

Psalm 4

Part 1

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Speaker | Sidney Thurston |
| Duration | 00:52:56 |
| Online version | https://www.audioteaching.org/en/sermons/st012/psalm-4 |

Note: This text is a computer generated transcript of the sermon. In some cases it may contain errors.

[00:00:00] Psalm 4, verse 1, hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness, thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress.

Have mercy upon me and hear my prayer.

Verse 8, I will lay me down in peace and sleep, for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.

A little word, if you care to turn to it, in Mark, just the last verse of Mark 4, I'll read it to you, or you can turn to it, Mark 4, verse 41, And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

Now just another word in Acts 28, Acts 28, verse 1, Acts 28, verse 1, And when they were escaped, [00:01:11] then they knew that the island was called Melita.

And a barbarous people showed us no little kindness, for they kindled a fire and received us, every one, because of the present rain and because of the cold.

And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat and fastened on his head.

Now the last chapter of Philippians, Philippians 4, Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, dearly beloved.

I beseech you, Odius, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

[00:02:09] And I entreat thee also, true yoke-feller, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow-labourers, whose names are in the book of life.

Rejoice in the Lord all the way, and again I say, rejoice.

Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, [00:03:06] whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things which ye have both learned and received and heard and seen in me, do, and the God of peace shall be with you.

But I rejoice in the Lord greatly, that now at last your care of me has flourished again, wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want, for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound.

Everywhere, and in all things, I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me, [00:04:05] notwithstanding ye have well done that ye did communicate with my affliction.

Not in Philippians, nor also, that in the beginning of the Gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.

Even those in Thessalonica came, ye sent once and again unto my necessity, not because I desire a gift, but I desire fruit, that ye may abound, that may abound your account.

But I have all, and abound, I am full, having received of the papyriditis the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing God.

But my God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

[00:05:06] Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you.

All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

I think, beloved saints of God, you will appreciate that this chapter comes in very well in connection with the rain and the cold that we read of, was the conditions on the island of Merida when the crew were wrecked on that island.

There's another thing connected with this I'd like to bring before you, and that is, [00:06:05] you may recall that Paul on that occasion collected sticks to build a fire.

Now he was a great apostle. He'd been in all sorts of extraordinary places. He certainly came to Bethlehem, and he speaks in Philippians on the lowest dungeon in Rome.

But here on the island, beloved saints of God, he makes himself busy with what lies at hand. He gathers wood in order that there might be a little wall for the saints of God. And, beloved saints of God, whether Paul is in the prison or in the third camp, he can do not very little more than this. Neither could we, I suppose, in our day, do very little more than what Paul did on Merida, that is, lay a

fire in order that the saints of God might be encouraged in war.

It does say, and we didn't touch on it yesterday because the time went so quickly, it does say there, be ye followers of me. That's verse 27, I think, of the previous chapter.

[00:07:06] Be ye followers of me. Now we don't have to be concerned about following Paul the apostle. I don't think it means that. It means follow me, Paul the Christian. And so, beloved saints of God, we have here an encouragement to follow this great apostle indeed, but not now looking upon him as the apostle, looking upon him very practically as a Christian, such as you and I, running the race which he has brought before us with our eyes on the path, if you remember, by saying his name, just in case we may have forgotten, his eyes on the path, that was Christ involved.

We saw how essential it was to be knowledgeable if we were to run a race, and we saw how the blessed God administered to all things in chapter 2 by bringing the down-coming Christ to our souls, our affection, that is the man. And then he brings the up-going Christ to us, and that is, of course, the off-pouring of the Lamb, [00:08:04] and so that we notice he feeds our souls, strengthening us down here in order that we may make a good race, so to speak, have nothing else before us but the Lamb, so that we don't deviate to the right hand or to the left, but rightly knowledgeable, as for the Lord can knowledge the soul, we run with Paul, forgetting the things that are behind, pressing onward to that which we want to find again.

Chapter 1, you know, is Christ in our heart, eh? Chapter 2 is brought before us here, Christ our pattern, super-mindful, Christ our object or life or motive in chapter 1, Christ our pattern in chapter 2, because the pattern is, you remember, let this mind be in you.

You notice that? That is to say, we have to go in for this kind of thinking, [00:09:03] let this mind be in you. That's chapter 2.

Chapter 3, we saw again, was a chapter of the model Christianity, and therein we found the energy that was imparted to the Apostle Paul in order that he might run the race, and that same energy is available, of course, to you and to myself. And now we turn quickly to chapter 4, and begin where Paul, where the Spirit of God begins here, and that is, he says, my brethren, dearly beloved, and longed for, join the crowd, then he exhorts them, stand fast in the Lord.

