

Encouraging ourselves in the Lord

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word.

I guess the only reason you clap is because the others are here when they're here. But anyway, all right, we have three couples visiting us tonight, Jared and Lauren, Aaron and Lydia, and Tim and Charity.

And we're sure glad you're here. Be sure and meet them and ushers. I hope you'll make sure they get a coffee cup. And thank you for having visited with us. Glad you came tonight. Tonight, since everybody, we have 180 people at camp or so, I understand.

I think it's 106 campers or something like that. And then the missionaries and families and workers. And we had two deacons up there. Brother John is back. So the Lord's really been working. I understand that things have gone well.

I only went up yesterday, preached one time all week long. Everybody else has been doing all the work. But they're having a good time there. You know, I never get to preach to Andrew Pearson. And since the attendance is low tonight, I told him it's going to look like no one's here.

[1 : 05] I just preached straight to him. So point number one for Andrew. No. Take your Bibles. He said, I guess we're leaving the Bible and going thematic tonight, right? Yes. Take your Bibles and turn to 1 Samuel chapter 30 and verse 6.

1 Samuel chapter 30 and verse 6. Lord willing, Sunday night, we'll finish the book of 1 Samuel and be in the 2 Samuel chapter 1 before the evening's over.

Tonight we want to talk about how to encourage ourselves in the Lord. How to encourage ourselves in the Lord. The Bible says in 1 Samuel chapter 30 and verse 6, And David was greatly distressed.

For the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved. Every man for his sons and for his daughters. But David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.

Father, I pray now that you would help us to understand this passage of Scripture. I pray, dear God, that you would use it in our lives to strengthen us.

[2 : 07] I pray you'd help us to encourage ourselves. I pray you'd help us to learn how to help others encourage themselves. And I pray, dear God, that tonight your family, your children, would be blessed and excited and thankful and grateful to you for all that you're doing.

And we'll give you praise for all. In Jesus' name, amen. First thing we want to look at is go back to 1 Samuel chapter 29 and verse 5. And so what's going to happen is before David will encourage himself, he's got to come to the end of himself.

He has got to get to the bottom of the barrel. He has got to get where he's in need of God. Go to 1 Samuel chapter 29 verse 5. You know he's living over with Achish.

And he's making raids on the enemies of Israel and Judah. And he's in Ziklag. And he's pretending to be a Philistine when he's not a Philistine.

But the guys back in Israel, they don't know who he is because there's no Twitter account. And there's no way to get a secret message to him to let them know, hey, I'm really on your side. And so he's going back to the king, Achish, and saying, hey, I'm killing a bunch of Israelites.

[3 : 14] I'm killing a bunch of Judahites. I'm killing a bunch of your enemies. I'm on your side. But he's been wiping everybody out. Well, there's this battle coming between Israel and Judah, and Israel and Judah between them and the Philistines.

And so in chapter 29, these first verses, they're getting ready to go to battle. And as they get ready to go to battle, David comes with all of his army, these 600 Jewish men.

By now it's probably swollen. His ranks are swelling anyway. But he's got 600 people. He's got all their families there, 600 soldiers. And he shows up to Achish and says, we're ready to go to battle with you.

And when he shows up to go to battle with him, Achish says, you're not his men. Achish says, I love you, buddy. I know you're on my side. Achish is a pretty dumb guy. Can't figure out what's really going on.

He's easily deceived. But the generals say that's not true. So read with me. 1 Samuel 29 5. Is not this David, of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying, Saul slew his thousands, and David his ten thousands?

[4 : 19] Then Achish called David and said unto him, Surely, as the Lord liveth, thou hast been upright, and thy going out and thy coming in with me in the host is good in my sight. For I have not found evil in thee since the day of thy coming unto me unto this day.

Nevertheless, the Lord's favor thee not. So what's happened is he's been living among these Philistines. He's been living a lie. He's not living out who he really is. And it seems like God's going to use these circumstances to bring David to the end of himself where he'll go back where he belongs and do what he's supposed to do.

But to get there first, sometimes God's got to bring me down to where I'm willing to look up. He's got to get me where I'm willing to listen to him. And so God seems to use these circumstances to get David back there.

They're going to war. David wants to go to battle. The men know better than that. And so David tries to fit in, and he gets rejected. I don't know how it must have felt that day.

I don't know how it must have felt for him and his 600 guys. They know they're liars. They know they've been killing the enemies of Israel and Judah. They know they've been killing Amalekites.

[5 : 29] They know they've been killing other people and not the people they claim they are. They got old Achish thinking he's on their side, but he's not on their side. And they've all sworn to silence. And every time they go into the city, they kill everybody.

They kill men, women, and children so nobody can get a message back to them. Look at 1 Samuel 29 and verse 10. You better leave.

