

Contentment In Christ

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[0 : 00] So this morning, I'll be speaking on contentment in Christ. Let's pray. Lord God, we thank you for your goodness.

Lord, we thank you for Jesus. Lord, we thank you for saving us. We thank you for giving us everything that we need for this life and godliness. God, I pray this morning, Lord, that you, by your spirit, would turn our hearts to Christ.

You'd remind us of how much we have to be thankful for, how faithful you've been, how faithful you are, Lord. I pray that you convict us, Lord, of areas where we're discontent and tempted not to believe, Lord.

Lord, I pray that you turn our hearts to Jesus this morning. Lord, I pray that you correct our thinking, that you'd allow us to see Jesus rightly. God, I pray for my own heart, Lord, that you give me your burden this morning.

In your words, Jesus' name. Amen. So the text I'm going to be speaking on primarily is Philippians 4, verses 10 through 13. And Paul's writing to the Philippians.

[1 : 02] I rejoice in the Lord greatly, that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You are indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity.

Not that I'm speaking of being in need, for I've learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low and how to abound.

In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through a thing that strengthens me. So Paul was writing this passage when he was in prison for evangelizing.

It was in 60 to 62 AD. And it was very likely that he was chained to a Roman soldier as he was writing this text. So if you think about it, you can put yourself in that situation.

It would be very easy for us to be tempted to be discontent if we were in prison, first sharing the gospel, being chained. And Paul is in this situation. He's writing that he's learned the secret, the secret of being content.

[2 : 05] And that's through Christ. In verses 11 and 12, he says, Not that I'm speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low.

I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty. In hunger, abundance and need, I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

So verse 13, it's a very common verse. It's quoted a lot. And it's a really encouraging verse. I can do all things through him who strengthens me. A lot of times people use this quote sometimes in even sports or different things.

But what Paul was writing, he wasn't writing that he can do anything that he sets his mind to. He was actually writing through Christ, through trials, he can persevere in a trial. Because by looking to Christ, that's where his contentment comes.

And so this morning, my aim is that we would see that looking to Christ and trusting to God is a way that we are able to find contentment in life as Christians. So when we look at our circumstances, circumstances are sometimes things that cause us to, in our minds, be discontent.

[3 : 15] You know, you have a bad life circumstance. Things are going how you want. You get frustrated. You get discontent. You complain. Sometimes you lose your temper. And this is a result of actually not trusting in the Lord in those circumstances.

You see, life circumstances always change. You know, if we find our contentment and our joy and our comfort in life circumstances, we're going to be disappointed. There's going to be something that happens in life that wasn't what we wanted.

Something's going to work out that not how we had it planned. And we're going to be shaken. But if our trust and our contentment is in Jesus, the rock, who is steady, we're able to weather those storms.

And so circumstances, if you think about it, they just really expose what's going on in our hearts.

Right? The circumstances just reveal in the moment if our hearts have been trusting in the Lord, or if our hearts are trusting in our own self, or if something else.

Right? And whenever we put our trust into something else, or we're trying to orchestrate our lives, try to get things in order how we want them, and those things don't work out, and we get frustrated, it just exposes in our hearts that we weren't trusting in God.

[4 : 27] Right? It just exposes that our thoughts were not turned to Him in those moments. And that gives us an opportunity to turn to the Lord. You know, so it's actually, we can look at it actually as God's kindness, when He's showing us our own frustrations.

And we can repent and turn to the Lord. And then say, okay, I need to see Jesus rightly. I need to see my life circumstances like rightly. And so these life circumstances that we sometimes put a lot of our focus on, and whether it's our health, our kids, or our kids' health, or our spouse, our marriage, our work, our church, money, how much money is in the bank account, how much money is not in the bank account, sleep, how much sleep we're getting, how much sleep we're not getting, all these things, they do affect us.