Here's a Spirit-energized exhortation, beloved saints of God, to you, to me.

We're in the kind of day when this is absolutely essential, that we should stand fast.

Sometimes we read we are to hold fast. Here it is, stand fast. [00:10:01] That is, we are not to be moved by what is going on around us. We're not to be moved by what is going on inside the assembly. Nothing is to move us. We're to have our eyes on this Christ, and we are to be concerned about what is honoring to his name, and anything that dishonors his name, well then, we will turn our backs upon him. But we are to stand fast, over and over again. You may recall that we are exhorted thus, to stand fast, to hold fast, and so on.

However, here he says, stand fast. You notice it's in the Lord. He changes, it seems, from Christ to the Lordship of Jesus, and so you stand fast in the Lord. I suppose it's indicative that you and I are being looked upon here as individuals, and as individuals, of course, the Lord, that Jesus is Lord.

Lord of individuals. Lord to the servants.

And so here's the exhortation, stand fast. It doesn't say in Christ. [00:11:03] You see, within Christ, it's not a sign of responsibility.

If you're in Christ, you'll be put there by grace, but within the Lord, it's all responsibility, and you are to act according to the responsibility. I'm very certain of this, that God is also Lord.

You correspond to the grace of God that has been found safe to watch us, and we should become here a replica of the rest of Christ in the Lord. I've no doubt about this at all, and you and I have the Spirit of God in order to enable us to stand fast in the Lord.

Dearly beloved, this is what he says, and it cheers one's heart to feel that here, a great Apostle in this, he has the welfare and the concern of the simple saints at all, also.

Now he puts his finger on the trouble. We know this letter actually is written as a kind of thanksgiving [00:12:01] for the gifts that they have sent to him, but he surely uses the opportunity to bring out a tremendous amount of truth, as you have seen.

Now he winds up the epistle by indicating immediately that he hasn't been blind to what was going on in Philippi. He puts his finger on the swamp.

You may remember, it says in Ecclesiastes 10.1, that the identified makes the ointment of the apothecary distinct.

It may be only a small thing, beloved, but it'll ruin the apothecary's ointment, according to Ecclesiastes 10.1.

And this sort of thing that he puts his finger on in verse 2, is the kind of thing, beloved, that will ruin the assemblies of the saints of God. And he saw it coming, we mentioned this, we see it coming, chapter 1, you get the teenage of the west just appearing under the door. Chapter 2 mentions it, chapter 3 he mentions it. Now he puts his finger on the trouble.

[00:13:03] He's not afraid to do this. Now we all know, you know that he's not. He does a shrink from the fact that he has to make his two dear sisters. It might not be very palatable to them.

It might not be very good for Paul. But he does a shrink from what he felt was his Christian duty, and that is to mark out those two people who were lying in the brink of little assembly down to the ground.

So you see, now we come to verse 2.

He does it in a very beautiful and touching way, if I may say so. He says, I beseech you Odias, you know he does this singly.

First one and then the other. He doesn't just lump them together, but he selects them one by one. He says, I beseech you Odias, you'll have to let your mind go.

And then he says, I beseech you Sintikki, you'll have to let your mind go. Because both of you, for both of you, there's only one mind, [00:14:01] and that's the mind of the Lord.

Now, if we carried over a verse like this, it would be well worthwhile. And that is to understand it is not your mind following. Your mind, or my mind, may cause all sorts of disruption in the assembly.

Especially if we are the kind of people who stand on our dignity. And we are wanting all of them.

If we forget that we are paid to deceive, if we allow it to slip from our minds that the purest Christ of God who was in charge of all things, gave you all up and found nothing here. If we are reconciled to the truth that you've got nothing here for us. You understand this, you and I have no rights here. We've got nothing here. The Christ of God had nothing here. He was taken up to the glory. And we saw last evening that's where you belong. Your citizenship is in the heaven.

So he says to these two, we want to see one mind in this assembly.

[00:15:03] We only want one mind in this assembly. Who's mind Paul?

The Lord's mind.

That's it, we want the Lord's mind. Now this isn't always easy. It often means climbing down, as we say.

One has discovered often enough it's a very difficult thing to climb down. And we so sometimes persist in having our own mind, that it clashes with the mind of another. And so, destruction comes in.

But Paul, he wants to bring it to an end immediately.

So he appeals.

He's appealing to you and to me. I'm not saying we're in this condition at all. But it's just as well to take this to heart, beloved. And understand that Satan will wreck an assembly if he can. And this is an easy way to do it. Get two people to disagree, and then sides are formed, and so on.

