

The Snare of Success

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[0 : 00] Paul writes to the man, Timothy. Timothy is Paul's own son in the faith, seeming that he led him to Christ. Although he had a mother and a grandmother who were followers of the faith as well.

! But Paul writes something here in this last chapter of this epistle. He kind of closes it down with a few warnings. And one of the warnings specifically has to do with success.

Or the word he uses is gain. And before we even read in this passage, I want you to consider that success or gain in this world that we live in is absolutely worshipped.

As if it is the pinnacle or the apex of every endeavor. Is to be successful. Is to get to the top. Is to make more money and move up in the ladder and become somebody and have somebody, you know, everybody know your name.

It's whatever vocation you're in, there's always a struggle to grow, to move forward, right? And it's not all bad. I don't want to act like it's all bad and carnal. But you do understand it's worshipped.

[1 : 12] Success is worshipped. Everybody would choose to be rich over being poor. Everybody chooses or would rather desire to be a winner than a loser, right? But how is success determined?

How is it determined? Everybody desires some sense of achievement or accomplishment or to attain to something and they long to possess value. But what determines the value?

What determines if you're successful? If you're in sports, it's going to be how many points you score or how many touchdowns you throw if you're the greatest of all time. It's going to be determined by how many rings do you wear on your fingers if you have, you know, championships behind your belt.

That's if you're a success. That's how it's worth. But if you would consider, if you back up, like, just stick with sports for an example because it's a very easy one to make and the world is addicted to sports and sporting events.

That everybody in high school that's playing something, they desire to make it to the next level if they really want to be good or be something, if they love it. They want to make it in college. But everybody in college, they consider making it to the next level.

[2 : 20] The NBA or the NFL, if they can get into that league, then that's success to them on the collegiate level. But in the NFL, you may not be considered a success at all.

You may just be riding the bench or you may be, you know, play for one season and you're gone. It's all relative to where you're at to where you think success is. And I'm just using sports as an example.

What about business? Well, the money that you make for the company or the company that makes the most money or what is your net worth? And it's all stacked up to say who's the most successful. It's determined by money. It's determined by wins or by points. But what about in the ministry? Because that's what Paul's writing to Timothy about. What about in the Christian life? I want to ask that question.

And what determines if you're successful? What determines if a church is a success? Is it the amount of money they bring in? Is it how filled the plates get on a Sunday morning?

[3 : 18] Does that mean we're successful? Is it the amount of membership on the role? Does that make a church more successful than another? Is that how we view it? The more people come, then now we're doing something.

Is it the more ministries that we can get off the ground and get started? The bigger size of a campus that we can build buildings upon? Does that mean we're a success? I want to ask these questions and consider what value or what determines a value of a church or of a Christian.

Now look at 1 Timothy chapter 6. We're going to start in verse 3. Paul says a few things about servants and masters. And then he says, If any man teach otherwise, And consent not to

wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, And to doctrine which is according to godliness, He is proud, Knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strives of words, Whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmising, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, And destitute of the truth, Supposing that gain is godliness.

From such, withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain. Now we'll read more in a moment, But Paul makes that last statement there, Godliness with contentment is great gain.

Because I believe he knows that Timothy's going to see the success of others. He's going to see those that suppose gain is godliness. And he might be tempted to wonder why, God?

[4 : 53] Why they're backslidden? Why they're men of destitute mind? They're destitute of the truth. Why are they so filled with gain? Why is it going so well with them?

He could be tempted to alter his message too. He could be tempted to adapt to what the people want to gain. And to do whatever it takes to get more people, Or to build it up bigger.

And Paul says, Timothy, listen, Great gain looks like this. It's godliness, Timothy. It's godliness.

And if you can couple that with contentment, If you'll just be content with what God brings into your life, And gives you whatever he puts on your plate to deal with, You show contentment with that.

Timothy, that is great gain. All the men with their ministries, And their mega bucks, And all the membership, And the whole big thing that seems so attractive to many, They're not even touching it.

[5 : 52] The greatest gain, Timothy, Is if you can live godly in this world, And if you can preach the truth, And not be destitute of it, Not be filled with pride, Not become envying and full of strife and railings, But Timothy, If you can just be godly, And you can be content with what the Lord puts in your hand, That's great gain.