You better leave. My guys don't want you here, and you've got to leave. How often have you tried to fit in with the lost world, and God has had to bring you through rough circumstances to make you wake up and realize who you are?

David's out living among the lost, acting like he's one of the lost, trying to fit in like he's one of the lost. That's not where he's supposed to be. God has a plan for his life, but he's over here living among them.

He's not really doing wrong. It's kind of like I was. To be honest, when I was a kid, I was so nervous, so miserable, the most miserable times in my life because at church, everybody thought I was a young preacher.

[6 : 41] Boy, everybody treated me like I was a young preacher, but I knew I wasn't really living what I was supposed to live there at church. And then I'd go to school, and I'd try to fit in at school and try to act like them, but I couldn't do everything they did because every time I tried to do all the bad stuff they did so I'd feel like one of them, I never could.

So I was like a man with no country, and I was miserable. That's where old David is. That's where old David is. That made me miserable. That had to make old David miserable, and now David's being told, go home.

We often live a double life, but it'll eventually catch up with you. You were meant to serve God. Give up your dreams and follow him. Just let me go to the New Testament so you'll know.

You can't live on both sides of the fence. Look at Matthew chapter 6 and verse 24. Look at Matthew chapter 6 and verse 24. New Testament principle showing this is a good illustration of a New Testament principle.

You have to choose. You have to choose. You can't get along with this world. When I say this world, I'm not talking about having money and a house. I'm talking about the system that doesn't love God, the system that doesn't love the Bible, the system that rejects what God says.

[7 : 51] You can't be a part of that system and really be right with God. You're going to have to choose. You're going to have to live in this world, but you can't love this world. You're going to live in this world, but you're not going to be a part of this world.

Matthew chapter 6 and verse 24. The Bible says, no man can serve two masters. For either he'll hate the one and love the other, or else he'll hold to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

I'll be honest with you. I think most of us think we can. I think most of us try to figure out a way to make them work. I think I have a problem with that. I think I enjoy all money can do for me, and I think I enjoy all of that.

And sometimes I want to say I can be a good Christian and have all this stuff, and I'm falling in love with the world. If you're honest, you probably have some issues where you deal with, can I love money?

Can I love things that money? But here it says you've got to love one or the other. You've got to love one or the other. That's one good thing about tithing and giving. Can I just say a word there? That's a good thing about when you tithe and give, you know what you're saying?

[8 : 49] My money ain't for me. When you use your money to support missionaries, you're saying my money's not for me. I can enjoy some of the benefits. I can enjoy some of the blessings with it, but I'm going to see to it as God blesses me more, I serve more, and I use it.

I've got to hate one, love the other, despise one, hold of the other. Look at Romans chapter 12 and verse 1. Same truth. Same truth. You know this verse like the back of your hand.

And the Bible says, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God. Holy and acceptable unto God.

I want to please God. I want my life to be what God wants it to be. I want to serve Him. And that's my reasonable service. David, get out of the Philistine territory. David, quit acting like you're a captain with the Philistines.

David, quit trying to join up with the group that's fixing to attack God's people. I don't know what he'd have done. Honestly, I don't know what he'd have done if Achish and all of his men had said, David, you're right with us, buddy, come on.

[9 : 47] Because he lived a lie. He hadn't been attacking Israel. What would he have done if Achish had said, you ride right here with me, and you're not going to be the first column in. We're going to charge in, and you've got to start killing Israelites.

His life was in a crazy place. You know what happens to us when we hold on to the world too much, and we get too hungry about what we can get and have and be and do instead of serving God.

So God used that as a wake-up call for him. Look with me at 1 Samuel chapter 30 and verse 3. 1 Samuel chapter 30 and verse 3. So David and his men came to the city.

So they leave early and head back to the house. And they got back to Ziklag, and when they got there, it was burned with fire, and their wives and their sons and their daughters were taken captive.

David's wake-up call. David's little island of security in the middle of the world. David's little island of security in the middle of those who hated God and worshipped demons.

[10 : 49] And all of a sudden, he gets back, and the city's burned with fire. Their families are taken. It's a total loss. And David and his men wept till they couldn't cry anymore.

Look at 1 Samuel chapter 30 and verse 4. Then David and the people that were with him lifted up their voices and wept until they had no more power to weep. I mean, it's like their world.

First off, they must have had the most terrifying day when there's 600 men amongst all the armies of the Philistines and all the lords of the Philistines. And David's up there saying, I'm with you, Achish, I'm with you.

All of these men are back and saying, man, I don't know. They all got their fingers crossed. I don't know what all they're thinking. We got to get out of here. We're in trouble. Things are going to fall apart. And then by the grace of God, they get sent home.

And they're probably on their way home thinking, phew, we got out of that one. We got, man, that was close. They could have had us. Our goose was about cooked. We were in trouble. And they come home.