Right? They're things that affect us every day. But that's not what we put our focus in. That's not what we put our trust in. As Christians, the Lord wants us to trust in Him. Right? Trust in Him in these eternal things.

So whenever we're focused on ourselves, that's another area where it's a trap for discontentment.

Right? When we're thinking about what other people think of us, or image, or wanting people to like us, or being in shape, or not being in shape, or this or that.

Right? Or job, wanting people to feel like you're doing a good job in your work. Wanting the praise of man. Being disappointed when you feel rejection by man. These are all things that we should not be put in our hope in.

[5 : 54] Because these are all things that are unsteady. Right? Psalm 23, 1. The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. Right? We need to find our rest and comfort in knowing that the Lord is for us.

The other thing, we need to realize that discontentment is sin. Whenever we're discontent, we're actually not being thankful for what God has given us. Right? We're not believing that God has our best interests in this particular moment in life.

And we're wishing we had something over there. And that would make things a little better. Right? If I only had this, then that'd be better. If this life situation was this, then that'd be a little better. If whatever it is, you can fill in the blank.

Well, what the Lord wants us to do, he wants us to turn our gaze to Christ and his faithfulness. And then have thankfulness abound in us. Right? So all these little things that come in, we can actually turn towards thankfulness.

If you're discontent about your job, things aren't going how you want it to. Actually, thank the Lord for a job that you can provide for your family. If you're discontent about how your kids are doing, thank the Lord that you have kids.

[7 : 01] Bless you from the Lord. If you're discontent about being single, thank the Lord for your singleness, that he knows what's best for your life. Right? If you're discontent about your marriage, be thankful that you're married, that God has given you a spouse.

Right? These are all things that the Lord actually wants us to train our thoughts towards thankfulness for. Right? And this actually turns our gaze to Christ. You know, the other thing is that can cause us to not actually be thinking about the Lord's sovereign hand.

And then contentment is not really believing that God is in control of our life. Right? That all things work out for our good according to his purposes. Romans 8.28.

That when we're not thinking about his sovereign hand over our life, when things aren't going well, we're just caught up in the moment. Right? We're just kind of thinking about, man, this is not how I want.

Now I'm getting frustrated. Now I'm losing temper. And what we need to do in this moment is actually turn to the Lord in repentance. When things aren't going well, we need to actually turn to him in prayer and thanksgiving.

[8 : 02] I'm going to read Philippians 4.6, which is just four verses before this. I'm going to start at verse 4. Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say rejoice.

Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Have you ever been tempted to be fearful or anxious when you face a trial in life? I think all of us have. And the Lord is actually wanting us, Paul's writing this in Philippians, to rejoice. Rejoice always. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone.

The Lord is at hand. The Lord is in control. And then it talks about when you pray with thanksgiving, submit your requests to God. When we're doing that, we're actually submitting our lives to him. We're saying, Lord, I submit to your will.

[9 : 05] I know you know what's best. And I'm thankful for you. I'm thankful for your faithfulness in my life. But I submit this to you. I submit my kids' health to you. I submit my wife's health to you. I submit my job situation to you, Lord.

We pray for your help in this. And that's what he wants us to do. He wants us to turn our worries to him, turn our fears to him, turn our frustrations to him, right? And it's not a sin to pray, right? He wants to hear from us. He loves us. But he wants us to do it with the right heart. Where we're not frustrated. Where we're not asking that God picks something in our lives. But we're submitting to the Lord and saying, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

And so looking back, as I was preparing for this, I was praying, and I was looking back. And I was reminded of the Lord's faithfulness in our lives and in our own marriage and our family and our kids. And many of us have been married 25 years this summer. And things have not always gone how we wanted to go, right? Things have not always been great.

[10 : 04] Things have been good, right? We've had trials. I can remember a time. And it actually made me well up with thankfulness and just realizing the Lord's faithfulness.

So I can remember about the first 10 years of our marriage, things were financially tight. And it was actually a really sweet time when we were really relying upon the Lord to provide for us.

