

Why Can't I Be Thankful

by Al Whittinghill

This sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering to God, acknowledging struggles with bitterness or anger towards Him, and the need to repent and trust in His sovereignty. It encourages making a choice to rejoice, understanding God's refining work in our lives, cooperating with Him, and maintaining a believing heart despite challenges. The speaker shares stories of individuals finding peace and healing through surrender and trust in God's plan.

Scripture: James 1:2, Romans 8:28, Philippians 4:6, 1 Thessalonians 5:18, Hebrews 12:6, Matthew 11:28

Topics: "Surrender", "Trust in God's Sovereignty"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering to God, acknowledging struggles with bitterness or anger towards Him, and the need to repent and trust in His sovereignty. It encourages making a choice to rejoice, understanding God's refining work in our lives, cooperating with Him, and maintaining a believing heart despite challenges. The speaker shares stories of individuals finding peace and healing through surrender and trust in God's plan.

Transcript

Well, that was a ministry to our hearts, and thank you for that, you all. Wow, that was beautiful. Did your heart enter into that? How marvelous, how wonderful is my Savior's love for me? How wonderful He is.

And what she said about living in the conscious presence of God, brought in with a mighty grace by the blood of Jesus, into this grace wherein we stand. It's good to see some of you that haven't been able to be with us. You know, we've had some serious moments in the Word, especially with the men.

It was too late in history to be gentle with the men. We're hard cases, you know. Most of us have learned how to make great excuses for everything that we live at a certain level, but the Lord wants to shake the tree.

He's shaking our nation, and He is seeking to get the attention of many people who've been just halfway tuned in. But if you look around and take time and get your Bible out and read the paper, a good paper that's honest, you will find out that prophecy is moving together at such a clip that it's almost astonishing. It takes your breath away, and I've been so aware that every moment that you have is precious.

Your goodbyes to your family when you walk out the door, make them real and right because you may never know when that's the last one you'll have. Or your hellos with your children to not just make

secondary things the vital thing, but learning to live in His appointment. You know, and our disappointments are often His appointment because He wants to prioritize our attention.

Well, we've been called by grace into the fellowship of His Son, that's what it says. And I thought this morning I would just read this verse at the beginning. This is not our text, but in Philippians 4 where it says, Rejoice in the Lord always.

And again, I say rejoice. Let your self-control or your temperament be known to all men because the Lord is at hand. He's available.

He's available, is what it says. Be anxious or be careful. Don't be worried, but be anxious 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 passes your ability to understand, will keep, and the word is garrison, like a military fort around. God will build a garrison around your heart and your mind through Christ Jesus.

Well, as a Christian, there's never a time when thanksgiving is not in order. Not really. We may have a hard time with it on our emotion level, but every one of us, especially even in this country or in our situation, should be thankful.

If you've come to know him and he has made you his very own, you ought to be thankful. You ought to be thankful. Real Christians ought to be the most thankful people on the planet because they've been shown what's really going on.

So most of us who are in this room that are born again, we know this down deep. But it's not always easy. We hear these scriptures that say to us, in 1 Thessalonians 5, 18, it says, In everything, there it is again, in everything, give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Concerning you and me. This is God's will, in everything. Like we just said, in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving.

Let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God will build a fortress around your heart as you keep your attention on his conscious presence. And don't shut him out because of secondary things like your iPhone and other things.

But keep him before your heart and mind and see. In Ephesians 5, 20, giving thanks always for all things. You say, well maybe you can give God thanks in everything.

But some of these things I hate. Well he says give thanks for all things as well. In the name of the Father and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving in your heart. Enter his courts with praise. Now let me just say here that that's not always easy.

I mean I can almost hear some of you saying well if you knew what I was going through you wouldn't find it so easy as you're saying. But this is a day when God is making simple our hearts on one thing. He's distilling us to one thing, one issue.

We wouldn't choose it. It's like calculus in college. You would never take it unless you had to.

You wouldn't enroll in some of the courses that God has us sign up for and really have as a portion of our heart. But we wonder sometimes we look at our life, where's the joy? Where's the joy in my heart? I don't feel the joy. I mean this person has it and this person over here has it.

But I have such a hard time rejoicing. I have such a hard time because I'm in pain. Maybe your life is full of pain.

You know it's great to see so many friends for many years and we've talked and there's been a lot of pain in life since we've seen each other. That we've had to walk through and work through you see. It may be hard to thank God even though you know you should.

Well I want to pray because this morning I want to talk to you and to my own heart. And to put it in the place where you remember in the coming days. This word will come back to you and you will remember this and God will remind you of it.

To how to have a thankful heart no matter what. How to rejoice in everything no matter what. And how to keep your eyes on Jesus.

We're going to talk about that this morning. We've been talking about prayer but that's what prayer really is. It's living in the conscious presence of God.

To pray without ceasing. To be talking to him without saying this is prayer. And also of course we've been talking about focused time of prayer and intercession.

But this is that everyday life thing. Now maybe you've experienced great disappointment. And God wants to give you a word this morning as you press into the future.

Because there's trouble on the horizon friends. Let's pray. Father in Jesus name we pray that you will speak to every heart in here.