I think Paul's admonishing Timothy here, Not to strive to be the richest preacher, Or to have the biggest church, But rather to strive for godliness, To seek godliness, And be content with what God gives.

Now continue reading with me in this passage, In verse 7, He says, For we brought nothing into this world, And it is certain we can carry nothing out, And having food and raiment, Let us be therewith content.

But they that will be rich, You must recognize that will is their will, It's their desire. They that will be rich, Fall into temptation, And a snare, And into many foolish and hurtful lusts, Which drown men in destruction, And perdition, For the love of money is the root of all evil, Which while some coveted after, They have erred from the faith, And pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

But thou, O man of God, Flee these things. Timothy, flee these tendencies, And these lusts, And these temptations, And withdraw thyself, From that crowd, That exalts this kind of thought.

[7 : 28] They're consumed with this mindset. Timothy, be content, And above all, be godly. Now hold your place, But flip back to Galatians chapter number 4. The apostle Paul has something to say, About his own personal life, That he had to learn how to be content.

He had to be instructed, By God, In how to do this. And so this is something Paul learned, And he knew, And he's passing it on, To Timothy, Saying this is what the ministry is supposed to be.

You live godly, And you be content, With what God gives you. So Philippians chapter 4, And I'll start, I'll just read verses 10 through 12. Paul says, But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, That now at the last, Your care of me having flourished again, Wherein you were also careful, But you 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. And then concludes, I can do all things through Christ, Which strengtheneth me.

[8 : 46] Do you think that when the apostle Paul was abased, When he was, as he said, Hungry, Or as he suffered need, Do you think in those phases of his life and ministry, That it was because he wasn't right with God?

Or because he had messed up? Or because God was no longer with him, And he was on his own, And he was preaching the wrong Bible, The wrong doctrine? Do you think that was what was going on?

When Paul learned how to be, I wouldn't say that at all. I wouldn't accuse Paul of doing anything wrong. God was teaching him some lessons in this. He said, I learned, I was instructed, How to be

abased, And how to abound in, And all of that, No matter if I'm up or down, To be content, That this is of the Lord.

This is of God's hand. I'm going to receive it of the Lord. You know why he did this? Because back in 1 Timothy chapter 6, I didn't read this, But the context of where he started, Had to do with a servant.

Telling the servants that are under the yoke, To count their own masters worthy of all honor. He's preaching to servants here. Or he's using that as an illustration, To tie into Timothy, And say, Timothy, If you've got food and raiment, Then that's all you need from the Lord.

[9 : 59] If that's all he gives you, That's all you need. You know why? Because you're a servant of Jesus Christ. And the apostle Paul said that When he introduced himself to this Bible And to the church, In Romans chapter 1, He said, Paul, A servant of Jesus Christ, Called to be an apostle.

And so the thought here is, Whether God gives you little, Or whether God gives you much, It's to learn to be content. To be content with it, As a servant, To your master.

And Paul learned this, And I would say that not all believers have, Especially in the age and day in which we live, And the land in which we live. And this seems very applicable to me. Because Paul warned Timothy, And so I want to consider tonight, I want to call this the snare of success.

Success can be a blessing, And it can be from God, But there could be a snare in there. If you don't know how to take it, You don't know how to handle it. And Paul addressed this topic with Timothy, This young preacher, Because he knows, In the heart of every man, Is this drive to gain, To strive for more.

To desire success. To move on to bigger and greater things. The Bible says, The eyes of man are never satisfied. Paul's a man, Timothy's a man, I'm a man, We're all of mankind, This is not just the wicked, This is every single man on this earth, In the ministry as well, In the Christian life as well, Can find themselves not content.

[11 : 33] Even in church related areas, Even in individual Christian lives, God's people can grow content, And they can desire more. Now, I put this, I say this clearly here, So you understand, Not, Having more, Is not necessarily a bad thing, I would never imagine that, Or say that, I don't believe that, Especially, If what the more is, Comes from God.