So Paul says, let's see an end of it at once. Picks the names out.

Not afraid to do this. We are, you know, I believe I said last evening, [00:16:03] we would rather have been God than our brethren. We're often afraid to do things that we ought to have done. I was saying this afternoon at one of the, at the meal table, or today sometime, talking about a brother who's now being called home. He said something to his growing-up daughter, teenager I think she was, about where she'd been and what she was doing, and what was happening where she went. And see what she said? She turned around on him, and she said, play the chore, Paul. They said, beloved, he is prejudiced. I sometimes feel that. It's our fault.

We've missed somewhere. We've missed out somewhere. It's all too easy to blame our own people. It's all too easy to say that young people are going here and there, and doing this and that, and kicking over the traces. But tracing back where we've been sourced, and Mike, you and I are also

responsible for this.

Because we've not had the courage that Paul had. We've not had the faith that Paul had. [00:17:01] Paul picks them out. He says, no, you two, you stop it. That's what he's saying. You stop it.

We only want one mind in this assembly, and that's the Lord's mind. Now, he treats the, he treats, him treats, the young fellow to help these women.

Probably including these two. You see, he's no animosity in his mind about this. He can do this freely before God. He's doing it in love, and he's doing it in faith. He's doing it in order that the name of the Lord Jesus Christ might be paramount, and the will of the Lord be paramount in the assembly. I remember reading, or reading, a Bible reading.

I'm very fond of reading Bible readings. And I was reading a Bible reading, and I'm fond of a girl with JBS was there. And JBS said, oh, he said, I wish I could put every head off at the meeting, and put one head off, basically.

We don't want a thousand minds. [00:18:02] We don't want a dozen minds. We only want one mind.

That is the mind of the Lord. And the Lord is saying to God, if you're sticking up for having your own way, let us take account of this. We don't want your own way at a meeting. You may have to go down about it. You may have to admit you're not built for anything or anybody. You may have to say, I am nothing, and I have nothing. And you may have to admit that you don't want anything, like healing. But it will be towards healing.

And it will be the production of the mind of the Lord in the assembly, which, after all, will be magnificent. Whatever matters will happen. So as you've got your own way, what does matter? How long will it last? No. There's only one mind that matters, and that's the mind of the Lord. Now he says, the names are written in the Book of Life. I don't know why he puts this in. I only pause on it, because you might say, what does he mean? There's the Book of Life, as you know. There's the Book of Life of the Lamb, is there? The Lamb's Book of Life. Two books. [00:19:01] One book you have your name kept in an array, as the case might be. The other book, the second book, the Lamb, the Book of the Lamb. Your name is heavily labelled, because it's based on redemption. But your names, their names are arranged out of the Book of Life, as it needs to be. And so he says, iterate their names are in the Book of Life. Every responsible soul now according to this world, so to speak, is written in the Book of Life. Thank God, I suppose everybody's here, is also written in the Book of the Lamb. That's based on, not responsibility, that's the Book of Life, but it's based on grace, it's based on redemption. And if your name is there, beloved, it will never be erased. Well, he says, rejoice in the Lord. Now you say, he says this often, so he has. I don't know how many times in this epistle he says to rejoice in the Lord. I don't know how many times in this epistle he says to rejoice. And every time he says it, and every time I read it, [00:20:02] my ear goes down to the great thing that he's done to me. And I hear this beloved apostle speaking from that filthy spot, telling me to rejoice. My heart is ashamed, beloved, to think of a man down there, brought by chains to a cross, actually taught me to rejoice, but I am up here in freedom and liberty. But so it is.

He says rejoice.

I want you to notice he adds another word here that he's never used before. He says, rejoice all. Up

till now he's been saying, rejoice, rejoice. And that's been good, of course. Now he says all. Beloved, how much more could you and I, I wonder, respond to such an exhortation? Oh, you say there's a little problem. What about some more, you might say, my young friend? In pressure.

Well, there's a lot of the chapters about. The chapter of this chapter is about being saved when the pressure comes. That's what Psalm 4 is about. Saved and enlarged in pressure, says the psalmist.

[00:21:03] And so you can rejoice always. All things you can. A man in the dungeon thinks you can rejoice always, even though you're not in the dungeon. And I say again, at the risk of repeating myself, he didn't say this on the third day. Where we might have thought he would say it, but he doesn't. He says it down there. Oh, beloved saints of God. Christianity is so intensely practical. And we are likely to get it, perhaps. Unless we read a chapter like this, we're brought up to the sky. There's salvation here, of course there is. There's salvation in pressure, of course there is. So you can rejoice always, yes. I'm listening again, old loving brother in the hospital. I found him rejoicing.