[11 : 48] And it's all gone. Their wives are gone. David's two wives are gone. And they're crying. And his friends even turned their backs on him.

Look at 1 Samuel 30, verse 6. See, God's taking him down, down, down. Verse 6. And David was greatly distressed.

For the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters. But David encouraged himself, and the Lord is God.

Look at this. These 600 men whose lives were in danger had come to David when they were in debt and discouraged and depressed and in distress. And they couldn't take care of themselves.

And they were in trouble. And they had come to David, and David was supposed to be their savior. David even said to them, I'll protect you because God's going to take care of me. He's going to take care of you. And now those same people want to stone him.

[12 : 48] They want to kill him. They want to pick up rocks and throw rocks at him until he's dead. He's reached the bottom of the barrel. His tricks are no longer working.

He has nowhere to turn now but to the Lord. The answer to our problem doesn't come so often until we reach the end of ourselves. I'd like to remind you, if I could, that I want to hold on.

I am so proud. You probably don't have this problem, but I got this problem. I'll take care of myself. I'll think my way out of it. I'll work my way out of it. I'll figure my way out of it.

I'll finagle my way out of it. I can take care of me. I'm a good guy. I can take care of me. And that gets in the way between me and God so often. Because I'm up there and I don't go to him when I ought to go to him.

I don't ask him for help because I'm pretty good at getting things done. He's like the last thing. He's a last resort. If it ever gets to where I can't take care of it, I'll go talk to him. Come on. You wouldn't be honest.

[13 : 50] But we live there oftentimes. And David's there. And now David's men want to kill him. His wives are gone. His city is destroyed. His wealth is gone. And David's in trouble.

So David encouraged himself in the Lord. Look at verse 6 again. 1 Samuel chapter 30 and verse 6. David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.

David encouraged himself in the Lord his God. David was very discouraged and so were his people. His men are wanting to stone him. He's being blamed for the whole fiasco.

The truth is, David, I'm sure all 600 men were like, man, we like living in Ziklag. I'm sure they all enjoyed it. Every time they made a road up, that's what they called it, they made a road into the enemy territory and they killed the whole town and they brought all their cows and they brought all their sheep and they brought all their gold and they brought all their silver.

They brought all their bread into town. I bet everybody was happy with David. Man, you're the man, David. David, but they were fickle. They wouldn't stand with him. And now they want him dead. So David encourages himself in the Lord.

[14 : 59] So I'd like to give you some verses that I think biblically I can use and I have used and you can use as we encourage ourselves to the Lord. Number one, we call on the Lord when we get in trouble.

Trouble is a great time. I don't like it. I don't want it to come. But I'll tell you, that's when you'll see him more than any other time. In Psalm chapter 30 and verse 6, the Bible said, In my distress, in my distress, I called upon the Lord.

And I cried unto my God, and he heard my voice out of the temple, and my cry came before him even unto his ears in my distress. So if tonight you're discouraged, and if tonight you're having a hard time, and if tonight family problems are going on or health problems are going on or whatever issues are on, the number one thing we do is we go to God.

That's where we ought to go before they ever get to. We ought not have to get to the bottom. We ought to try to stay on the bottom. Say amen. We ought to try to stay humble so God can work in our lives. But let's call on the Lord.

Let's spend some time. Can I ask you to carve out in your day, every day, just a few minutes? Could you just carve out a few minutes to say, I'm going to put off work, and I'm going to put off study, and I'm going to put off play.

[16 : 19] And I'm going to take 5 or 10 minutes or 15 minutes, and I'm going to spend some time with God. I'm going to say, God, speak to me through your word. And I'm going to let him talk to me as I read his word, as I pray over his word.

And just take 5, 10, or 15 minutes and read the Bible and pray over what it's saying. And let God do a work in you. And then go to God and say, God, this is what I'm dealing with.

I need your wisdom. I need your direction. I need your guidance. I yield my life. I yield myself to you. Call on the Lord. You know, that's what he did that day. Can you imagine what happened?

They want to kill him, and David's like, grab, I've got to get my harp, and I've got to find me a quiet place. And he got all alone with God. He sort of said, God, I need help. I don't know what to do. I don't know where to go.

I don't know what to do. He went to God. He called on him. And second thing, praise him instead of complaining. Praise instead of complaining. Grumbling and complaining are like praising the devil.

[17 : 18] Anytime I say, man, I just can't believe how bad I got it. You know what I'm saying? I can't believe how bad you let me have it. If I heard my wife talking to some of you ladies and saying, I just can't believe how we have to live.

I just can't believe we don't have more stuff. I can't believe Austin doesn't take better care of me. That would break my heart. If she complained and grumbled about all that stuff, it would break my heart. But yet our God listens to us clamplain and gripe and whine all the time.