It could be a gift, It could be a reward, It could just be God's blessing, Because God is good, And he makes it rain, On the just and unjust, On the righteous and unrighteous alike, The Lord is a good God, And more, Can be a blessing, And as a church, I don't have a problem with praying for more, And to pray for more members, To come through the doors, To pray for more money to come in the doors, So that we can do more for Jesus Christ, I love that thought, I don't mind praying for the Lord to build this, And have more ministries, And take on more missionaries, And have more meetings in our year, That's great, That would be wonderful to me, And I desire, If there's more, If God gives more, That we could glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, With what he gives us, All of it, That's my desire, But, First, We must choose to be content, If we're abased, We must choose to be content, While we're abased, So that we can, Choose to be content, When we abound, And that we don't view our success, By the numbers, And the money, And the things that we can do, As if we did something, As if God's not blessing us today, As if a few people, And a small offering, Or a few missionaries, Isn't a work of God, And isn't doing something for Jesus Christ, Don't get distracted, Paul warned Timothy, About the snares of success, We must choose, To be content, Whether we're few or many, Whether we're thriving or surviving, We're commanded to be good stewards, Of whatever God puts in our hands, Whether it's great or small, So success is highly sought after, In every area of life, Including the church, Success and growth and more, Is sought after by everybody, But I want to show you tonight,

That it doesn't come, Without its own set of problems, Because success can be a snare, And so this can be a warning, If anything, And I take this personal, This is a warning to me, From the word of God, And I'm just going to, Let you watch, Let you peek in, On something I feel on my heart, Because success isn't always easy to handle, And the Bible proves it, And history proves it as well, It can make you do things, You never thought you'd do, Success can make you change, Who you are, It can change how you act, It can change how you look at other people, It can change how you treat other people, Amen, That's not a foreign concept, To anybody in this room, That the more you grow, The more money you get, The more power you get, It can certainly affect, How you relate and act, With other people in the room, Success is great, If it's from God, And if you can handle it, Because some men, As we'll see in this Bible, They couldn't handle it at all,

And God had to obey some again, And so the snare, That I want to show you, I want to show you some men, That God exalted, There's so many of them, I just limited it to three, And I didn't even pick these three, As like these are the top three, I just started going, And I thought, I'm just going to stop right here, Because it goes, And goes, And goes, And goes, But let's take a look back, At 1 Samuel chapter 10, And I'll try to be brief, With all of these, I know this is a long introduction, But the point's already been made, And now I want to show you, From the Bible, How success can be a snare, And how it can change you, And it can change, How you depend upon the Lord, 1 Samuel chapter 10, And we're going to start here, With King Saul, When he was anointed to be king, And when it was made public, And in verse number 20, Is where I'll begin, 1 Samuel chapter 10, Verse 20, When Samuel had caused, All the tribes of Israel,

[16:02] To come near, The tribe of Benjamin, Was taken, When he had caused, The tribe of Benjamin, To come near, By their families, The family of Matri, Was taken, And Saul, The son of Kish, Was taken, And when they sought him, He could not be found, Therefore they inquired, Of the Lord further, If the man should yet come thither, And the Lord answered, Behold, He hath hid himself, Among the stuff, And they ran, And fetched him thence, And when he stood, Among the people, He was higher than any other people, From his shoulders, And upward, And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him, Whom the Lord hath chosen, That there is none like him, Among all the people, And all the people shouted, And said, God save the king, And so Saul was lowly, Saul was humble, Saul was hiding, He didn't want the spotlight on him, He didn't want the pressure on him, He didn't want people demanding anything of him, He couldn't hide among a crowd, So he had to go hide among the stuff, He was such a big guy, And so he started off, Look what Samuel says a few chapters later, Chapter 15,

He started off little, In his own sight, But in chapter 15, I don't have the time to break this down, And even to cover what's in 13, It was disobedience to the commandment of the Lord, In chapter 15, Again, Disobedience to the Lord's commandment, Notice just verse 17, Samuel confronts him, 15, 17, Samuel said, When thou wast little, In thine own sight, Wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel?

And the Lord anointed thee king over Israel? The implication is here that Saul, You're not little in your own sight anymore, Are you? You're openly rebelling against the word of God, And that's what he tells them a little bit later, Verse 23, Rebellion, He's accusing Saul of this, Is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry, Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king.