Although he's lost both legs, I found he rejoiced always. It's possible, you see. Practical.

It wasn't expected of you. Paul, you see, writing for the Religions, he says, you're the kind of people who know what will happen. You're connoisseurs of Christianity. [00:22:01] So are you, beloved. You know Christianity inside out. Well, then it's expected of you. And meaning we rejoice always. Not today, and forgetting tomorrow, but all the time. Not when things go slower, but when things go fast. As we say, when things become difficult, we find it easy or hard to rejoice. Paul says always. I'm only saying again, beloved, that this is an intensely practical world. And Christianity is exactly that. Now it says, let your moderation, let your yieldingness is what it means. We're getting back to where we began really. Let your yieldingness. I was reading the other day, there are two brothers in the Bible reading. They couldn't see eye to eye. If you'll forgive me for a moment, George David used to say to me, he said, you know, you won't get down to time size in one Bible reading. He said, they don't think of the real meeting unless there's a fight. [00:23:04] I don't know what he means, but you would if you knew time size. You know what he meant. I don't.

But there were two brothers in this particular story, and they were arguing in the Bible reading, and they kept on arguing for about 20 minutes. So nobody was sort of worthy. And the master brother quoted very quietly to him, changing the wording. Marcus, this is what he said. Let your determination be known unto all men. There was a lot about it. There was enough. Those two tried out, because the Bible, of course, doesn't say that. Let your yieldingness be known unto all men. Not your determination. You can be determined about things, but I mean, that's not what you're in order to do as a Christian.

You're in order to give way. When you're oppressed, you yield. Oh, you say, that's not easy. Of course, it's not easy. You couldn't do it. And the man that would find it impossible being dealt with by Christ on the cross, and [00:24:01] you'd be given a new life.

You couldn't, of course, do these things. But with the Spirit of life, it's possible, isn't it? So instead of standing on your dignity, instead of insisting on your rights. I have all sorts of things coming from mine, of course. One has to exercise a tremendous amount of discipline not to keep telling you all the things that come through one's mind. But I do remember this. A brother, a young brother said to me one evening, he said, you know, it's a wonderful thing to be baptized. It's a wonderful feeling, he said. I said, you're perfectly right. It is a wonderful feeling. You know, I didn't dare do it. So I grabbed him to

the playroom. He was leading a protest, asking for more wages.

There he was, carrying a banner in the front. Clean chunk.

He's got some rights here. It's hard for you, isn't it, sir? But how could you have no rights? You have no rights.

It's not a little bit, thinking of the good, kicking over the traces. You don't belong here. And if we have been baptized, let us remember this, beloved. We've been baptized, and we have professed, we understand that we have finished with this [00:25:06] sin. We've died out of it, just like the precious Christ died out of it. In a shameful way, he died out of it, by way of the cross. Let your yieldingness then be known. Are you going about, beloved, tomorrow, and the coming days, allowing your yieldingness to come out? Not your determination. Not so people say, oh, he makes up his mind. He's quite a characteristic. He's a determined man. No, we don't want that at all. The blessed Lord Jesus is looking for a yielding spirit. Let your yieldingness be known unto all men. So, when you are a sale in the library, or in the street, or at your work, in your office, let your yieldingness be known unto all men, not merely the Christians. You say, what shall I get out of it? Beloved, it doesn't matter too much what you get out of it. The point is this, the precious Christ asks you to yield. [00:26:03] Let your yieldingness, he says, be known unto all men, because he was the most yielding of men when he was dead.

And if you want to represent this Christ in the glory, this is the part. We don't want to put any blinkers on our eyes, but just, but look at these verses as they come before us. Now, he says, he can't say this now.

He says, the Lord is at hand. That's just why you can let your yieldingness be known. That's why you can afford to let things go. That's why you can afford to be sat on, stood on, sprang from, let your work. Of course, the Lord is at hand. That's why. It doesn't mean he's coming at any moment. That's probably true. That is what Peter, that is what Paul says. He says, I'd like you to understand, he says, that as you're walking down the street, the Lord is by your side. There's nothing in here that you can do to dismay yourself. [00:27:01] You can afford to yield because he's here. My beloved saints of God, you sit there, you know the Lord is by your side. You know that. That's what the scripture here says, and what it means. The Lord is at hand. The Lord is by my side. How easy then it ought to be, beloved, to yield, to give way, to exhibit the features of this fearless Jesus, like he's here by your side, to encourage you, strengthen you, and to lead you on in order to do these things.