And encourage us each one to trust you. And to be able to sing oh how marvelous. Oh how wonderful is your precious love and grace to us.

Build a wall around our hearts today. That will withstand the onslaught of any enemy of God. And so we thank you in Jesus name.

Amen. Why can't I be thankful? These people are thankful but why can't I feel thankful? I feel so beaten down and your pain might even be heightened. Because you don't have this and you kind of condemn yourself.

Why can't I be thankful when everybody else seems like they're thankful. And there's questions and something's blocking my prayer life. And I can't seem to read my Bible with a concentration.

What's wrong? You see your plans have been changed. When your plans are changed and things don't work out like you thought. Things can really go awry.

It doesn't just happen to rookies or new Christians. It happens to seasoned saints as well. I'm thinking of John the Baptist.

One of the greatest preachers born of women says the Lord Jesus of him. A burning and a shining light. He was willing to go to jail and ultimately lose his head.

Just for taking a stand on God's word the way it's written. But yet when he, you know all of Israel. Thousands and thousands came out and he baptized them.

He introduced the Lord Jesus. Behold the Lamb of God who is taking away the sin of the world. He saw the Holy Spirit descend in a manifest way like a dove.

And remain on the Lord Jesus. And he said this is the one. He's the one who will baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire.

So he knew the Lord. And he was awesome. But yet as the crowds grew they arrested John the Baptist.

Because he took a firm stand on the word of God. And they put him in the dungeon or the prison. And forgot about him.

At least the society did. And there he is in Matthew 11. It says here in verse 1. And it came to pass when Jesus made an end of commanding his 12 disciples.

That he departed from there to teach and preach in their cities. And so these crowds began to follow the Lord Jesus. And now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ.

He sent two of his disciples. And he said, go ask him these things. Go ask Jesus these things.

And he says to them, they say to him, the Lord Jesus. Are you he that should come? Or should we look for somebody else? Now why would John ever ask that? After what he had been through with Jesus. After he had known the power of God.

Filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb it says. Are you really who I thought you were? You see his plans were changed. Maybe he thought he would be with Jesus.

And being part of the second level leadership. And bringing people in. Maybe he thought this was the way it would work out.

And he would be along by his side. But instead I'm in a dungeon and I'm forgotten. How can this be? Are you really who I thought you were? And Jesus, verse 4, answered these two disciples.

And says to them, go and show John again. Remind him. Remind him of what he already knows.

And go show him again those things which you do here. And see and tell him the blind are receiving sight. The lame are walking.

Lepers are cleansed. Deaf are hearing. And dead are raised up.

And the poor have the gospel preached. He's quoting from Isaiah 61. It's one of the first verses he quoted when he was introduced.

And then it says, and blessed is he. Whosoever will not be offended in me. Now the Beatitudes in Matthew are six chapters before that.

You know, blessed are the poor in spirit. That long list of blessings. And we read those.

But here, chapters later, six chapters, it's blessed is he whoever is not offended in me. It's a forgotten Beatitude. We don't read it that much.

But it's there. So what does that mean? Blessed is the one who will not be offended in me. It kind of means, I think, blessed is the man who doesn't begin to question God and wonder who he is and doubt what he's been shown so clearly when his plans are changed.

Don't be offended at the privilege that God gives you to be put in a difficult situation that's dark and shine like a light at night. Learn him, because there are certain aspects of your Heavenly Father and the character of the Trinity that you can't learn except in trials. You just can't do it.

But you see, John had it figured out wrong. And we've often got it figured out wrong. We get in situations that we don't really understand.

And so that's what we've been talking about. Prayer, to give us insight from the Spirit of God and our spirit as to what is really happening. Not so we can escape, but so we can surrender to his will to be done and to glorify him in all of it.

See, it's human nature to resist change. When change, especially as you get older, things begin to get shaky and you begin to resist change. And then maybe you might resent change.

John was in that danger right there. Why didn't this work out like that? So you might resist it. You might resent it.

You might run from change. You might get out of dodge. I'm leaving.

Or you might even rebel against it. And just kind of throw up your hands and say, That's it. I'm tired of putting up with this.

But here's the word, friends. Change is ahead of each one of us. It will happen.

It will happen. It reversals and disappointments. It may be your health.

It may be your career. It may be what you thought about yourself. It may be your family.

It may be your church. It may be your town or your nation that you live in. But change is ahead.

That's what happens to people as they live on earth. So what we've got to understand is when life surprises us that storms are normal for Christians. In the world you'll have tribulation.

He said that. Somebody said the Christian life is full of storms. You're either in one right now and saying, Please, Lord, get me out of this storm.

Say, Peace. Be still. Or you're just coming out of one and you're saying, Whew, man, I'm glad that's over.

Give me a breath. Or you're looking on the horizon and you see clouds and you say, Uh-oh, here it comes. I've seen it before.

But there are storms and you're either in or just out or one on the horizon. But despite all of that we have that promise. You know what people often call the hospital verse.

It says in verse 28 of Romans chapter 8, For we know this, I hope you know this, that all things work together for the good to those who love God and to those who are the called ones according to His purposes. So when you love God and you're consecrated to His will, His sovereignty can be your sanity because He's in charge. He knows the end from the beginning.