This man allowed something to get to his head, He allowed the power, And the success, And the dominion, He wasn't that way years ago, Matter of fact, It wasn't even all that long ago, But something changed him, What else could it be, But the success, But the position, But the elevation above man, Having people tell him what to do, There was a time just a little bit, Back in chapter 14, He was ready to kill his own son, Because of some stupidity, This man is just, It didn't take him long, He lost his marbles, But look a little later, There's something else, When in this chapter, Actually I'll read it first, So I read verse 23, Look at 24, And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned, For I have transgressed the command of the Lord, In thy words, Because I feared the people, He's making excuses, And obeyed their voice, Now therefore I pray thee, Pardon my sin, And turn again with me, That I may worship the Lord, And Samuel's having none of it, Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee,

For thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, And the Lord hath rejected thee, From being king over Israel, And as Samuel turned about to go away, He laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, And it rent, That's Saul, Taking a hold of Samuel, Like don't you turn your back on me, That's what he's doing, Turning and walking away, He reached out and grabbed a hold of him, Now you remember the first time, That Saul met Samuel, Remember when his father lost the asses, And he went out to seek after them, And he couldn't, And he took his servant, And he said, Hey there's the man of God here, We could go inquire of him, And Saul said, We can't go to the man of God, We don't have a present to give him, We have nothing in our possession, He revered the man of God, Samuel, The seer, The prophet, He was fearful of him, And his position with the Lord, And, But now, Something got to his head, This man thinks, He can take a hold of Samuel,

[20:07] The prophet, As he turns to say, I'm not with you, You rejected God, He's done with you, And so am I, He's right, He turned to leave, And the man, Saul has the gall to reach out, And grab a hold of Samuel, The prophet, Boy, He's changed, He's changed, Something's changed him, He's

not little in his own sight anymore, He lost all of that humility, And all of that reverence, Success has changed how he sees himself, And how he views others as well, Now, You can see here plainly, That this man doesn't fear God, He doesn't fear the man of God, It's just, He's the man now, That little bit of success, Has gone to his head, Look ahead a few books, To 1st Kings, And chapter number 3, I'm just going to, Just fire, Kind of flare, These few kings here to you, And let you consider them, As evidence, How this can be very true, The snare of success, 1st Kings chapter 3, And I'll just, Remind you of Solomon, As a youth, As a young man, He was young and tender, He called himself a child, Look at verse 7, He wasn't a child, He was a grown man, But in verse 7, He says, And now, O Lord my God, Thou hast made thy servant king, Instead of David my father, And I am but a little child, I know not how to go out, Or to come in, And thy servants in the midst of thy people, Which thou hast chosen, A great people, That cannot be numbered, Or counted for multitude, Give therefore thy servant, An understanding heart, To judge thy people, That I may discern between good and bad, For who is able to judge this, Thy so great a people, That's the attitude, The humility, The dependence upon God, That Solomon had, When he began his reign, He saw himself as nothing, As incapable, Unworthy, I'm a child, I'm nobody, I don't know anything, About this position God, He depended upon the Lord, Entirely, Look at chapter 8, Solomon gets building, The house of the Lord, And the Lord is blessing, Everything in his kingdom, In chapter number 8, He opens his mouth, And makes this, Some call it a sermon, Or a prayer, In verse number, Oh man, I can only give you, A little bit of this, He begins in verse 12, But I'll pick it up, In verse 22, And Solomon stood, Before the altar of the Lord, In the presence of all, The congregation of Israel, And spread forth his hands, Toward heaven, And he said, Lord God of Israel, There is no God like thee, In heaven above, Or on earth beneath, Well, well, well, He meant that, He absolutely meant that, That's where he was, In that moment, Things are good, These chapters in here, In the beginning of Kings, They outline, The extreme, Wealth, And wisdom, And power, And glory, That this king had, But just quickly, Look at chapter 11, It doesn't end well, Something has changed, Something has horribly changed, Because he once stood up, And said, You're the God of heaven and earth, There's none like thee, And then in chapter 11, Just reading verses 6 through 9, He said this, Or the Bible says, That Solomon did evil, In the sight of the Lord, He went not fully after the Lord, As did David his father, Then did Solomon build, And high place for Chemosh, The abomination of Moab, And the hill before Jerusalem, Before Jerusalem, Where God's presence, Dwells in the tabernacle, In the temple, And for Molech, The abomination of the children of Ammon, Likewise did he, For all his strange wives, Which burn incense, And sacrifice to their God, And the Lord was angry with Solomon, Because his heart was turned, From the Lord God of Israel, Which appeared unto him twice, Twice, A supernatural encounter, With a holy God, Speaking to him, Answering him, Answering him, And something's changed, Because once, He exalted God, He begged God to guide him, And to preserve him, And his nation, And now he's forsaken him, What is it, Solomon, That changed your mind?

