God's not going to use that man matter of fact it's the base things of this world that God calls in 1 Corinthians chapter 1 too many Christians have never sacrificed the estimation they have of themselves haven't given it over to Jesus Christ haven't offered their pride to the Lord for him to just take away oh God please take this pride out of me and be pleased with this vessel because pride is an ugly thing and God got it out of Paul and Paul learned how to be a base and pride will keep

[15 : 52] Christians from serving one another in the spirit of meekness pride will keep Christians from humbling themselves to just do anything pastor just anything you'd like me to do pride will keep a person a Christian from doing that pride will be inside of you saying well if I get recognition for it and if I get a position around here or if I get a place amongst if people know how good I am and what I can bring to the table then I'd be happy to step up to the plate but Paul learned and Paul was instructed and Paul had the experience to know that he could live lower than he once was he learned how to be a base there's something else I want to see in verse number 12 Paul learned that he could live with less in verse 12 I know how to be a base 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

Paul learned he was instructed that he could live with less now I told you this is going to smack somebody in the face because you've never been taught this in your life or you've never had this thought put into you instead it's been the opposite the whole time that you deserve more but the apostle Paul our example the one we're called to follow and be doers and followers of him told us he had to learn and be instructed how to be content when he was hungry and how to be content with the life Jesus Christ gave him when he was suffering need that is not an attractive aspect of the Christian life and if you would surrender to the Lord and give your life to him and write a blank check to Jesus Christ say you bought me I'm yours I'm your property do what you like I'll obey always I'll obey by your grace and by your strength if you would go that way you would have to learn from experience like

Paul that you can live with less it's not attractive I know there's more money in the corporate world than in the ministry there's more opportunity in the city of LA than in the King James Bible believing churches around this place and for missionaries it's very easy to see this in missionaries that leave the states and go to different countries especially the ones that are third world country it's for them the fact is if they serve God they're often going to live with less they could raise all kinds of support but they can't live that lifestyle in a third world country and be have them receive their message and the gospel of Christ and sometimes they have to learn how to be abased sometimes they learn how to have to suffer need and it's very easy to see in in missionaries but it's not just isolated missions giving things up in life whether it's a short time or for a long time or doing without some things because that's just what it is but you're not that you're not programmed that way you have a government to fall back on and you got programs available to you and that's you're going to grab resources and I'm not telling you not to I'm just telling you that if you're going to serve Jesus Christ you may have to learn to live with less if things really got taken away from you your abundance of supplies and the abundance of food and and money at your at your reach and access to necessities or even just the comforts of life if that got taken away from you you would learn to survive you would do it you wouldn't kill yourself you would start fighting you would start doing with less you wouldn't look as pretty in the mirror your hair might be a little bit different grayer for most of us you would your clothes might be filthier but you wouldn't just walk off the pier and never come back you'd start fighting you'd try to survive it's instinctive inside of you to do it you just haven't been in that place yet you haven't been pushed that far yet to where you just have to trust God and call on God to supply your needs and provide for you and as

Americans I don't know that anybody in this room has any idea of what it means to scrounge for food with an empty stomach for four and five days and did not know how to get food I don't think we know that we haven't we haven't been dealt that hand I don't think you know what it's like to not be able to go to your bed to your bedroom you don't know what it's like to not have privacy to have air conditioning our air conditioner goes out every year we got two of them at our house every summer the heat of the summer one of them something they're kind of older units and we've suffered in air quotes we've suffered a few nights in the heat of the summer and it's miserable it is I don't like it at all I'm we know we do we complain and we complain and we all complain about how hot we are and we all are because we get hot and sweaty and sticky and it's just yeah nobody likes it our hot water heater just went out yesterday and so for the time being we don't have hot water and you know what we're gonna do we're gonna survive we're gonna figure out how to survive for a few days until it gets fixed and then Lord willing we'll be able to just live that lavish style again but for now we're gonna deal with it big deal but those little that's so small isn't it hot water air conditioning it's not torture well for some it feels like it but you adjust what you do is you learn when my wife and I were in