And He holds all things in His hand. And you may not understand everything. In fact, that's what faith does.

It walks with love of God and maybe has a blindfold on. But God, change is coming and we're going to have to face it. And it's change in my future.

And God will honor that change. If you love Him, He'll make it work for good. Now one of the most amazing illustrations of this I heard when I was in India.

It was an old preacher. And he got up and he told this story. About up in northwest India in a province up there that was rather hostile to the gospel.

But it was years ago before things were so modern that now they are. But there were Maharajahs there. And that was like a king or a royal governor.

And they had a province under them. It's like a king. And there was this Maharajah in northwest India.

It was a very wild part of India. Not often safe to travel the roads. Kind of like Perkins Avenue over here at night.

You might meet a thug. I mean thugs broke into the hotel where I was over in the parking lot and broke 19 car windows. And they were looking for guns according to the policemen.

So you got them here too. I know you know what I'm talking about. But there was this Maharajah.

And he had a servant who was a wonderful Christian. He was like his right arm man. And he was always with this Maharajah.

And he was a godly man. And he always walked in the spirit of God. And this Maharajah was not exactly Christian at all.

And what they would do is when they would be together this Maharajah would always praise God. And if the Maharajah like broke a vase, dropped on the ground, this servant would go, Oh, Master, all for good. And the servant said, That's weird.

I mean the Maharajah said, That is weird. How could this guy ever do that? No matter what happened the servant would go, Oh, Master, all for good. All for good.

But he was a good servant. Faithful man. Well one day the Maharajah, he was a little irritated with this man for always being, it's like somebody that always whistles.

You want to just smack them maybe. I don't know. But it's just kind of irritating after a while.

But he was always genuinely praising God. And one day the Maharajah was whittling with a knife and he slipped. And he cut his thumb completely off.

I mean sliced it and just fell off. His thumb is on the ground. He is bleeding profusely from his wound.

He wraps the towel around it. And the servant runs in and says, Oh, Master, all for good. All for good.

And the Maharajah says, You idiot. How could you possibly mean that this is for good? Take this man to the dungeon. I don't want to see the likes of him ever again.

And they took this servant down to the dungeon and forgot him. Put him down there. You know rats and bats and not very sanitary.

And he is down there alone. A couple of months go by and the Maharajah's hand heals, but his thumb is missing. And being bored without companionship, the Maharajah says, We are going hunting.

And they went out with a party. And they put the Maharajah's tent over here to the side. A royal tent and it was obviously his.

That night they were sleeping and thugs that were there. They were well known in this area. They came upon them and snuck in his tent.

What they would do is they would kidnap you. They would come and they would take Mike and they would slap him until he was quiet. Then they would wrap him up in a rug like this.

And then whisk him away over to their temple where they would unfurl him and then offer him as a sacrifice to the pagan god. They did that all the time. And so they grabbed this Maharajah and took him rolled up in a rug back to their temple.

And when he gets there they unroll him and they put him on the altar and they are just getting ready to sacrifice. It is a great sacrifice this Maharajah. And they draw their knife back like this.

And he is like this. All of a sudden they go, What? You are no good for sacrifice. You marred.

You have no proper hand. And so they beat him with their fists. And he was bleeding.

And they sent him away. Or he ran away and they released him back to his palace. And when he got back to his palace he was sitting there thinking about what had happened to him.

And he said, My servant was right. He was right. Me getting my thumb cut off saved my life.

And he was right all along. And I mistreated him. Go and get him out of the dungeon.

And bring him to me. I must make this right. And so the servant was brought up.

And he had that dungeon look. He had been bent over. And he came up before the Maharajah.

And the Maharajah says, Oh servant, you have been faithful to me for years. And I have wronged you greatly. And I have sent you into a difficult dungeon.

And here you are. And he told him the story of what had happened to him. And how his thumb missing had saved his life.

And the servant was right. He said, Servant, can you ever forgive me? Please forgive me. And the servant looks at him and says, Oh master, all for good.

All for good. And he says, You are amazing. How could you possibly say that being in a dungeon down there all this time was all for good? It's amazing.

Tell me what you mean by that. How could you? Oh servant. And the servant goes, Oh master, if servant had not been in dungeon, servant would have been by your side where I have always been.

And they would have taken me also to this temple. And he says, And look master, all for good. All for good.

You have to look back on it. Sometimes hindsight is what teaches you how God knows what He is doing. His sovereignty can be your sanity.

He will take care of His own. And even though it is a martyr's block, sometimes it will be all for good if we trust God and learn to trust Him. In every situation, in everything, giving thanks.

His ways are higher than ours. His thoughts are higher than ours. And He knows what He is doing.

And He knows what He is about. He orders our steps. He orders our stops.

There are no accidents for a Christian. Not a real Christian. No accidents.

God wants to encourage to lift your eyes to Him. To lift your hearts to Him. To lift your hands to Him in these coming days.

So you can trust Him. I wasn't planning on speaking on this this morning, but I remembered the words of my wife as I left. She said, Don't forget, in the conviction of it, they need encouragement.