[24 : 42] What got to your head? You think it's just the women? Why did he go after the women, In the first place? Because, A powerful king, Nobody says no to, Nobody withholds anything from a king, Of his riches, And his glory, Of a kingdom like his, Nobody, You know how powerful men act, How the rich men act in this world, They get whatever they want, Whenever they want it, You tell them no, They'll bury you, Don't think for a minute, That this didn't get to his head, Forsaking the Lord, It's given him amnesia, He's awful forgetful these days, Forgetting the God, That he prayed to, The God that appeared to him, The God that he said, There's none like thee, And then he's going to build, Build?

That's not just a trip up, Where he walks out, And sees a woman washing herself, And lust overtakes him, No, He's going to build, That takes planning and money, Like before Jerusalem, In such a place, That holy place, That God would place his name, Solomon's just dismissing, All of this truth, He's forgotten where his success came from, He's forgotten why God blessed him so much, To begin with, The audacity to build places of worship, For these abominations, Of the heathen, In the land of God, My, How his heart has turned from the Lord, What changed you Solomon, You were tender hearted, You were humble, Like Saul, You were little in your own sight, And now you're just violating, The word of God, Not giving a rip, I'm telling you success will do it, You pair up a sinful heart,

Which every single one of us have, You take a sinful heart, And you start giving it whatever it desires, Give it the option to have whatever it wants, You think you could handle it? You think you could take it? Being on top of the world, Having everything at your fingertips, Being the man, You think so, Do you?

Let's look at one more example, Because success can be a major snare, Let's look at Jehoshaphat, In 2nd Chronicles 18, 2nd Chronicles, And this will be our last, King that we look at here, 2nd Chronicles 18, And verse 1, A shocking statement here, When you know this man, Now Jehoshaphat, This is the king of Judah, To the south, And Ahab, King of Israel to the north, Jehoshaphat had riches, And honor in abundance, And joined affinity, With Ahab, They became bros, These are two kings, Two rather opposing kings, Really, This is a, There's civil war, And unrest in Israel, It's never been merged, Back together, There's two separate kings, And it says, He joined affinity,

[28 : 03] With Ahab, Now he got, Rich is an honor, We know where he got it from, The previous chapter tells us, I'd like to highlight it with you, Just look at it quickly, 17 and verse 3, The Lord was with Jehoshaphat, Because he walked in the first ways, Of his father David, And sought not after Balaam, But sought to the Lord God of his father, And walked in his commandments, And not after the doings of Israel, Therefore the Lord established the kingdom in his hand, And all Judah brought to Jehoshaphat presence, And he had riches and honor in abundance, And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord, Moreover he took away the high places, And groves out of Judah, Skip down a little bit to verse number 10, And the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands, That were round about Judah, Judah is just a small little kingdom, Just a southern portion of the nation of Israel, Maybe one third of its entire land mass,

Judah, This kingdom, They've got a king, Jehoshaphat, He's not that, It's not that big a deal, In the landscape of the area, In the region, But because this man sought the Lord, God began to bless him, And the fear of the Lord fell upon all those kingdoms around him, Not Ahab, They're not fearing him at all, They're fearing this man to the south, And it says, So that they made no war with Jehoshaphat, They don't want none of it, Verse 11, Also the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents, When in the world did the Philistines ever bring presents to the king of Judah? And tribute silver, And the Arabians brought him flocks, 7,700 rams, 7,700 he goats, And Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly, And he built in Judah castles, And city of store, And had much business in the cities, And he goes on, He's so successful, Just exalted to the sky, To heaven, God has blessed this kingdom, And so then we see in 18, He joins affinity with Ahab, With Ahab, The riches, The power, The strength, The success, Everything that a king would desire, I sure can do a number on you, It sure can start to mess with your head, It can change how you think, Can change how you operate, He's going to befriend Ahab, He knows who Ahab's married to, He's not blind, To the history that Ahab had,