[21 : 52] Pensacola we were at Bible school for three years and in the last year of school a hurricane came by and it wiped out I mean it the eastern wall of it hit Pensacola head-on and just wipe the town out for a good week no power no nothing and so what we didn't have our electric refrigerator was dead our electric stove was dead we had some charcoal and lighter fluid a little bit and we were able to use that to cook pretty much everything we had in the house and and we still have not unfond memories of the taste of charcoal that some things are not supposed to taste like charcoal but they did because we didn't have a choice and we were to this day there's just something about the charcoal grill it just kind of got under my skin but that was short lived that was like five to seven days of cold showers thank God we still had running water I remember saying that the indoor plumbing all of that work still but there was no electricity and there was no the gas stations were you know dead there was nothing that you could really do there for the first several days and it was a like a war zone it was very a unique thing to live through but in the moment you know what we learned to do we just we lived with less that's exactly what we did we found out we didn't like get all spiritual like Lord if this is what you have for us we surrendered we meant it so we'll go without a shower or we'll we didn't it wasn't a big deal we just you know why because we had hope that it was gonna get turned on in six seven eight days at the most it was gonna you know the crews were coming FEMA was coming everything was gonna get back restored but there was a few days where it just wasn't normal it was it was far from normal in a lot of ways our life and a lifestyle but we dealt with it we just learned to live with it and if it would have dragged on for a month or if it would have been that same set setup that some people live in their entirety of their lives specifically brothers and sisters that are on the mission field where they only get power certain parts of the day I got a video this morning for my sister in Nepal where there's flooding and it looks like a river it's right down the street of the city just muddy brown water flowing pretty hard it's they're just dealing with it and it's it overflows things their sewage system and that city's you know it's nothing like American setup it's ugly it gets bad pretty quick when things like that happen and you know what you do you learn to deal with it you learn to live with it you learn that you can live with less you learn that you can live a little lower than you thought you had to have and Christian you're in a bad place if you think that you deserve certain things in this life like you think in your mind you're programmed and trained to believe I deserve some things you know what you deserve according to this Bible I'll give you one you're real close look at

Philippians chapter 1 if you think that God or this government owes it to you to keep you comfortable to keep you healthy to keep you safe to have your back to give you free speech to give you gun control or the right to bear arms I want to help you with something here are this Bible is our source not some document this Bible verse 29 of chapter 1 this is Paul writing to a people that is that has some adversaries mentioned in verse 28 so they've got some opposition facing them and in verse 29 Paul says for unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on him but also to suffer for his sake that's what Christ has given you thank God he's given us the ability to believe on him and that he's given us opportunity to trust him and have our sins forgiven and eternal life but then on top of that he's given us the opportunity the ability the right to suffer for him no president's ever going to tell you that not if he wants to get elected nobody's ever going to tell you that's what you have in this life to look forward to if you've taken Jesus

Christ but that's what God is going to allow are you content you content with those two to just be able to believe on Christ and have eternal life and then in this life suffer for his namesake and the behalf of Christ I know that's not how you want to think tonight I know you don't want to hear that stuff when you understand and when you learn that you can live with less if God directs you to you won't have so much trouble keeping the focus of your life on Jesus Christ when you learn and accept that I can live with less I don't need to chase all of that and have all of that and claim all of that I can live with less and put my efforts and attention into the Lord Jesus Christ and my affection on things above instead of on my comfort and my feelings and my desires and my demands if that's you you might have to learn like the Apostle Paul had to learn and be instructed that he could live with less

Paul learned he could live with less and he was put through things that enabled him to understand and really to change the way he viewed life and his place in it and now one more thing come back to chapter 4 Paul's instructed to live lower to be a base he's instructed to live with less to to to be hungry and even to suffer need and there's one thing in all of this that Paul learns is that the Lord Jesus Christ is aware of and you might say a sufficient for all of his needs this is something he learned being instructed how to to be content in all of these ways he learned that Christ is all and that he's sufficient for all of my needs and so in in verse 12 again it says I know how both how to be a base 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 and here's his conclusion I can do all things be filled or be hungry abound or or have to go without I can do all of that all of it I can be that guy I can do it contently through Christ which strengtheneth me and if you offer yourself to God and you're willing to suffer or to do without or whatever it takes to obey and glorify