And I thought this woman how right she is. Because encouragement is the fuel, the thanksgiving of real prayer. And it's very difficult to pray.

I mean sometimes the best prayers in history have come from wits in corner. That's true. On them being burned at the stake.

Save the King of England, says the martyr in Europe. He's burned and the Lord then saves King James a little later after that. But I want to look at four keys to have a thankful heart no matter what.

Would you turn in your Bible to James chapter 1? I want to look at four keys that are important and vital to have a thankful heart no matter what. To walk with the Lord when life surprises you. To respond to Him in a way that honors Him when things aren't going the way you think.

So in James chapter 1, written by the physical brother of the Lord, pastor of the first church of Jerusalem, a servant of God, of the Lord Jesus. That's how he introduces himself. Not the physical brother of Jesus.

He says here, verse 2. My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into many different kinds of testings or temptations. Because you know this. This is something you know.

That the trying of your faith is working. It's at work and it's working. Patience or endurance.

But you've got to cooperate. Let patience have its perfecting work. So that you can become perfect and entire.

Not lacking or wanting anything. But if you do lack or want wisdom, let him ask of God. If any of you are like that.

And He will give to all men liberally. And He won't scold you. It will be given to Him.

But let that one ask in faith. Not wavering. For he that wavers is like a wave at the sea.

Tossed back and forth. Driven with the wind. And tossed.

Don't let that person think he shall receive anything of the Lord. A double-minded man is unstable in all of his ways. The word in the Greek is two-souled.

It means a person that is one way in this situation and then another. And not constantly living in the presence of God and doing what we're saying here. We'll always be unstable and you'll always wonder what happened.

But verse 12. Here's another beatitude. Blessed is the man that endures.

And it is that. It's hard. But he endures parosmos or temptation.

For when he is tested, he will receive the crown of life. Which the Lord has promised to those that love him. To those that love him.

Again, he says he'll cause it to work together for good. If you love him and you're called according to his purpose. So there are several things that we need to extract from here.

And I trust that the Lord will make them real to you as we look at them together. So the first one is in verse 2. Where it says, count it all joy. When you fall into many kinds of different testings or temptations.

Count it all joy. The first point then is when you fall into something. The word here is like falling off a curb into the street.

You're walking along and you step off the curb and bang. You're down there and you say, how did I get down here? That's the kind of thing we're talking about here. You're walking along in your Christian life and the next thing you know you're on your back looking up.

What happened? Well, count it all joy. The word is a word that means it's like an accounting term. Which means this is what you've got to call the reality.

You've got to count it all joy. So this first one is a joyful attitude. I want you to say that.

A joyful attitude. Can you say it? You're not saying it. A joyful attitude.

And he says when you fall. Not if. You fall down.

At first thought joy and trial seem totally incompatible. Don't they? I remember the first time I went behind the Iron Curtain many years ago. Before the curtain was down.

And I saw in the Eastern Bloc countries Christians that had such a hard time of things. But yet God was on them in such a way. And I saw such joy and it blew my mind.

It let me just see that joy has nothing to do with circumstances. Joy in His presence. In His presence is fullness of joy.

And I saw this in them. And they counted everything joy. You know in 1 Peter 4 verse 12 it says, Beloved, don't think it's strange.

It says it twice. Because we're tending to think it's strange. Beloved, don't think it's strange when you fall into some fiery trial that's sent to test you as if it's a strange thing.

Now if something happens to you and you ask me to pray for you. It's something really tragic. I expect trouble for others.

And I want to pray for them. But when it happens to me it seems strange. Is that how you feel too sort of? What's going on here? I can't understand it.

How could a loving God ever allow something like this? So here is the first thing. A joyful attitude. And you reckon, you count it so.

It's an intelligent choice to rejoice. Because you know that behind whatever is happening to you. There's a sovereign God who has wonderful character.

Like Paul said in Romans 8, I reckon that the sufferings of this present day are not worthy to be compared with the glory of God that's going to be revealed. When you see really clearly. In that day.

When it happens. Behind everything for a real Christian stands the unassailable character of God. And He will work it for good.

As you trust Him. I imagine Stephen when he was being stoned. Getting ready to be stoned.

He knew what was going to happen to him. He saw him picking up the rocks. And he looked up to Jesus.

And he saw Him and he said, Lord receive my spirit. And don't lay this to their charge. It sounds like Jesus on the cross.

Doesn't it? And it says that he saw Jesus standing. He had been sitting. But here He's standing.

He's the first martyr. And He's the first one that really demonstrates what we're talking about here. He's praising God in all these things.

And I'll tell you what. It had a terrific impact, didn't it? On the Apostle Paul. Who held the clothes.

And he'd been convicted so much by that. That when Jesus finally knocks him off. His high horse.

Onto the ground. He says, Saul, Saul. Isn't it hard for you to keep kicking against the pricks? There are people that run from God.

And He keeps pricking their heart. And He keeps saying, come to me. Come to me.

And they're resisting. And finally they get knocked over. And the Lord says, it's hard.

You've been resisting mightily. But now trust me. So when we're in trials.

You and me. And we respond properly. Maturity works.