And we faced one of our first adoption. And we didn't have the money for it. And we prayed about it. We felt peace about it. And felt that the Lord was calling us to do it.

And so we did it. And I looked back and I see the Lord's faithfulness in that. And it was a time where we didn't have money for all the groceries that we probably needed.

We didn't have money to fix cars and do different things. We didn't have money for Christmas gifts. But I look back and I saw the Lord's faithfulness in that. It was probably some of the most memorable times we've had together as a family.

[11 : 03] And our kids didn't even know. They didn't even know that we were tied, that we didn't have money in the bank. And the Lord provided. Looking back now, it was 15 years later or more. No, 13 years.

And He's provided for us. He took care of everything. He knows what we need. And so that's one of the things is trust in God, right? And I remember in that time, we had some moments where we were going through a trial.

We were having a tough time. And whenever we turned to the Lord and prayed together, we felt peace. The peace of God guarded our hearts and minds. And that's another thing. He talks about in verse 7.

That the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. You see, as Christians, the devil hates us, right? He seeks to steal, kill, and destroy from us.

He's shooting his fiery darts at us. And sometimes when we're afraid and when we're not trusting the Lord, some of those darts land. And we believe some of those lies. And we can't believe those lies, right?

[12 : 05] We have to turn to the Lord. And we have to be like soldiers being like, okay, I'm in a battle right now. I'm not going to believe this lie. I'm going to turn to the Lord. And I'm going to fight. You know, we have this book of answered prayers that we've put together over the years.

We just write in the things we're praying for. And then we go back and fill in how the Lord answered those prayers. And it's been really sweet to see the Lord's faithfulness when you go through and

look at that. And it actually builds our faith.

We're going to look back and say, Lord, you are faithful in that situation. This situation didn't seem really good at the time. And look how you answered that prayer. And sometimes he didn't answer the prayer how he thought, but it was so much better than what we were praying for.

And so I would encourage you guys, if you don't have a prayer journal or something like that, journal it in. Put in your prayer request if you have the Lord, and then go back. And just read through and even fill it in to see how the Lord has answered your prayers and how faithful he's been.

But that actually grows our faithfulness, our trust in the faithfulness of him. And so Christian contentment is grounded in knowing and trusting Jesus.

[13:09] We all know that. We all know that Christian contentment is in trusting in God. That's something that we know in our heads as Christians. But do we believe it? Do we believe it that the Lord knows best?

Do we believe that God is near? Do we believe in the moment when we're facing a trial that our loving Father is near and wants to take care of us and will take care of us and loves us better than anyone?

And will take care of us better than we can take care of ourselves. So do you trust him? That's my question. And my question this morning that I want us to examine our hearts in is do we trust him when finances aren't going well?

Do we trust him when our job isn't going well? When parenting is not going well? When we're sick or spouse is sick? Do we trust him in life and in death? Do we trust him in relationships?

Do we trust him in our church? These are things that we actually need to turn our hearts in. If there's something that we're not trusting in him, my prayer is that we would repent. And we would say, Lord, I'm sorry.

[14:13] God, please forgive me. I want to trust you. Please increase my faith. Help me with my unbelief. So being content is trusting God's providence for your life in the good times and the bad times.

So have you ever noticed that when you're doing well with the Lord, you're spending a lot of time focused on him and on the word and prayer, you're basically training yourself up like a soldier for righteousness.

That when a trial comes, you're able to know. I trust the Lord. I'm not going to believe this lie. I'm not going to react in frustration. I trust God in this. Or when it's a big trial.

And I think a lot of times I was praying for our church and I was realizing a lot of times when a big trial comes, we're aware. We're aware like, oh, this is really bad. I need prayer. You reach out to the church.

We need prayer in this. But one thing that I wanted to challenge us on is it's a little stuff sometimes that we try to do it on our own. It's a little things where we think I've got this and those things can add up.