Jesus Christ then Paul assures us he absolutely assures us that the Lord Jesus Christ will be there to strengthen us and then in verse 19 he he assures us that the Lord Jesus Christ will supply our need verse number 19 but my God shall supply all your need according to his riches and glory by Christ Jesus but by the way if you're surrendered to Christ then you're going to permit God to determine exactly what that need is you don't get to come to him and say okay Lord I'll do it but here's my demands it's not a negotiation for your life you've actually been bought so you you're owned by him therefore you need to learn to allow Jesus Christ to be sufficient for you remember back in in second Corinthians chapter 12 when the Apostle Paul was crying out to God about this thorn in the flesh this messenger of Satan that was buffeting him and he just wanted it gone and he wanted it rid of and the Lord wouldn't do that and he said this my grace is sufficient for thee and my strength is made perfect in weakness Paul you're not understanding you want it you want to be strong but but I want you to be weak so that my strength can can flow through you you can be a channel of my strength in your life then

[30 : 10] Paul got it and he changed his mind he learned something from that he was instructed in that situation that wasn't pleasant and he learned that Jesus Christ strength is better than his own and he learned that having the grace of God that's sufficient enough for this trial is worth it and it's better to have that and so he learned how to submit to the thorn in the flesh and to that trial that God brought on because he said in that passage that the power of Christ may rest upon me there's no if there's no submission then there's no experiencing the reliance upon Christ and then there's no experiencing the joy and the blessing of the fellowship that comes with it as well and few people few Christians ever learned this they never get to that stage of learning they they fall out they back away they quit because they can't understand why God would put them through this or why God would have them be without why would they ever be hungry if

God's going to supply their need and yet I'm hungry Paul said I learned to be content when God has me hungry he talked about it in all that list of things that he endured he talked about in hunger that was literal that that guy's stomach was hurting and in pain and because because what because he's serving Christ that's where it got him now back in verse 13 again I want to reread this verse I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me I know we take that kind of let it stand by itself and apply it a lot of ways and it's a great verse but understand how Paul writes in the context he's talking about being on this end of the spectrum or being on that end of the spectrum and I can be content with anything God has for me whether it's easy or hard whether it's good or evil I can do all things through Christ if there's no Christ then I don't have the strength to endure that I'm gonna cry I'm gonna quit I'm gonna complain I'm gonna bail and I'm gonna seek a better life but through Christ the Apostle Paul can deal with some pretty ugly things when he's in suffering need and when he's

abased but

Jesus Christ will be there to strengthen you and church yes you he'll be there to strengthen you just as his word is true to Paul it's true to you he can do all things through Christ and so can you if you've got Jesus Christ if he calls you to learn by experience what it is to suffer need you can do it Jesus Christ will strengthen you if he calls you to to be hungry he'll never leave you and no test or no temptation will ever take you but such as is common to man God is faithful in that thing matter of fact he will not suffer you or allow you to be tempted above that you're able matter of fact the end of that verse says you are able to bear it so you can trust him and he'll strengthen you to get you through it and so Paul learned this stuff by experience he was instructed so these experiences instructed Paul while serving God to be content with whatever God allowed in his life and if you're not happy with how things are today and if you're scheming to try to fix or get around something that's unpleasant in life maybe just maybe this is for you maybe you need to learn to sit still and open your heart to God and realize that maybe I need to be a based a little bit this will be for my good if I'll just humble myself a little lower maybe