Tribulation works. Patience and patience. That list in Romans 5. And it ends up giving hope and assurance.

Because we see God is who He says. Tribulation. Count it all joy.

Listen. I walked. Robert Browning wrote this poem.

I walked a mile with pleasure. She chattered all the way. But I was none the wiser.

For all pleasure had to say. But I walked a mile with sorrow. And not a word said he.

But oh, the things I learned from him. When sorrow walked with me. Because by the heaviness or sadness of the heart.

It says in the scripture. You're made wiser. And God maketh my heart soft by these things.

So maturity in the Lord. Has more to do with how we respond to trial. Than how many trials you go through.

Old Keith Green wrote a song one time. Take another lap around Mount Sinai. That you didn't learn your lesson.

God wanted you to learn one of His most precious things. There are things about His character. You can't learn in good times.

You have to understand when something happens. That He's going to teach you a treasure. A precious thing.

But you've got to count it all joy. I remember when one of my good friends. His dad we'd been praying for for a long time.

This was a couple years ago in Atlanta. And he was a big business man. Wealthy and everything.

We'd been praying for his dad. And one day they came into his office. And they found his dad dead in his chair.

Back like that. And it devastated my friend Bill. And he called me and says.

Pray for me Al. I'm mourning my dad died. And I don't know what happened to him.

And he got with the Lord. And he's alone. And he said I'm going to pray.

And he tried to do all these things. To say Lord show me this. And comfort me.

And after some time nothing was happening. He felt miserable. He felt forlorn.

And he felt like the Holy Spirit said. Worship me. And he said Al.

I forgot about my pain. And I began to worship Him. And instantly.

The peace of God came. And garrisoned my heart. Just like that verse that we just read.

Behind it all. He stands. The joy of the Lord is your strength.

I remember. This little lady. Once she had in her Bible margin.

T.P. T.P. T.P. And someone said to her. What's the T.P. stand for? And she said. Oh that means tried and proved.

Tried and proved. It's like that precious. Elderly white haired woman.

That was really peaceful. And always full of joy. And there was a younger woman in the church.

Who really. She was not that way. She was feisty.

And she was always jumping to conclusions. She was a Christian. And she saw Aunt Bessie.

Who was always even keeled. And always just. Always trusting God.

And so this young woman came to her. And she said. Aunt Bessie.

How do you always praise God. How do you always just keep your eyes on Him. And I never see you flustered.

I need help. Is there some verse you claim that you love. And you claim more than any other.

And Aunt Bessie said. Yes honey there is. And she said.

Well what is it. And she said. Here it is.

It came to pass. And the girl said. Yes go on go on.

She said. That's it honey. It came.

And it's going to pass right on through. And while it's passing. I'm going to be praising.

What wisdom is that. It came to pass. In the fullness of time.

It came. You see my choice is between murmuring. Or maturity.

The first one is. Count it all joy. And I would call this the choice.

To rejoice. The choice to rejoice. And it's a joyful attitude.

But the second one. Which is right cousins to it. That goes together with it.

They're joined it's almost hard to bring them apart. Is in verse 3. Where it says. Knowing this.

See when you're counting it all joy. When you fall. Then you know something.

You've got to know that the testing of your faith is working. You've got to understand what's happening to you. So this is the second one.

First is a joyful attitude. Because you have a. Understanding mind. That's the second one.

Verse 3. And it says. Knowing this. Whereas the first one is the choice to rejoice.

I would call the second one. The knowing. That means growing.

If you know this. You see the process in the ways of God. You see that this life is just a dressing room.

You've got to understand that. It's like you know. In that basketball game.

March Madness. They're back in the locker room getting all ready. Putting on their stuff.

And their tennis shoes. Making sure the laces are just right. You know talking to the coach.

Getting the water together. And then they get all dressed. And they all say.

Well let's just go home. The locker room is just a dressing room. For the game that's coming.

The big one. And this life is just a dressing room. And the Lord says.

Put on the Lord Jesus Christ. And to make full assurance of your faith. And to prove yourselves.

In the things of God. It's a laboratory for truth. And God wants to raise your perspective to His.

He wants you to spend time in His words. So He can give you an understanding. In all things.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Lean not onto your own understanding. But in everything you do.

Acknowledge Him. Meaning as Lord. And the Lord will direct your steps.

In the next verse. Fear the Lord and depart from evil. That's what makes those first ones work.

They always quote those verses to high school graduates. And I say read the next verse. Fear the Lord and depart from evil.

Because the first part won't work. Unless you love the Lord. And you surrender to Him.

Because of who He is. Then that will work. To trust in the Lord with all your heart.

You won't lean on your own mind or thoughts. But you'll understand Him. And He will give you the desires of your heart.

He will put into your heart the desires He wants you to have. And so God is building you. JT He's building you for eternity.

He's not just making you until you turn 80. Or turn 90. Or however old you might live to be.

He's building you for eternity. And time is a passing vapor. It's going to be gone quick.

But see faith that hasn't been tested. Can't ever be trusted. You see faith that hasn't been tested.

You see Christians that have all these wonderful testimonies. And you see things in their life. But I tell you this didn't start with big things happening like that.