Just a little few years back, With Elijah, That whole battle we studied a few weeks ago, Here on a Wednesday night, It was the Mount Carmel, And the prophets of Baal, And he slew all those prophets of the groves, And I mean, That's 850 men he killed, And in this chapter, Before you know it, He's got 400 more prophets, Jehoshaphat knows who Ahab is, He knows his deal, It's no secret, What he's doing in his country, People that he, Jehoshaphat, Would have withdrawn from, Like Paul told Timothy, He's now friendly with, Ahab no doubt, Sees this king's power, His success, How the region is staying, Away from him, And he says, I better get in good with him, And so somehow, Subtly, Devilishly, He becomes his friend, And Jehoshaphat, Let's his guard down, He's not seeking the Lord, And I learn a lesson here, Success can draw you,

To the wrong kind of people, The Bible says in James 4, That friendship of the world, Is enmity with God, But success, And power, And money, And promotion, Start to rub shoulders, With the different kind of people, Start to maybe, Start thinking a little bit differently, I think success can do that, To anybody here tonight, Probably people in your life, You might view them as ungodly, And wicked, And having nothing to do with the Lord, Nothing, Not spiritually minded in any way, But if you could, Just move up a rank or two, And start finding out, That you're kind of in that same status, Or tier that they are, You find yourself invited, To some things that you weren't before, It can happen to you, You'll find yourself, Rubbing shoulders with some people, That you have no business being around, God is nowhere in sight, And your connection to them, Is completely carnal, And you'll find yourself, Running with a crowd, That doesn't know the Lord, Why?

[32 : 47] Because you moved up in the world, You can move up in the world, Find yourself in a bad spot, Around the wrong people, Success can give, You amnesia, Just like it did this king too, Did he forget where he came from?

Did he forget where his wealth, And power came from? It wasn't by his own ability, What's causing him here to overreach, To join with Ahab, Now in the chapter, I'm not going to read the chapter, But Ahab, Wants him to go to war, They're buddies now, And now he says, Hey friend, We've been friends for a while now, Let's do something, Let's join up, Because I got something I want to do, And he does, He joins up with him, But he says, Inquire of the Lord, In verse 4, He wants to, You know, Find out from God, If this thing's right, You know, Jehoshaphat, That's his, His track record, Is seeking the Lord, And so it's ingrained in him, To do that, And in verse 5, The king of Israel, Gathered together the prophets, 400 men, And he asked them, If he should go to battle, And they all said, Yes, Go, God will deliver you, Yeah, It's all good, But watch verse 6, Jehoshaphat, He's got more discernment, Than Ahab, Obviously, And in verse 6, Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the Lord,

Besides, That we might inquire of him, Implying that those men are the prophets of Baal, Again, Not of the Lord, And the king of Israel, There's one, Micaiah, But I don't like him, And he's always, You know, Prophesized evil, And I'm sure you're familiar with this story here, And Jehoshaphat's like, Well, Let's, Let not the king say so, Let's get him here, So, He, I mean, He's got some red flags, Or he's got some things that are holding him back, From joining and going to battle, He wants to hear from God, And so the preacher shows up, And he tells them, After the little bit of playing around, He tells them the truth of the matter, He tells them, In verse 16, I did see all Israel scattered upon the mountains, Not Judah, But Israel, He's talking, He's prophesying about Ahab specifically, That, Because they have no shepherd, They have no master, He's telling Ahab, If you go to battle, You're going to die, And he doesn't want to hear it,

But here's the thing, Jehoshaphat, If you read this chapter, Verse 28, The king of Israel, And Jehoshaphat, The king of Judah, Went up, To Ramoth Gilead, He still joined with him, He heard the word of God, He heard that that king, Is going to die in this battle, And he still said, I'll go, I'll go with you, Why would he do that?

Why would that not be the sign, For him to back away, And say, You're on your own, Friends are not, I'm heading back to where I belong, What would make him feel invincible?