[15:15] And they're actually wise. Right. It's a little things where we we trust in Jesus. We trust in the Lord. But then I can kind of control this over here. I can kind of control my finances over here.

I can control my schedule. I can control my kids bedtime. I can control this or that. I can control my kids obedience or disobedience. The reality is we can't control everything.

The Lord is the one that's in control. And we have to submit those things. And that's part of actually contentment is resting. Resting the Lord. Cease striving and know that he is God. And that's when we can find true godly rest and peace is when we actually trust the Lord is at hand.

And trust that he can do better than we can do in these things. Right. And I think some of us actually need to repent of actually self-reliance. Of trying to do it too much on our own.

Trying to try to make our own schedule instead of submitting our schedules to the Lord. And some of us maybe need to submit our time fully to the Lord. Say, Lord, whatever you want.

[16:18] God, it's yours. My life is yours. And so here's some other things I wrote down. Contempted contentment is trusting the Lord when we're tempted to be fearful.

Lean on our understanding. Wives, do you trust your husbands to lead you? Not because they're doing the best job. Not because they're perfect, but because you trust the Lord and his ways.

Husbands, do you trust the Lord's provision for your life and providing for your family? Not because you have enough money, but because you trust the Lord. And single people, do you trust the Lord's

plans that he has for your life?

That he's cared for you and has good plans for you? Do you trust that the Lord has your best interests? Do you trust he knows better of what you need than what you want? So I think sometimes we have all these ambitions and we're just not resting.

And so we should have no greater comfort than resting and knowing that we belong to the Lord and we're safe in a sovereign hand. I'm going to read a book from Jeremiah Burroughs.

[17:21] It's from the book *The Ritual of Christian Contentment*. Christian contentment is that sweet, inward, quiet, gracious frame of spirit, which freely submits to a delights in God's wise and fatherly disposal in every condition.

I thought of Psalm 91, 1 through 4.

I'm going to read that. He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the Lord, my refuge and my fortress, my God in whom I trust, for he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence.

He will cover you with his pinions and under his wings you will find refuge. His faithfulness is a shield and a buckler. Now it's good. Christian contentment is resting and knowing that nothing that happens to you is outside of God's sovereign hand.

It had passed through his wing and he allowed it to happen because he knows that it's good for you, even if it's really bad. He knows it's good for us. And so it's resting in that.

[18:35] We have to prepare our hearts to rest in any trial that God knows what's best for us. And sometimes we think that we know better. We don't say it, but sometimes by our reactions we think we know it's best for our lives.

So we have to strengthen ourselves in the Lord. We have to continually train ourselves up to turn to the Lord. The next talk about some warnings. So one of the warnings that I thought about was comparison.

These are some of the lies of the enemy that he wants us to believe, or sometimes it's our own flesh. We're comparing ourselves to others. Oh, they have this better than me. They're greater than me. They're better at this than me.

And that just causes discontentment. Coveting. Coveting what someone else has. If I have what they had, that'd be better. But we need to realize that coveting is sin.

Coveting can cause people to be angry and jealous of people who didn't sin against them. It can reveal there's a chip on your shoulder. That's something that you need to actually potentially repent from and have freedom from.

[19:48] It's the opposite of thankfulness. What thankfulness is, is you're actually thankful for the Lord's faithfulness, the sovereign hand over your life. Coveting is wanting this over there and thinking my life situation isn't quite as good as it should be.

And a lot of times this happens without us even realizing it. It's little stuff. And what we have to do is we have to have an alertness in our minds like a soldier does on the battlefield to realize, you know what?

Actually, I'm sinning right now. I'm coveting. I'm being unthankful. I'm wishing my kids were like their kids. I wish my spouse was like their spouse. I wish my job was like their job.

Instead of being thankful, saying, Lord, thank you. Thank you for providing for me. Praise God. And for providing for them. Right? It's one of the schemes of the enemy. It's one of the lies that actually causes us to believe that God is not taking care of us right now the best way that he can.