There was times that they had tears. And they were like John the Baptizer in jail. And had to put up with the dungeon darkness.

As they were living in the fullness of the will of the Father. But our Heavenly Father has promised. He'll work all for good.

All for good Master. All for good. In everything.

By prayer and supplication. With thanksgiving. Let your heart requests be made known to Him.

And His peace will come. And He will garrison your heart. And He will let you know that He is God.

You see this is what Peter says in his first chapter. He says listen. Don't be surprised at the fiery trial.

The dokema is the word. The trial test that will come upon you. As if it's a strange thing.

But you're going to be in manifold. It means many colored. Like a rainbow of trials.

It's necessary. Because the trial of your faith is more precious. Than even gold.

That's going to be done away with. They're going to walk on the streets of gold in Heaven. Today they'll kill you for it.

It's the most precious thing to people on earth. But you see. If you go out here.

And you look in the hill. And you find a big lump of gold. And you go and you take it to someone.

And you say, I'm rich. I'm rich. Here's a big thing of gold.

And he'll put it in a big pot, the way they used to anyway. And turn the heat up under it. And suddenly this gold nugget begins to melt.

And become what looks like a golden lake. And you say, isn't that beautiful? And He says, not so fast. And He turns the heat up.

He turns the heat up hotter. And all of a sudden up comes all this garbage. That's hidden on the inside.

And it comes up. It looks like burned paper crumpled up. And I say, what is that? What is that? It's gross.

Or as my grandson said, that's ghost. That's ghost. He got it from his mama.

That's ghost. That's ghost mama. That's ghost.

I say, can you do something about that? And he gets down and he goes. He blows. And this kind of ashy stuff just skims across the top.

And goes off. And leaving it looking gold again. Then he turns the heat up.

Not so fast. And up comes more garbage. And then he takes a scraper.

And he scrapes this heavier stuff off. And I say, well how many times do you have to do that? Well the Bible says how many times you have to do it. It says that it is like silver that is refined seven times in gold.

So is our heart in the heat. And so finally He says, here is when I know it is finished. And He'll stand over the gold and look down.

He says, when I can see my reflection in the gold without any blemish or spot. Then it is ready to be put in circulation. And to be used for the purposes for which I called it.

And so we get in a situation. We think we've been in church all our life. And we get in some situation.

And the heat comes up. And up comes all this garbage. And the Lord says, count it all joy.

And understand what is happening. Because it says the refining pot is for silver. And the furnace is for gold.

But the Lord tests the hearts. He does this to your heart. And take away the dross from silver.

And it will be a vessel all the finer. We have this treasure in earthen vessels. And so He wants your head knowledge and my head knowledge to become heart reality.

He wants it to move 18 inches from the head to the heart. I say look, when truth moves from your head to your heart 18 inches and goes down this way. You'll often get a lump in your throat.

Because it will flatten and surprise you what God teaches you. So we are in God's quarry. You know it is so interesting to me when you see Solomon.

He built his temple in 1 Kings chapter 6. All those big stones were quarried away from Jerusalem in a big place. They brought them up to the temple. But it says, When Solomon got all these things finished, and he brought them up to the temple to put it together, there was never the sound of a file or a hammer heard.

He assembled it on the mountain. Prefab you might say, but made in the quarry. And see right now you are in God's quarry.

And He is chiseling off the rough edges. And He is making things smooth. He has got heavenly sandpaper.

So that in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, up you will go and you will be fully fitted together, framed in the whole purpose and will of God in His perfect time. It takes time to make a saint. It is not like what we think.

I remember some years ago there was a year, my wife and I call it the year that was a hard year. It was the year her, first of all, my son got lymphoma and was probably going to die we thought. And then her mama got sick.

And then my mama died. And all these things began to happen. Tragedy in our daughters, happening to her with something that broke her heart at that time.

And I remember about the time you are thinking you got it together, in would come something else. And I had a picture in my mind. I felt like I was praying.

And I saw myself in a pot, a big pot. It is a circular metal. I can't get out.

It is all around me. And it is starting to boil. And I felt like, Lord, no matter which way I turn, here is something new coming.

What am I going to do? And it was like I felt like I was being in a stew, you know. And about the time I was saying, I am getting used to it, in would come another ingredient, like an onion would come in or something. I know this sounds crazy.

But I am in the midst of this. In comes an onion. In comes this garlic.

Lord, I don't like garlic. And all this stuff coming. And you are being just melted together.

And you would back up like this, trying to get up. You know, no matter which way you went, there was heat. I was being held in it.

And I said, what is happening? And he says, look higher. Look higher. And if you see in this picture looking higher, suddenly you see the chef.

You are in the banqueting ingredient here. But suddenly you see the face of your chef. And he says, Al, I know what I am making.

And when I get through this, I am going to take this off at the right moment and put it on the king's banqueting table. And it will be a feast to him. And so that is like it may be with you.

You don't like what is happening. And the Lord says, count it all joy. Because you realize what is happening.

And I am assembling you. But the third thing is, it goes together with it. And that is the third thing here is in verse 4 and 5 of James 1. It says, but let patience or let this endurance have its perfecting work.