We're a big group of babies sometimes. Can I get an amen right there and owe me? But yet God's been good to us. God's been good to us. Don't magnify Satan.

Don't magnify Satan. Do magnify the Lord Jesus Christ. Number three. Let's go to James chapter 1 and verse 2. Now this one's maybe a tad hard for us all to deal with.

But let's read it anyway. You see, I've got to know that God's working in my life. I've got to know that God is working in my life.

[18 : 24] I've got to know that I'm not just an accident here. But that everything that's happening in my life and everything that's going on, God's using it.

So look if you would at James chapter 1 and verse 2. My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations, different kinds, several kinds, several temptations.

When you've got a lot of problems. When you've got a lot of junk going on. Knowing this, that the trying of your faith works patience. That the trying of your faith works patience.

Now I'm going to tell you what I've heard. Listen, I've heard people say, don't ever pray for patience because God will give you trouble. And we say that because some preacher told us that. But the facts are, you know what you want to have?

Patience. Patience. Because patience means endurance. Patience means I can keep on going. I can keep on going. Years ago, Betty and I were living in Atikipa.

[19 : 26] And we decided to get our kids a horse. We had a piece of property. Biggest piece of property we'd ever had in the city of Atikipa. The biggest piece we'd ever have. And we had about a half acre of land.

And so there's about a quarter behind the house. And so I told the kids, I'll go buy you a horse. So I drove out in the country with some provings. We found the horse. And I found a guy that would sell a horse. And he told me this horse was an endurance horse.

And I said, okay, what's that mean? He said, this horse wins endurance races. I said, what's an endurance race? He said, this horse, she can just go all day long. And she just never gets tired.

I said, okay, whatever. I figured he just tried to sell me the horse. We bought the horse. I said, now how do I get the horse there? I mean, I have driven in my car about an hour outside the city. Up the mountains, down the mountains, around the mountains, and over the mountains, and up to his place finally.

And he said, oh, don't worry, I'll bring her over. It'll just take me five or six hours to get there. She'll just make it. Don't worry. She can go. See, endurance is a great thing. Endurance means I can keep going.

[20 : 27] That doesn't take one mile and I'll wear out. It's not 100 yards and it's over. I got a long time to live. I'm 60 years old and I might live to 80 years old. I don't know how long the Lord let me live.

But I want to be able to keep on going. I want God to make me the guy who can hang on and serve him and live for him and honor him all of my life. Amen. So what God's doing, he's building you.

Somebody gets saved. They get excited about the Lord Jesus. But you know what? They don't have much stick to it. They don't have much endurance. They don't have much patience. So God sends problems our way.

You're here a while when he's building you. He's strengthening you. They say when you lift weights, no pain, no gain. Well, in the Christian world, there's a little bit of truth to that. There's no pain, no gain.

If you don't go down deep, you won't come up high. If you don't get close to God, you won't get strong. If you don't put roots down, you won't bear fruit upward. Knowing this, that the trying of your faith works patience.

[21 : 28] But let patience have her perfect work. Look at that. Let patience finish her job in you. Perfect means finish. Let her finish her job in you. That you may be perfect, mature.

That you may be mature and entire, integral, wanting nothing, lacking nothing. You see what God's doing? He has predestined you to be conformed to the image of his son.

Romans chapter 8 and verse 29. He's at work in you. He's at work in you. He that begun a good work in you will finish that work. He has a plan for your life. And so he's sitting there, Austin, buddy, there's a lot of junk in you.

There's a lot of stuff I got to fix. I got, man, I'm working with a mess here. That's who you are. And he takes me and he said, watch this. And he starts working in me and forming me. And every little problem.

And every time he drives me to my knees. And every time I need him. And every time I'm discouraged. And every time I'm hurt. And every time I draw closer to him. And every time I let the word work in my life. He's building me.

[22 : 27] To get me to where I ought to be. Could you say amen right there? This is a long time thing. How many of you remember when you were small. Or if you remember your kids.

And they just wanted to grow. They just wanted to grow. I can remember doing all kinds of stuff. I can remember hooking my feet around the rails. To the bottom of the wrought iron bed.

As I slept in and my hands were on the top. And trying to stretch myself. I can remember the farmers all telling me. If I wanted to grow. I need to rub three and one oil on my joints. And one of the other guys said. Just don't use shortening son.

Because it will really mess you up. I can remember all that kind of stuff going on. When I was a kid. You'd have to be a country bumpkin to understand that. When Joe Gibby laughed. That says something about Joe. But see here's what he's saying.

God's working in you to get you where you ought to be. Brendan Wong told me about a fellow. He had part in a funeral today. And talked about what a great guy he was. And how God had used him. Don't you know God had to build that man a long time.

[23 : 24] To give him that testimony when he died. Count it all joy. Let patience. Let endurance. Let God continue to work in you. Finish the job. Number four.