And so don't feed your discontentment. Whenever we're thinking inward and we're thinking about ourselves, that selfishness, that inward thought and behavior, it actually feeds our discontentment. And some of those habits can be internet, scrolling, looking on our phones, social media, just online hobbies, anything that takes our eyes off of others in the Lord.

[21:04] Those are things that feed our discontentment. And these are little traps that can happen. You know, we live in a day and age where this is so common. You know, I was thinking about it the other day and just realizing I didn't get my first smartphone until I was in my 30s.

And once we did, like, I found myself just looking up news articles, looking up different things, looking and buying stuff on Amazon. Right? These are things that aren't necessarily bad things, but it's a heart condition that we have to be aware of, that the Lord requires so much more of us than just sitting on our phones and scrolling through stuff.

So it's something we have to train our minds up for to have an alertness to realize what's going on in this present age. The other thing is, some of these warnings, they're not necessarily bad things, right?

But they can be bad things if our heart's not focused on the Lord. So having money in the bank is not necessarily a bad thing. It's good to provide for your family. Be in good shape. It's good to be healthy so that you can serve the Lord.

Right? If your heart is focused on the Lord in these things, then it's not a bad thing. It's a good thing. It's what can we be doing to be more effective, right, for His kingdom. But if our hearts are selfish, right, if we're just thinking about, I want to look better, I want to have more comfort, I want to have more money in the bank so that I can, you know, just do whatever I want, that's actually selfishness. [22 : 29] We have to be aware of, like, some of these things I'm talking about is really our heart posture before the Lord. But you know it when you're in it. You know it if you're in it because your heart is directed either towards yourself or is directed to the Lord in His ways.

I'm going to read 1 Thessalonians 5.18. Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. So do we give thanks in all circumstances?

No, we don't. You know, we have to realize this is God's will in Christ Jesus for you. And what it means is in the moment we have to have an alertness to turn our hearts towards thankfulness. You know, we're prone to wander in our hearts. There's so many things that can turn our hearts away from the Lord. There's so many distractions. There's so many things in life that can turn our hearts towards thankfulness.

And we have to remember to give thanks. This is God's will for us in Christ Jesus because He knows what's best for us. He knows how prone our hearts are to wander, right? And we have to remember Him. We have to remember what He's done for us.

[23 : 32] And when we're thankful in all circumstances, the reality is as Christians, we're rightly seeing God. And we're rightly believing the gospel. And that is the foundation for thankfulness, is remembering the gospel.

That is our anchor. If we can remember the gospel in all things, we can be thankful in all things, right? When we remember that we sinned before a holy God, when we remember that the just penalty for our sins was eternity in hell, when we remember that God had mercy on us and sent Jesus to die on the cross for us to take our punishment.

And because of that, that we get to have eternity with Him. That we are a son and a daughter of the living God that cares for us. When we remember all this and that He's not only saving us for eternity, but He's actually saving us right now and keeping us.

That He loves us. That He is near. That He is caring for us better than anyone. That the God of the universe is for us. That's how can we not be thankful? How can we be frustrated in a situation, in a circumstance, when we're remembering the gospel?

And that's what we have to continually do. We have to know that God made us, that He's for us, and that He knows us. Do you believe that? Do you believe that this morning?

[24 : 48] Do you believe that God is for you? Do you believe that He has your best interest? Do you believe that He's near and cares about your immediate needs? So we have to train ourselves up to remember who God is.

Remember these things. And we have to remind each other of these things. That's important for us to do as Christians, is to spur each other on in these things. To remember, God's got you.

You know, He's got you. Don't worry. And I'm praying for you. The other thing to remember is life is a vapor. Right? Eternity is forever. And it goes fast.

It goes really fast. And 2 Timothy 4a talks about there's a crown of righteousness for those who have loved His appearing. And you know how we love His appearing?