There is a part that you have to be. Let it happen. And so that you can become perfect and entire, not lacking anything.

So this third step is a submissive will. A joyful attitude. That is the choice to rejoice.

Because secondly, you know what is happening. And that is a knowing that means growing. And the third is cooperate with God.

That is a submissive will. And this is the trust that is a must for you. It is when you trust God and you make the, yes you have done the first things, but now you are cooperating with God.

A lot of people that don't understand, they run away from things. Before they even ask God what is going on, they try to run away, get out and dodge. But see what we should do, instead of blaming God for sending it, or allowing it.

Instead of just trying to get away from it, we need to say, Lord we thank You for allowing this. We don't understand it, but give us the ability to understand. Instead of saying, does God really care? And fall into self-pity, which is what I have a tendency to do when things get really hard.

I feel real sorry for myself, and I have a wife that helps me. She says, that does not work. She is awesome in that.

And say, what is going on? But this attitude is why so many people think they are miserable. You are not miserable. You are just not cooperating and making a choice to rejoice because you don't understand what is happening.

And you haven't really got a submissive will in this. And so, God will never test you more than you are able. This is not just passive acceptance, like whistling in the dark, waiting for it to go away.

This is active cooperation. Like, Lord, I hate this. I hate every second of it.

But do a deep work in me, and let me live in Your presence. Let me understand what You are doing. And afterwards, no chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous, but afterwards it yieldeth the peace, the fruit of righteousness to those that are gymnasied.

That's the word. Exercised by it. It's like bench-pressing 100 pounds more than you can.

So, if you just can't cooperate with God, it says right here what you're to be about. It says here, look at this. Let patience have a perfecting work so you can be perfect and entire, lacking nothing.

If you lack wisdom, ask of God. See, he says here there's three things you have that will keep you in this moment. There's perseverance in this prayer and this praise.

So, if you lack wisdom, ask God how to cooperate with him, how to rejoice and have perfect peace, this trust that is a must. And you know what God will do? He'll come, it says, and he will give to you. He won't scold you and say, you should have known better than this.

He'll give you what you need because he'll make it work together for the glory of his name and for the good of you and ultimate standing before God. You see, we've got to be standing on his promises and not just sitting on these premises. He'll teach you.

He'll guide you in the way you should go. But see, you've got to be a see-througher and not just a look atter. Norman Grubb once said to me, I picked him up at the airport in Fort Worth, and he came and he says, Al, you've got to be a see-througher and not just a look atter.

And I said, that's weird, what does that mean? But I understood later, he meant you've got to see through your circumstances. You've got to see through what's happening around you and not just look at it and say, oh no, oh no. You've got to see what God is showing and you've got to hear what he's saying and you've got to embrace what he's giving.

And when you do, you'll enter into the joy of your Lord. When you say, Lord, use this to mold me. Paul said, I want to know him and I want to be the power of his resurrection.

Yes, Lord, we say. But also the fellowship of his sufferings is plural there. Different kinds of testings and sufferings.

It sounds like idiot to say, Lord, I welcome this. But God's not desiring just to make you miserable. He's desiring to make you holy.

And that's the highest thing. Christ in me, this is holiness like we sang yesterday. So if you just cannot seem to understand, if you lack wisdom, ask God and say, show me the rainbow in the cloud.

When you look at the light of the sun in a big storm, you see a rainbow, promise. And you know the scripture said there's probably 7,500 promises in the Word of God. And Caleb lived for 40 years on one promise.

And all these promises of God are yes and amen. In Christ Jesus unto us who are his. One day I was studying and I read this and it really struck me.

And it said, if you don't get up off of what you're down on, you're never going to get in on what God is up to. That's pretty good. You got to get up off of what you're down on.

What are you down on? Are you in this group that's down on this group? Are you always down on this and that and making issues your main thing? You got to get up off of what you're down on so you can get in on what God is up to. And he'll make you a voice to all people, not just to your group. Today we live in a day, we talked with the man, that everybody's doing what's right in their own eyes.

They think what they're doing is right. The Bible says every way of men seems right in his own eyes. But the Lord tests the spirits.

And He'll put you in a situation where your philosophy will be bankrupt, and you'll see it, and you'll finally come to the point where you'll say, Lord, I'm bankrupt. My ways aren't Your ways. Your thoughts aren't my thoughts.

But I want the mind of Christ. Use this to change me. That's what He'll do.

And you know what will happen? Your friends will go, wow. See, the truth is trials will make you better, or they'll make you bitter. There are so many people that are bitter in church.

They won't come to God because something happened to them when they were a child, or something hurt them. And they're bitter at God, and they don't realize it's the devil that did it to them. Or either they did it by their own stupidity, or their own dumbness, or lack of understanding.

Instead of realizing that God wants to change your heart and make you into a real ability to cooperate with Him. So if you lack wisdom, ask of God, and He'll give to you. He'll give it liberally to you, and He won't scold you.

It will be given to you. What a promise. But the last one is, let him ask in faith.

Verse 6, nothing wavering. For the one who wavers, the one who is back and forth in the moment. You know, it's like foxhole religion.