Fruits, God is looking for, you know. Fruits.

We must distinguish between fruit and service. It's a grand thing to serve the Lord. I have no question at all, but I know very well what is put first in our hearts. Fruits.

This is a fruit.

This springs, beloved, from the new nature. The old lady knows nothing about yielding. You know that as well as I. Go back to your unconverted days. Was you a yielding man?

No, you certainly weren't. [00:28:01] Well, that's what you are now. You're a yielding man. Why? Because you belong to him, and you don't belong here. See, anything may go on around you down

here. What's it to do with you? You don't belong here. I know it's hard sometimes, but then, that is why the Spirit of God comes in and says, the Lord is attending. I remember, you have gone through this, I dare say. They used to say to me, look, you're too mean to pay your union dues, for instance. You're too mean to pay your union dues. What do you do? Stand on your dignity? Prove you're not? What do you yield from that? Let your yieldingness be known unto all men. Why? Because no matter what he says, he's by your side. He says, I'll never leave you.

Actually, if you were to read it in the original, it goes like this. I will never, no never leave thee. I will never, no never forsake thee.

Now, this is the one, because it will be by your side tonight, and tomorrow, and all the rest of the journey. [00:29:04] Now, he says, be careful for nothing. Now, he says, be careful for nothing. That is, be over-anxious.

Don't be over-anxious about anything. I need you here. Don't be over-anxious about anything, he says. I want you to exchange anxiety for peace.

Now, this is a wonderful proposition, all contained in these few words. It's a kind of exchange at heart. At the end of the magazine published, the exchange at heart. Well, it's a kind of exchange at heart. You can make an exchange for what? You can make an exchange for trouble, and difficulties and problems. You can make, you can exchange all of those for peace. Would you like to? He said, I certainly would. Well, why don't we?

Here it is. Do you know, beloved, how you can enjoy peace? It tells you here. Be over-anxious about nothing. Don't be over-anxious about anything, is the main meaning of it. [00:30:02] But, but, in everything.

Now, don't miss anything out, beloved, and think somehow or other that everything ought to come your way because you've done something. But, everything, he says.

Everything. In everything by prayer. I remember walking down to the city of Norwich with the, Mr Westcott, you remember? The great man he was.

A grand Christian, you know. And I was talking to him, he was talking to me about prayer, I thought he was a youngster. And he says, I said to him, I don't know what to pray about. Ooh, he says, what were you reading this morning? Ah, they called me young, I love it, because I hadn't read that book. It was a trouble. But anyway, he was a great Christian man. He says, turn what you read into prayer. Have you any doubts, beloved, about what you should pray? Well, where's all the Bibles?

Turn your reading into prayer. [00:31:03] It can be done, you try. Now, he says, in everything by prayer and supplication.

With thanksgiving, prayer and praise. You notice that? I'll have to pass over supplication, you know what that is. It's carrying on and on and on, asking God. Tenaciously, so to speak. But prayer and with thanksgiving.

Prayer and praise, beloved, did you notice this? Prayer and praise lead to what? Peace.

Prayer and praise, beloved, lead to peace. I hope you get this. Marvelous thing, isn't it? Take everything to God in prayer. We used to sing to him, I believe, years ago, about taking everything to God in prayer. Well, this is what he taught here. It's quite scriptural. Take it to prayer, to him in prayer. Add praise to it. Prayer and praise.

Beloved, if you're in need, you turn in prayer to God. If you think about God, you turn in praise to him. It's as simple as that.

Now, prayer and praise put together equals peace.

[00:32:06] Says so here. You might say, well, how does it work? Are you very practicable on it? Don't you see, we are so constituted that we act very foolishly. I'm afraid we act very foolishly. You and I have to be on our knees and we say something to the Lord and then down to the mercy seat. And what do we do? When we've had our foot, we kneel down again and put it on our backs and we take it home again. You and I have to be so simple. If you take something to God or to the Lord, you've got to leave it there. That's the place where faith brings everybody, at his feet. You don't go to him with it and bring it away. That's the fault. Make it now, make your request who says, no, not to God. And what's the result? The result is peace. And the peace of God.

You notice that? And God's peace. The peace of God. [00:33:02] Can you understand it? No, says Paul, I don't understand it. He says it passes understanding. The peace of God, which passes understanding, shall guard over your affliction. You think of that. You realize, by the way, that the peace of God is standing guard to not only your heart, but also to your mind. Providing, of course, that you're going to God in prayer with praise, then the peace of God is standing as a sentinel. As a man on guard.