Let's wait on the Lord. Don't with me if you would. Isaiah chapter 40. I know these are verses jumping around. But it fits. You need to encourage yourself in the Lord. Wait on the Lord.

Wait on the Lord. Now that is a hard job for me. That's a hard thing for me. Because I want what God. I want God to do it now. I don't know why it takes nine months to get a baby here.

I don't know why it takes so long to get a church to grow. I don't know why it takes so long to build a building. I don't know why we can't drop a quarter in the meter. And get our building finished up. Say amen. I don't know why it doesn't work that way. But it doesn't work that way.

And you know what God wants me to learn how to do? God wants me to be quiet. And sit at his feet. And let him work in my life. If I want to be encouraged. I need to know God's working in me. But I need to get alone with God.

[24 : 23] And I need to just be quiet. That's probably something we don't do anymore. Turn off the cell phone. Get rid of the social media. Talk to your wife and say God I'm here.

Isaiah 40 verse 31. They that wait upon the Lord. They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles.

They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint. They that wait. What's waiting? What's waiting? Getting alone with God?

Sitting before God? Actually probably getting to a place you're satisfied with God if he never does what you want done. But you're ready for God to work and you're trusting God.

And you're waiting on him. And you know it's beyond what you can do. In fact as in this story David's going to wait on the Lord. In a few minutes I'm going to show you the verses. David's going to go and say I need God to speak.

[25 : 18] I need God to speak. Think the right things. That's the next one. Think the right things. Philippians chapter 4 and verse 8. We've gone over it so much I'm not going to go over it much tonight.

But the Bible says whatsoever things are and it gives a whole list. It says think on these things. Now watch. Here's what we do.

When we're discouraged we're thinking about all the wrong stuff. When we're discouraged we're thinking about all kinds of junk. We're thinking about lies the devil would tell us. We're thinking about lies we'd tell ourselves.

We're thinking about lies that other people would tell us. We're not saying. What's God say? Things are going wrong so it's like God's left us. You know David's been run out from Achish.

Now he gets a zigzag and zigzag is destroyed. His family's missing. Everything he owns is missing. His bank account's been stolen. His iPhone's gone. His computer's gone. He's alone there.

[26 : 15] And now his men want to kill him. And he could have said that's it. I give up on God. But that's not what he does. He says I'm at the end. I gotta go find God. I gotta go find God.

So fix your mind. In Isaiah chapter 26. In verse 3 the Bible says. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.

Because he trusteth in thee. Austin fix your mind on the Lord. Austin begin to think about what God's already done in your life. And if I died today I'd die a rich man.

If I died today and none of the dreams I've asked for ever came true. I'm going to heaven when I die. I ought to fix my mind on the Lord. I ought to say God no matter what happens you're good.

You've been good to me. God I know you'll take care of me. And I know you're at work in my life. I'll keep my heart trusting in you. Conquer your thoughts.

[27 : 10] This is my biggest weakness. Well I got so many but this is one of them. I don't conquer my thoughts. Man I can let stuff beat me up.

You have that problem? Probably the only guy in the room but I got that problem. Look what it says in 2 Corinthians 10 5. Casting down imagination. And every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.

Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. Now I can imagine like nobody's business. I have got I mean I have got a wild imagination.

An old fellow told me in my first church he said you can't be a good preacher if you don't get a good imagination. You got to learn to think it out and imagine what God's saying there. Get a picture of that thing in your mind. Well that helped me.

I mean I'm also I'm real good at picturing everything falling apart. I am really good at that. I can get a you could talk to me right before I preach. And you could kind of chew me out a tad.

[28 : 13] And as soon as you do I'll be like oh boy oh boy oh boy oh boy oh boy oh boy. The whole church is mad at me now. Oh boy oh boy. And I come sit in my seat oh boy oh boy oh boy. And I can just imagine.

I don't know if they're firing me today. What's going on oh boy oh boy. You say what in the world? That's me. Now you're not like that. You're not like. You know sometimes Betty can make movements, sighs, moans, and groans.

And whenever she does I'm like she's mad. I can imagine it. I mean I can imagine it. I can imagine. I mean I'm just so used to it.

See I can. You don't have that problem do you? I can just build these imaginations in my mind. You don't ever do that do you? Oh you have. You've said what's he preaching to me about?

I was preaching one Sunday morning way back in my first church. And I was preaching on trust the Lord. And I had no idea. But I knew that my mother dealt with blood clots in her legs.

[29 : 10] And so in the middle of the message I said baby you're here this morning. You've had a blood clot. Well my mother wasn't. That was years before. After the service this kid came and told his dad. He said I'll never go back to that church. You talked to the pastor.

You told him I had blood clots. He knew it. And when I got in there he preached straight at me. He came and told me. He said man he's mad at you. I started building castles. I started building all these.