It's when we're thinking about eternal things and we're not thinking about ourselves. When we're thinking about Jesus is coming back. Right? He's going to make all things right. When one day all this sin that's in this world, all the things that we see that's going on, the abortions, human trafficking, murders, abuse of kids, when we see all this stuff that breaks our hearts, we know that Jesus is going to come back and make all things right.

[26 : 04] Right? And there will be no more sin in this world. Sin's not going to be in our bodies anymore. And then we're going to have a glorified body with Him. Right? When we think about sickness and health, all that stuff is going to be conquered when Jesus comes back.

How can we not look forward to His appearing? I think one of the distractions is we think too much on temporary things. We think about just day-to-day, what's going on in our week.

Right? What's happening in our schedules. What we need to get for this week or that. Or what we want. Want to work on our truck. Want to do this. And all those things are not necessarily bad things.

But when they turn our gaze away from focusing on the eternal, we have to turn towards our eyes to the Lord. And that's what causes us to love His appearing. It's actually remembering that He's coming back.

And it's going to happen. And it's going to happen real soon. I'm going to read another quote by Jeremiah Burroughs. A soldier is content unto a hardness, though he does not know that he shall have the victory.

[27 : 07] But a Christian knows himself to be a soldier, and knows that he shall conquer and triumph of Jesus Christ in all eternity. You know, that's really good. I love that. You think about a soldier on the battlefield.

He's prepared for hardness. Right? Like a guy in the battlefield is ready. He's been prepared for this. He's prepared to endure hardness and hardship because he's trained himself up for this. He's prepared for this. He knows this is going to be hard. This is going to be tough. And so when he's sitting in the foxhole, and he hasn't eaten in 72 hours, and it's cold, and it's wet, and people are shooting at him, and he's seeing hardness all around him, he's prepared for it.

And he knows it's going to happen because he's a soldier. But he doesn't know that he's going to have the victory. But as Christians, we're soldiers. But the good news is we know that we're going to have the victory because Jesus Christ is going to try for all eternity.

And so how much more should we be prepared for hardship? Because we know in the end, Christ is going to be victorious. We know as soldiers we're going to win, and we're going to reign with him. So that's one of the things that I love at is because a lot of it depends on what we're prepared for.

[28 : 20] Are we prepared for this hardship? When it comes and we're prepared for it, we're like, yeah, this isn't great. But you know what? Jesus is still on the throne. It's going to be okay. My fourth point is pour out your lives to God and others.

So because of what Christ has done for us, because of us being bought and belonging to him, pour out your lives to others. Pour out your lives in service to the Lord, in service to his kingdom, to the church, to evangelizing, to using your gifts for building up.

And realizing also that the Lord, he is so good. He knows what's best for us. Actually, service is a means of grace that the Lord uses to battle discontentment. Have you guys ever found out whenever you're serving someone else, you're opening your home, you bring them a meal, you bless someone with a gift that they didn't expect and go through a hard time, that your countenance is lifted.

You feel super encouraged because you're not thinking about yourself. It's a means that the Lord uses within us to actually have his heart towards others, being the body of Christ, loving others well, evangelizing.

Have you ever noticed that when you're sharing the gospel with someone, you're not thinking about your life circumstances, you're actually really just praying for this person to know Jesus, to be saved. Your heart is focused on that.

[29 : 41] You want them to give their life to the Lord. It's actually one of the most enjoyable things that you can experience as a Christian is actually sharing the gospel with someone and see them come into Christ, see them come from death to life.

And it brings so much joy because we're actually not even thinking about ourselves, we're thinking about, well, I want this person to be saved, right? It's turn your heart towards the Lord.

Turn your heart to pour it out to what the Lord wants and have a burden for others to know Christ and to be known by him. You know, Paul's attention when he was writing this was not on himself. And that's how he was able to say in verses 11 and 12, I found a secret to being content in all circumstances. That's what he was doing. He was evangelizing. That's why his heart was not discontent.