[35 : 43] What but his success, But his power, But his dominion, But what went to his head, He's got a track record, Everything he touches, Turns to gold, Nobody messes with him, The Philistines, The Ammonites, The Moabites, They won't touch me, Yeah, I'll go to battle with you, And just ignore, What the prophet, He asked for that prophet, And he got the message, All I can discern here is, He lost reverence, He lost fear, For the word of God, I can't imagine, He ever, Back in Judah, Back when he was, Walking with a pure heart, Before the Lord, Would have ever, Done anything like this, Now there's so many more, Examples we could cover, There's so many, People like this, That get lifted up, And it's God, That lifted them up, It was God, That put them, In the next stage, And took them all the way, To the top, In some cases, And they didn't handle it right, And it's not just,

In the Bible church, It's in, It's in the pages, Of church history, And it's even, In our present time, In my lifetime, I've seen, And heard of stories, Of men, In the ministry, Men, In the church, That have allowed success, To go to their heads, And I know a man right now, A good, Good man, I've, Thought very highly, Of this man, My, Probably for the last, 30 years, He's very successful, I'd say he's rich, I don't know his net worth, But it's up there, It's really up there, And this man, Has done a lot for the Lord, He's given his life, In preaching, In different ministries, In different ways, Around a local church, And I can't believe it, That today, He barely shows up, To church, Barely shows up, Sunday morning, Doesn't have a good, Relationship with the pastor, Kind of got lifted up, In his own head, That he's, Doesn't need preaching, Doesn't need the word of God, Doesn't need to submit, And it just, It hurts, To see him,

And to fellowship with him, If I ever get around him, Back when I, Go back east, Sometimes I get to see him, And I just, I'm shocked, I think, Where in the world, What happened to you? You were on fire, But you, You try to tell him, And he wouldn't even hear it, He wouldn't understand, He's deceived about it, Anything I can think, Is it's the snare, Of success, Even the success, That comes from God, Can be abused, And misappropriated, And become a snare, That drowns men, In destruction, And perdition, Into many foolish, And hurtful lusts, And the solution, I believe, From our

passage, We read earlier, Is to learn, To be instructed even, How to be content, In whatsoever state, You're in, If you're content, With little, And you're thankful, To God, For the little, That you have, And you give him, The glory for it, Then, And only then, I believe, Can you remain content, When God gives more, And continue to give him, The glory for it, Otherwise, I don't know, The solution, Beyond that, And will God ever bless, And do things in your life, Or in this church, That you might be praying for, And desire, I don't know, I don't know, But I want to warn you, It could be a snare, As much as we think, It's the way it should be, We need to learn first, To be content, Right here, Right now, Today, With this, Right here, And God, And a King James Bible, And health, And freedom, And an opportunity, To do something, With our lives, For Jesus Christ, Today, You have all of that, None of that's been taken away, From any of you, You have that, And if you're not going to, Exercise it, Then why would God do more, Why would God give more, Why, Why?

Because you're not content, With this, So God help us, To have a content heart, And spirit toward him, And we can pray for more, I'll pray for more, I'll continue to, But I'll also be content, That if this is what, God puts in my hand, Praise the Lord, He's right, So let's stay there, And may God, Use this to help us, Not to chase things, And get too lofty, And high minded, And be warned, That you too, Could fall, When you get lifted up, Father, Please let the word of God, Do the speaking tonight, Into our hearts, And may your spirit, Bear witness to these truths, And these examples, Speak volumes to us, May they caution, And warn us, That we're no better, And Lord, May Jesus Christ, Be glorified, In our response, In our attitude, Toward how we look, At things today, I pray that you would, Give more in this church, That you'd grow, And that we'd be abundant, And abounding, In the work of the Lord here, It is my desire, I believe it's yours too, And your timing, So God help us, [40 : 35] To be on board, And content with what it is today, And to be faithful to this, And then allow you, To give and bless, And move, And we long for that, But we'll be patient, And we'll trust you, And so we ask these things, In Jesus name, Amen, Alright, Amen, You are dismissed, And be in prayer, For those we mentioned earlier, And see you Sunday, Lord willing, Amen,