God's trying to teach me that I can live without some things that I think I need that my neighbors have or my friends or my family members have but maybe I don't need that maybe I don't need the upgrade because everybody else has it maybe it would take me away from Christ maybe I shouldn't even be chasing down that road of technology or of things and lust in this life maybe you need to sit still and learn a lesson that you need a good humbling or that God won't let you down you need to learn to trust him or maybe you need to learn that Christ is all and that he'll never leave and he's always aware of his children and he always has help to give and an answer for your problem and he has grace to assist you and he'll be merciful and he'll always be there to comfort you through it all you can always trust him he's always a prayer away he knows his children he knows you by name the Lord knoweth them that are his so when you start complaining when you start imagining that you deserve more that you deserve better that you ought to put some more time in or some more energy towards something that's just caught your eye I want to challenge you like this is a serious challenge I want to challenge you to go to this holy Bible and seek out of the word of God if you actually do deserve better if you actually do deserve more or the upgrade find a verse in the Bible that preaches and teaches that God owes it to you or that you as a Christian or as a human being deserve what it is that you're complaining about what we need instead is to learn to be content with the supply of God God shall supply all your need we need to learn to be content with that supply we need to learn to be thankful for that supply we need to be learned to love him for the goodness that he's already given into this life and stop forgetting so quickly about it while we're lusting for other things and in the end of this when when you are hungry or are suffering need or are abased these are all the ugly side of these things when that happens to you allow that to do so to work something and bring out a different fruit in your

Christian life and that fruit is the fruit of hope because those low times in life and those hardships and trials and temptations of life that you don't want to bear are the very things that can cause you to grab and cling harder and closer to the hope that one day by the grace of God by the by the will of God there's a brighter day coming for me and it'll cause you to say I'm going to go to a land where I'm never going to hunger again where I'm never going to suffer need where the Lord Jesus Christ is the light of this land and I'm going to bask and bathe in the glory of God and I'll be done with this world during that hurricane we endured that week not knowing for sure when it would end but but we knew we just we knew it was coming to an end we knew the power was going to kick back on one day we'd hear the click and the buzz of the the refrigerator going the air conditioner would again work in the house we knew that day would come in just a few days we had hope we had hope and when you're an experience when God is teaching you some things when he has you in some places you're not content with and not satisfied with then learn learn from it be instructed in it be instructed you probably do need to be brought lower if you allow that pride to live in you I'll get it mixed up what's the verse in Proverbs that pride go with before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall you allow that you're just asking for trouble so maybe

[38 : 17] God wants to teach you something to avoid the trouble you want to avoid the lesson but God's doing it for your good and when you trust him and submit to it you'll see in the end I look back at my life and think well if God hadn't worked in my heart and brought me to a place where he humbled me before him and I look at the way I was thinking in my mind only God knows where I'd be today and what kind of a stupid filthy wretch of a man I'd be in my heart but for the grace of God it's just try to put me through some things to get me away from that guy and by his grace I'm

thankful for it so when you when you are learning these lessons and while you are receiving the instruction that last thought was you're never without hope it's just going to make heaven prettier it's going to make it more precious it's going to make it more alive to you and more real that you're a child of God and that hope is going to you'll hold on to it even closer so Paul had to learn some things Paul said I am instructed and these are instructions that for the most part we're not that interested in learning but you're never going to get to those places if you don't learn them and you have to learn them by experience and so God puts you through some things to teach you some things to allow you to be a better servant of Jesus

Christ he doesn't need your stinking pride and he doesn't need you to tell him how good you are and what you can offer him he knows what he wants from you you just have to let him get it out of you and let's close with that let's be dismissed father again we are grateful to meet together on a Wednesday night we're thankful again for the word of God and the Apostle Paul and for how much he went through and endured how much we can glean from that and in some cases we can learn from others experiences and then Lord it's true that sometimes the only thing that's going to teach us is our own experiences and so God give us grace I pray that you'll give wisdom to each believer here this evening and that you'll help us to renew our minds to be more like yours help us to embrace the hardships in life knowing that you allow them knowing that it's for our good and that we can trust your hand in everything Lord help us if need be to be content and to learn to live with less and to learn to allow you to humble us and to learn to rely on Jesus Christ for everything what a blessed life that is it's seems like it's not so easily achieved with this flesh and this world against us so God grow us in

Christ one day at a time and one step at a time and I pray that the word of God would have effect in our hearts tonight in Jesus name amen amen all right you're dismissed