It's because he was pouring out his life for the sake of the kingdom. And, you know, what happens to your heart when you're doing this? You have joy. You're not discontent because you're actually being filled by the Lord with joy that surpasses all understanding.

[30 : 42] I was thinking about this just the other day. You know, there's a time just recently, maybe a month or two ago, when some of us got to share the gospel for this young man who was getting ready to play soccer in another country.

Sam had shared the gospel with him at the community college. Then he texted and wanted to get together. So we went out to dinner, went to Buffalo Wild Wings, had wings with this guy. And we spent the whole evening just not only sharing the gospel with him, but walking through what it meant to follow Christ with your life, what it meant to be a Christian, and how you turn away from sin now, that your life is not your own, and your life belongs to Jesus.

And in that moment where we were just kind of each taking turns and sharing about Jesus with this person, what it means to be a Christian, we were filled by the Spirit with so much joy. And I remember just driving back and actually just feeling so encouraged and so close to these brothers. There's something that happens when you're doing this with other Christians where you're closer together now. Because you've done something eternal, right? You've now taken something more than just hanging out and fought for something together that has eternal value.

And that's what we should be doing as a church. We should be hanging out, loving each other, and on mission. On mission to the lost. Because that is what the Lord is going to use to bring us closer and actually bring people into his kingdom.

[32 : 02] So encourage one another in the Lord. Look for opportunities. Pray for opportunities. Have your eyes up on people that need to hear the gospel. So I'm going to summarize with four points.

Number one, see Jesus rightly. Look to Christ. Contentment is trusting God, setting your thoughts on him. Rejoice in knowing that he is your shepherd, and trust in his provision for your life.

Number two, don't believe lies. Trust that God has your best interests in mind and knows what's best for your life. And rejoice always. Pray without ceasing.

Give thanks in all circumstances. For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 1 Thessalonians 5, 16, and 18. Number three, remember the gospel. Remember Christ and what you've been saved from and what you've been saved for.

Remembering why we're on this life. As Christians, we're not on this planet to live for ourselves. We're on this planet to live for Jesus. And so remember, as a Christian soldier, and that's what we are, you will be with God in glory for all eternity.

[33 : 08] That's the end. That's what we have to look forward to, and that's forever. Number four, forget about yourself and seek first God's kingdom. Pour out your life in service to the Lord.

Open your homes. Open your schedule. Preach the gospel to unbelievers. Be generous with your time, with your money, your resources, your kids' bedtimes. Enjoy the Lord in serving together as a family.

And I was thinking about it actually this morning. I can't remember how many sweet conversations and meaningful conversations we've had with people over the years that were after 11 p.m. on our couch.

It was, I can't count how many. And I'm not saying you have to do this every time, but there's many conversations where the Lord really blessed our time with people speaking into things and encouraging one another when it was after midnight.

And we knew we had to get up the next morning. They knew they had to get up early the next morning. But it's being willing to be a vessel for those things. And I would say it's good to be aware of these things.

[34 : 10] You don't have to program it in where you have to stay up to 1 a.m. talking on the couch and praying together. I'm not saying do that all the time. But what I'm saying is be open to it, right? You'll know. You'll know.

And seek those opportunities. Don't be so closed off with your schedule. But the Lord is going to work, right? And so even in those moments when people are over, you can feel it.

You can say, is there anything you want to talk about? And a lot of times you can see people kind of waiting a little bit to go home and be willing to have those moments together where you're hearing what's going on in each other's lives.

And those are the moments, honestly, where I look back and I have the most affection. The Lord has built the most meaningful Christian friendships in our lives for many and I for those moments that were after midnight where we were just enjoying fellowship with people, talking about really

important things.

So I'll say we want what the Lord has for us. So don't limit yourself to it just because of sleep. I'm going to close with this verse, Colossians 3, 1 through 2.

[35 : 15] If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above. For Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things that are above, not on things that are on the earth.

For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ and God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Amen. Amen.