I said what did I do? He said you preached about them blood clots. I said is something wrong about preaching about blood clots? I just said that could be something he was worried about. My mama worried about that one time about 10 years ago.

He goes he thinks I told you. I thought oh man. Whole church mad at me. That's what he said. Casting down imaginations. I don't know what's going to happen man. Who's going to get elected president? The whole world's closing.

It's over. Jesus is coming. If Hillary gets in there. Katie borrowed the door. We're all dead. If Trump gets in there it's just as bad. There's no hope now. He doesn't got you a castle built.

[30 : 05] Just be honest. You do it too. And he says casting down imaginations. And every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. You see what happens when I get discouraged.

I begin to think God's mad at me. I begin to think God doesn't love me. I begin to think. I begin to think the whole world's turning its back on me. I think all kinds of junk and it's not in the book. He says conquer your thoughts.

Conquer your thoughts. Bring them into captivity. To the obedience. What would Jesus say about that? Can you imagine if I'm sitting here praying and I'm waiting on the Lord. And I'm doing all the other things we've looked at.

And I look at him and say I know you don't like me either. I know you quit on me. I know you. And he'd be like where did you get that? I didn't say that. That's not how I do it. He said bring it into captivity. Philippians chapter 4 and verse 6.

Take your request to the Lord. What is it you're asking for? You know here's what we're told. I'm told I can ask him for anything I need to ask him for. I don't mean he's always going to do everything I want.

[31 : 07] I mean I got lots of big dreams. But here's what I can do. Look at verse 6. Philippians 4 6. Be careful for nothing. But in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving.

Let your request be made known unto God. I can go to God and I can say God. I'm going to trust you to decide if this is what I need or isn't what I need.

If this is what you're going to do in my life or isn't what you're going to do in my life. I'm just going to trust you with that. I'll thank you now. Because I know you're going to answer right. Verse 7. And when I do that, the peace of God.

Is God going to give me a husband? God going to give me a wife? Is God going to take care of my children? Are my parents going to live? Am I going to have enough money? Talk to the Lord. That's what he's saying. And say thank you. And then the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Let me give you one more. And I'll move on. Get with good Christian friends. I will tell you this was planned to be preached Sunday night. And so I know you're here and you already got this down pretty good.

[32 : 13] But maybe you're going to encourage people. See, whenever you're discouraged, the tendency is to walk out on God. And the tendency is to walk away from your friends.

To walk away from people that would help you love God. But the wise man said in the book of Ecclesiastes in chapter 4 and verse 9. He said, Two are better than one because they have a good reward for their labor.

For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him that is alone when he falls. He hath not another to help him up. And again, if two lie together, then they have heat. But how can one be warm alone?

And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken. Did you know the church is a great place? Just, can I just, it's a great place. Because when you're in a good church, when you come into the church, you know what others are supposed to be doing?

Encouraging you and exhorting you and challenging you. Do you know what discipleship is? It's like you're not alone. You're in a cord. You've got somebody else studying the Bible with you. Somebody else praying with you.

[33 : 15] Somebody else spending time with you. And so this thing about discipleship is a great thing in every way you look at it. You've got a Sunday school class. My goodness. You come into this Sunday school class. You've got five, six, eight, ten, fifteen people who know you and feel for you and understand you.

You're not alone. That's what the wise man said. We need each other. No man lives to himself. No man lives to himself. You need each other. Don't pull away when you're discouraged.

Trust the Lord. Psalm 118.8 says, It's better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. And I'm not going to read all that to you. I'd like to, but I don't think we have time.

So let me just say this. Trust. Trust in the Lord. Trust in his name. In the name of the Lord. In that chapter it says, In the name of the Lord. In the name of the Lord.

Trust in the Lord. It's the Lord that helps you. Verse 14. The Lord is my strength and song. The Lord. The Lord. The Lord.

[34 : 15] Trust in the Lord. Now go back to 1 Samuel chapter 30 and verse 7 with me if you would. 1 Samuel chapter 30 and verse 7. Go talk to God.

And that's what David did. In 1 Samuel chapter 30 verse 7. David said to Abiathar the priest, Amalek's son. I pray thee, bring me hither the ephod.

And Abiathar brought forth the ephod to David. And David inquired at the Lord, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? Shall I overtake them?

And he answered him, Pursue, for thou shalt surely overtake them. And without fail, recover all. I want you to go back through the verses with me real quickly. I want you to go back through the verses with me real quickly.

I want you to see what happens. See, David's discouraged. His men want to kill him. He's lost everything. His wives are gone. He's not where he's supposed to be. He's going to end this chapter up in victory.

[35 : 16] He's going to go get back everything he lost and then more. He is going to end up like Job did. Lost everything and gained it all back and many times over.