And he's guarding your afflictions. And he's guarding your thinking. Wonderful promises these. I say again, intensely practical, aren't they? And yet there it is, all laid out before us. All belongs to you and me, beloved saints of God. The peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall guard over or garrison your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

[00:34:04] You couldn't expect it in any other way, of course. Now we come down to a very pregnant verse. I hardly know what to say about it. It's so intensely practical.

It comes right home, don't you feel, beloved? Have you read verse 8?

The first time I saw verse 8, I was a boy. And I went into a girl's school, mortal school. And there just inside the doorway on a nicely printed card was verse 8.

And I stopped and read it. I'd never forgotten it. I don't sense it to be any good or much good. But there it was. There's a grand text, beloved, to have up. Shall we read it a piece at a time, perhaps?

He says, finally, for as for the rest, he says, I've given you ample exhortations. I've given you much encouragement. And now, as for the rest, he says, look, do you want these things? Do you want to go in for divine things? Is Christianity something that appeals to you? [00:35:01] Would you like to run a race down here that is pleading to the Christ and the glory? You say, of course I do. That's just what I'm here for. Well, verse 8, beloved saints of God, puts you right. It puts you on the right path, right from the beginning. Mark you, you're going to suffer. There's nothing, there's no Christianity without

suffering.

Let us take care that we understand this. So, here we go, verse 8.

Whatsoever things are true, I say, beloved, there's a jam in for you also, if you like.

There's something going to jam you awake, isn't it? Do you go in for whatsoever things are true? Do I go in for whatsoever things are true? Or do I go in for those things that engage my senses, my mind? What do I read, do I? True things?

What do I say?

True things? Did I say this was a practical epistle? I don't need to say it, do I? [00:36:01] It comes home to me constantly.

Whatsoever things are true, O beloved young Roman sister, what a thing this is to stop out the road, the pathway. Here's a guide for you. As plain as any guide could ever be. I was in the shed a few years ago, and I followed the signpost, I came to a dead end. There are a lot of dead ends in the shed. But there were a few young people there, and they stopped and asked. And I said, isn't this the so-and-so and so-and-so? They said, no. But I said, the signpost point is here. Well, there's those boys, they've turned it round again. Now, there's nothing like that in the Word of God. The sign is there, beloved, it's not turning round. It's there, and it's pointing to the path, the Christian path.

And it says, the very first step you must take is you must go before that which is true.

Now, it's going to cut us off, isn't it? It's going to cut us off, and it's going to have a go at our activities. [00:37:02] It's going to water down all of the rule of our reading, don't you think? Let us be careful about what we go in for. We read, we look at that which is true. Whatsoever things are honest or noble. There's a wonderful catalogue here, beloved. This is Christianity, practical living out of Christianity.

Find the dear brother or sisters going into what is true. Conscience and heart are open, nothing to fear. I remember George Davison when he called on a dear brother somewhere about in this region. Robert Nelson, I think the brother's name was. He said, I had to call on him very early in the morning, and I knocked on his door. And Robert Nelson said, come in George, I've got nothing to hide, no idols to hide. That's it. What is noble, what is true?

See, it throws everything open. Your heart is open, you're free from everything. [00:38:02] Your heart is open, you're free, beloved. None to worry about. Your conscience is in trouble. Whatsoever things are just and so on. We will have to hurry through them, of course. But just, noble, just, pure, lovely.

Modernly lovely. Marvellous isn't it? You and I have a capacity. We have a nature that loves lovely things.

Loves beautiful things. Morally lovely.

Morally beautiful. You have that nature. A new nature, in order that you may understand and go in for morally lovely things. Whatsoever things are good to report. If there's such a thing, he says, as virtue or courage. If there's such a thing as praise. If there's anything praiseworthy, so that we think on

these things. Plus what he says, you see, anything else worthwhile, think on those. [00:39:03] See, beloved, how you are sacredly gated.

Not a very nice term, but how you are separated from what's going on around you. This verse will mark your, won't it, set apart.

You'll be characterised as a brother or a sister who goes in for true things. Who goes in for noble things.

Who goes in for morally beautiful things. What a feature. Christ's features, of course, coming out in the lives of the saints down here. What a wonderful joy it must give to the heart of a blessed God. As he looks down and sees the features of his beloved son, being brought out in the lives of his dear people. And this is how it is done. All so practically, yet so very really.

If only God would give us the grace and give us the desire to go in for these and do away with what is untrue. But not that if you've got anything untrue on your bookcase, do away with it. [00:40:01] Don't be tempted by having the wretched stuff there. Get rid of it. Now, he says, those things, he's been talking about these things.