Look at what he says in verse 7. Would you want to write that in verse 7? Bring me the ephod. Bring me the way I talk to God. Now, let me explain that to you.

In 2016, bring me my Bible. Bring me my Bible. I'm in trouble and I don't know where to turn. Bring me the book.

Bring me the book. And I'm going to be quiet. I'm going to get alone. And I'm going to say, God, I've got to hear from you. And David lived at a different time than you and I live. God doesn't just speak audibly to us.

We don't have a preacher. I'm not. You can't call me. You can't say, Abiathar Austin, come over here. We need to know something from you because I'd come over and say, man, I don't know no more than you do. I can read the book with you, though.

[36 : 12] That's about all I can do. See, we live in a different day and time. But you don't have to have an Abiathar because you've got the Holy Spirit who lives inside of you, who knows this book because he wrote this book, and he can take this book to your heart.

I love this because look at what it says, if you would, in verse 8. Underline this. He inquired at the Lord. Underline that. He said, God, I need help. I'm asking you. And here's the beautiful thing.

Anybody could inquire. But look at what the Bible says. And he answered him. You ought to underline that. And he answered him. By the way, that's what he'll do to you. I know your life's messed up.

I know you've got to have help. I know you're not as bad off as me, but you might be building some castles in your head you shouldn't be building. And you've got reason to think some crazy thoughts. You've got reason. I mean, you just got ran off from the big, bad, dirty king, and zigzag's been taken, and your wife's missing, and your whole life's falling apart.

But now's the time you encourage yourself in the Lord. It's when you do that. And he answered him. So what do we do now? Step out and do it. Look at the verse here.

[37 : 17] Verse 8. Shall I pursue after this troop? Shall I overtake them? And the Lord said, take off, buddy. You'll catch them. And you will recover all.

Would you want to write that verse? You're going to get it all back. You're going to get it all back. David and his men will obey God. We make excuses even when we know what God wants.

You see, here's the problem with most of us. We know what God wants. We know what we're supposed to do. We know what God's plan is. Our biggest problem is the lack of obedience.

It is time to get to work. It's time to go out and win the victory. It's the Lord that will give you the victory. And by the way, we are always victorious. You can encourage yourself in the Lord.

Now here's two more things that happen in this chapter that are really wild. David and his guys go and they get everything. Look at 1 Samuel chapter 30 and verse 24.

[38 : 14] They go and they get all of it back. It's amazing. Just a few hours ago, they wanted to kill David. Just a few hours ago, they didn't have anything.

And all 600 of them have cried their eyeballs out. And some of these guys must have been really emotional guys. Because 200 of them are so tired, they can't go on any further.

And so they go on a trip. Look at 1 Samuel chapter 30 verse 24. He said, I'm going to give equal shares to the goers and the stayers.

I'm going to give equal shares to the goers and the stayers. In 1 Samuel chapter 30 and verse 21, 200 men were so faint they could not follow. 200 men were so faint they could not follow.

And they were made to abide at the brook Basor. 1 Samuel chapter 30 and verse 21. But now David's come back and he says, hey guys, how you doing? We've been successful?

[39 : 19] Well, God is good. We got our wives back. Hey, got all your boys. I got all your wives back. Got all your wives back. Got all your stuff back. Got your computers. I got your guns.

I got your swords and your spears. I got everything. You lost. I got it all back. Hey, we got a whole bunch more junk. We took all their stuff too. So they took ours. We took theirs. And we're back. And the 400 of the guys looked at the 200 guys and they said, you guys didn't fight.

You guys didn't risk your life. You just sat here whining and complaining while we went to battle. And so let me explain something to you. You can have your wife and your kids. That's it. We're keeping your stuff even.

We'll just give you your wife and your kids. All right. We'll let you have some of your stuff back. But we keep all the booty. We keep all the bounty. We keep all the good stuff that we've won. These guys have been brokenhearted and faint and exhausted.

Something's so wrong they couldn't go into battle. Look at chapter 30, verse 22. Then answered all the wicked men and men of Belial of those that went up with David and said, because they went not with us, we will not give them all of the spoil that we have recovered.

[40 : 25] Save to every man, his wife, and children that they may lead them away and get out of Dodge. You didn't fight with us and you can get out of town. Is that what it says in that verse or not?

We'll give you a wife and kids and I get out. I hope they gave him a canteen. They were willing for the men to get their wives and children, but they wanted them out of the army. But David understood something now.

David's been living by trickery all this time. Are you with me? He has been lying to Achish, killing everybody in the armies and the towns, everywhere he goes, killing every man, woman, and child.

Not one tweet gets back to the enemy. Not one email gets back. Not one person escapes. And if you've ever read any Old Testament scripture, you know somebody always gets away. But not this time.

David doesn't let them. And then they got ran out and they lost everything there. And David was discouraged and he went to the Lord. And amazing, it's like the Lord got back into his vocabulary.

[41 : 25] I like that. Some of you get that way, don't you? Just be honest, you got God in your vocabulary on Sunday, but not on Monday. On Sunday, but not the rest of the week.

And then you got to pick up God, go find your Bible so you can go back to church. Look at 1 Samuel chapter 30, verse 23. 1 Samuel chapter 30, verse 23. Then said David, that's not the way it's going to be, boys.

With that which the Lord hath given us. Underline that. The Lord. This wasn't the 400 men.

And it wasn't my mighty ability to lead an army. And it wasn't the fact that I could kill a giant. But the Lord hath given us. It's the Lord who hath preserved us.

Look at the verse. It's the Lord who hath delivered the company. It's the Lord. Isn't that powerful? Isn't that powerful? Isn't that powerful? Well, David said, hush.

[42 : 24] What are you being selfish for? A few minutes ago, you want to kill me? Now you got all your junk. And now you want to kill them? Get rid of them? I don't get this. Stop it. God gave us the victory. That's why at church, we ain't never going to be that way.

We're just going to love each other. Care about each other. Amen. Kind of works with that goer-sender stuff too, doesn't it? Because in chapter 30, verse 25, 1 Samuel 30, 25. He said, from now on, that's the way it works.

And it's stable to stuff. And then they go, they'll get the same amount of stuff. I find that kind of illustrated in Philippians chapter 4 and verse 17.

I know you probably get aggravated at me because all you hear is missionaries and missionaries. And I constantly hear people saying that. Austin Gardner tries to get everybody in the world to be a missionary. Hey, I plead guilty.

I'm not even embarrassed about it. I mean, I hope there's enough evidence to convict me that that's true. But let me say to you that stay. I'm staying too. I'm here. I ain't there.

[43 : 20] I'm here. Can I tell you what he said? Look at Philippians chapter 4, verse 17. Paul wrote the church at Philippi, the church that had given him offerings. And Paul said, guys, thank you for sending the money you sent me.

Thank you for caring about me. Thank you for sending some support. And thank you for sending me some love offerings. And thank you for being really generous to me. And he said, and guys, I'm not saying thank you because I need you all to send me more money.

Because if you know anything about it, when somebody gives you something, you better say thank you. Because if you don't say thank you, they won't give you anymore. So it's a cycle. You got to say, they give, you say thank you. They give, you say thank you. If they give and you don't say thank you, they quit giving.

So it's like you just got to learn how to work the system. But Paul said, I'm not doing that. That's not what I'm doing. Paul said, I want you to have fruit to your account. Look at the verse. I desire that fruit may abound to your account.

But hey guys, when you pray for me and think about me and support me and help me, God just pours it on you. So Vision Baptist Church, you and I, we're here.

[44 : 21] I miss it. I miss it like crazy. I miss standing and preaching and seeing people get saved every week. I really miss that.

I miss, I miss teaching people that don't know anything. Sometimes I stand in front of you guys. And I'll just be honest with you. I build these castles in my head about your knowledge and how you're judging my preaching.

I never worried about that with them brown people. Them little brown provings. They were like, that's the best preacher we ever heard. You know why? Because I was the only one you ever heard. That's pretty easy. But at this church, I'm like, I know I'm not the only one you ever heard.

And I ain't the best you ever heard. And I ain't even a good preacher. But in Peru, I was the best. I mean, bar none, I was the best. You know why? Because I was the only one. I said, you could be a big fish in that kind of pond.

But I can't do that here. So I don't, sometimes I build these, but can I remind you something? God's rewarding us. Hey, somebody stood in China.

[45 : 17] And somebody stood in South Africa. And somebody stood in Peru the other day. And they preached a message. And you and I just came to church and prayed and gave. But God up in heaven said, ka-ching, put some money in all them vision people's accounts.

And people support missionaries. And people are praying. And people are involved in it. And them that stay by the stuff, give them equal rewards. Look what he said. Not because I desire a gift, but I desire fruit.

And here's a funny word he says that may abound to your account. You get a measly little percentage here on all I've been doing. That's not what it says. He said, I pray fruit abounds.

That's what I'm seeing God do in your life. So there's a funny little story. Get rid of them 200. They didn't do their part. David said, that's not how it's going to be.

That's not God's plan. God's plan is for us to be working in this together. And so you're in it together with them. A lot of our guys give their own kids. But you're in it together with them.

[46 : 21] God's going to see fruits in your account. Would you encourage yourself in the Lord tonight? Would you go seek him? Would you trust him? Would you let him work in your life? This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia.

For more information, log on to www.visionbaptist.com where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.

■■■d love you to plug in with them to 2 times. Godlich, that's exactly what are you doing. And the best way to go to the Sådano in my life. I've tried to coordinators with my life with my life.

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