Now he says those things. He's going back a little to his own life. He says, you've heard, you've learned from me, you've received from me.

You've heard and seen, notice the next preposition, in me.

Not about me. You've heard and seen in me. This is what delights my own soul when I look at Paul and John.

They can talk about the things they did, unashamedly. What they taught, beloved, they did. Then the little remark I tried to make the other night, I think I misquoted.

I think the true quotation should have been, [00:41:01] your actions speak so loudly I can't hear what you say.

That was the expression I wanted to convey to you. Your actions speak so loudly that I can't hear what you say.

But in the case of Paul and John, their actions did speak loudly, but you couldn't hear what they said, because what they said they did. And then of course, superlatively, the impeccable Jesus, when he was here, he said, I'm absolutely there that I say. Whatsoever things are true, beloved. Now these things, he says, you've both learned, received, heard, and seen in me. He knows a little word, do.

And there's something following this activity. You've noticed that we can exchange anxiety and fear for peace, if we take it in prayer and thank you to God we've seen it. Now, as I said before, he says, now, instead of praying, [00:42:02] if you do what you've heard, receive it. If you are a practical Christian, what then?

Something more than having the peace of God. Is it possible to have something more than the peace of God? Yes, it's possible. You do what you've seen me do, and I'll give you the, and you'll have the

God of peace. Not only the peace of God, you'll have the God of peace. The very source of it all, beloved. You remember the Lord when he was here, recorded I think in John 14. He says, not that the world, he says my peace, my peace.

You've got God's peace, you've got the God of peace. You've got the peace of God, you've got Christ's peace. My peace, he says, I give to you. Not that the world gives, he says, but that's not the way I give. The world wants conditions. The world wants to make some sanctions, so to speak, when they give, but is it utterly and wholly free. [00:43:03] In liberty I give, freedom. Not that the world gives, I, do I give.

Now he says, I hope we got there. It's only a small point, but you know it's a vital point. It's going to make all the difference. It's going to revolutionize your Christian life, and mine of course. If I only learn that I can have peace in exchange for anxiety by prayer and praise, and if I only learn that I can have the God of peace providing I do the things that I've been taught. Why do you and I go through this scene all het up, all troubled and perplexed? Why? Because these practical things, which are so simple, are not brought out in our lives. We're not practicing them fully. Perhaps I must speak for you, speak for myself. So there's praying and there's doing. I'd have to jump over much, if I may, and go down to verse 13 perhaps. [00:44:04] He does say, sure, in verse 12, how he's above every circumstances, whatever it might be. And then, in verse 13, he says something very comforting, and he says, in all of our verses, he says, I can do all things through Christ. But actually it ought to read, I am strong in everything through Christ with strength. He doesn't say I can do all things. That's too big a claim. But what he says is, I'm strengthened. I'm strengthened in order to do those things which are pleasing to himself. I am strong, he said, in all things through Christ, and Christ is the one who strengthens me. You know what Christ is? I'll write here again what he writes to Timothy. He says, remember Jesus Christ risen. That's who Christ is. He's the risen man.

And he says, the risen man, the man of God, the risen man of God. And he says, the risen man, the man in the glory, the man who is the king, so to speak, [00:45:05] the supreme one in this city to which I belong, he strengthens me.

All things through Christ strengthen. Then he commends, then he commends the dear Philippians for what they have did. Then he, he says that he has everything.

He's, as far as himself is concerned, he's satisfied. You know it's a great thing, beloved, to be a Christian and to be satisfied, don't you think? There's nothing worse as testimony to be a dissatisfied Christian. To go about moaning and groaning about this, that and the other. There's never ought to be the path of the Christian at all. However, Paul didn't. Do these things, says Paul, and the God of peace will be with you. Something attractive about this, isn't there? It's worthwhile going in for Christianity in its practical aspect, isn't it? When you're going to secure not only the peace of God, but you're going to secure the God of peace himself. [00:46:03] And then just finally, he talked about his supply in verse 19. My God, you notice, the God he had tested, the God he had proved, the God whom he never questioned when he was chained to a cross, never questioned the wisdom of God in putting him there. Beloved saints, often enough we question God's wisdom when he deals with or deals with our relatives or friends, don't you think? Paul never questioned. What God did was as far as he was concerned. It was the right thing. We might say, Paul, are you satisfied with God and wouldn't you be there? Yes. If I repeat myself, beloved, I would say, out of the privilege of being at this time, don't you understand I'd rather be here with Christ than out of there alone? Yes. The man's spirit couldn't be conquered, beloved. What can you do, a man who sings at midnight when his back

is bleeding? You can't do anything with him. [00:47:01] What can you do, a man who's chained to a cross he says was choice always? You can't do anything with him. He rises above every circumstance. He's like his blessed master. When he says, my God, this is a God he's proved. This is a God he's tested. This is a faithful God. This is always good by him.

He says, my God shall supply all your needs.

Oh, beloved, say to God, if you take nothing else home tonight, take this home with you.

My God, says Paul, supplies all your needs.

He knows his needs. He doesn't say he supplies your luxuries. He supplies all your needs. My God does this, he says. He shall supply all your needs.

What a blessed thing it is to have the confidence of this apostle or ought I to say, this Christian. A confidence in my God with the assurance that doesn't matter what happens, he will supply all my needs.

My needs, Mark you, he supplied my needs.

God told me he might be satisfied with my needs. [00:48:04] I've told this story often. You'll have to forgive me if you've heard me say it before. You know John Wesley went to Georgia and he took a secretary with him. And in Georgia he stayed a night with a widow. The widow had one cow providing the milk. And during the night when the widow's cow died, in the morning she was in tears. John Wesley says to the secretary, how much money have we got? The secretary says, we've got \$20. Oh, he says, give it to her. Give it to her. He says, when we go to the next place, we should get 40. Because God always doubles up. The day of the wedding, March and January, they got to the next place. Do you know the game? That game, that game, two dollars short, he turned on the secretary.

What did you give the widow? Oh, well, I'm sorry. I only gave her 19.

[00:49:01] I thought we ought to keep a dollar for ourselves. So she got a risk because he didn't trust God like Wesley did. Because he didn't trust God like Wesley. See what he means? Don't let it be like that, beloved. He is a God you can trust. He says, my God, he'll supply all your need.

May I say again?

Not your luxuries.

You may want a lot of luxuries. This world goes in for a tremendous amount of luxuries, don't you find? I find Christians too.

I'm not throwing stones, beloved. I find Christians are quite dissatisfied with the houses they live in. They want something bigger and better. And so on. This is the spirit this is in the world, beloved. Never mind.

We all be concerned about that. We be concerned about what is good. My God says, Paul, he's going to supply you with everything you need. Ask any Christian who is trusted in God whether he's

not a God to be trusted in. Of course he is. I don't know if I ought to go on telling you tales, especially when they involve myself. But I did pick up a purse some time last year.

[00:50:03] And there's quite a lot of money in it. And I took it to the police station. And within a few hours, I believe, it was claimed by the owner. And a week or so after, they wrote me a very nice letter. And they sent a pound note to me. And I wrote back. I sent the pound note back. And I said, my master owns the chapel on the thousand hills.

My God will supply all my needs.

So, I'm not boasting about this.

Only in the fact that God is a reliable and faithful God. And they wrote back. You know, it's astonishing. They wrote back and said, we've served this God with all our lives.

Isn't that beautiful? Yes. They knew him.

This is his name.

They knew him. They and I immediately became joined together. Members of one body.

Think of it. [00:51:01] Marvelous, isn't it? Well, my God, he says, will supply all your need. And he closes with a benediction. As we Muscovites, with a benediction. Now unto God and our Father, be glory forever and ever.

Amen. There's only one thing in the remaining two or three verses that one might call attention to. And that is Paul's company. You know, in Acts 13, he talks about Paul's company. That's when Mark had gone. It's very striking, this. John Mark, you know, wouldn't go. We talked about that the other day. But when he had gone, they talked about Paul's company. Do you belong to Paul's company, beloved? I was in night school many, many years ago. We all had to get up on our hind legs and give a three-minute address or speech. And I got up.

I wasn't very old. I didn't know much. And I talked about turning the swords into parachutes.

Just came into my mind as I sat at the school desk. The pastor's daughter sat on my hip, or by my side. [00:52:03] It's her turn next. She got up.

Oh, she said, what he said. Why, it's only what David said. Who said? Only what David said. It's what they say in the age of Christian. It's only what Paul said. And after all, a sister said to me, he was a woman-maker.

What did she say? Why was Paul a woman-maker? It's all nonsense. It's all nonsense, what Paul says about it.

He belonged to Paul's company. It's a grand thing, isn't it? To be in company with Paul. I'll tell you what. I'd rather be in company with Paul if it's a shipwreck in the offing than be in company with anybody else. So he says here, the brethren which are with me, Paul's company, they please you.

Shall we go back a verse? Now unto God and our Father, we glory forever and ever. Amen.