Wavers. He's like a wave of the sea. He's with this crowd, and he believes what they believe.

Youth group is awesome. Then you get over here with this high school crowd. Oh, I love this brother.

He's just so nice. I love him. He just happens to be a drunk who sleeps all over the place, but he's your best friend.

And you see the complexity of this thing here. See, don't ask wavering, because you're tossed. The reason you're tossed back and forth is because you don't have an inner fiber like God wants you to.

So you've got to man up, or lady up, or whatever it is, and make a choice. And let the Lord make you into a Daniel. It's easy to be a Daniel when the lions are asleep.

But when they wake up, that's when you stand, and that's when you prove the character of God. I said that to the man. It's fresh on my mind.

Dare to be a Daniel. Dare to make him known. So the last one is a believing heart.

A submissive, a joyous attitude, because you have an understanding mind, and then you cooperate with God. You submit yourself to God, a submissive will. And in the process, as you pray and as you persevere, the last one is a believing heart.

You've got to believe God. And this would be translated, keep your eyes on Jesus, looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher, or the perfecter of your faith. You know, I read Paul's credentials as he talks about his life.

And in 2 Corinthians, he talks about his credentials. He gives his credentials in 2 Corinthians 6 and 2 Corinthians 11. But he says this in verse 17 of chapter 4, After all these things, a night and a day in the deep, beaten with rods, persecuted, robbed, all these different things, the Lord let him walk through this must have really made the devil mad.

When Paul could look and say, For our light affliction, which is just for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. And this is while we are looking at the things which, we don't look at the things that you can see, but the things which are not seen. Because the things that are around you are temporary.

But the things which are eternal are not seen. I heard Corrie ten Boom, you know who she was right? She went to the Nazi prison camp and her sister Betsy, they went together and Betsy died. Corrie got out and traveled all over the world later and she called herself the Tramp for the Lord.

And she would say this, she would hold up this big tapestry that was just jumbled threads from the back. And you would sit there and you would say, That's pretty ugly. I would never hang that up.

And then she said, That's the underside. That's what you see when you are looking. And she would turn it around into a beautiful golden crown that was embroidered on a piece of black velvet.

She said, That's what God sees. He's making a tapestry. And then she, she was a little squatty lady and she, you know, she looked like she had her hair rolled up like women so they wouldn't be caught dead.

And she wore this hose that had the lines down the back, you know, you wouldn't even wear that to your funeral, I'm telling you. But she didn't care. And she raised her hand and she says, Look around and be distressed.

She was talking about what you're looking at. How you see things, like Paul. Look around and be distressed.

Look within. You'll get depressed. But look to Jesus and you'll find rest.

And that's what he wants us to learn today. Keep your eyes on Jesus. Stay on your knees.

And you know what he'll do for a seminary student? He'll turn your, if you put neology center, he'll turn your theology with neology into doxology. And you'll be praising him while things are passing through your life. And he'll be using you.

The only real calamity that's bad that can happen to you is to don't have a believing heart. To stop believing God. To fall into unbelief.

But if you will, when you fall into different kinds of testings, count it all joy. Ah, let God give you his joy, his presence. He'll let you know it.

He'll garrison your heart because you have an understanding mind. And it's the knowing that means you'll be growing in this thing. And then you cooperate with God.

You pray. You persevere. And this is the trust that is a must.

And the last one is the loving that keeps looking. I have a hard time remembering that one. I don't know why.

That's a believing heart. You love him and he makes all things work together to those who love him. So God had one son without sin.

But he's never had any children without suffering. Because it says in Philippians, not only are you called to believe, but you're called, you have the privilege of suffering for his sake. It may not be exactly when or the time.

There was a guy named Matt Brunson. I was at this National Prayer Committee meeting. And we were having a meeting.

It was in the Reagan Building right there in Washington. And that night there were about, I'd say, maybe 1,200 people that were admitted into this room where Pence was going to come in a little bit and talk to the people at that time, Vice President Pence, about what he saw happening. But before all that there was an interview with Matt Brunson.

Now you might not know that name, but he was the missionary. What are we doing for, what time do you end here? Is it time? He's scratching his wrist. I know how they do that.

Yeah, scratch. It's time. I'm winding down.

I'm winding down. But Matt Brunson was in Turkey and he was a missionary there. And God was using him with the population.

And they loved him. A lot of them loved him. A lot of them hated him.

But the government didn't like him. And one day they arrested him after 11 years of being a missionary there. They put him in solitary and they didn't think he would ever get out.

Only his wife was allowed to see him every now and then. He was miserable and he was there all alone. And somehow the government, our government got involved and put pressure to the tune of millions and millions and millions, maybe a billion dollars on Turkey.

And they let him loose. But he came back to America. You might have seen it on the news.

And he went and he got that on his knees before the leadership of our country that had helped get him out. And he thanked them and he prayed for them that they had been used. I mean it was a public testimony.

He's an amazing man this Matt Brunson. It wasn't a political thing. He was thanking God.

He was making the choice to rejoice. But he was being interviewed by another person. And this person looked at Matt.

He's sitting up there in this chair. It's like an interview you're watching with all these 1,200 church leaders from all over America. And this man asked Matt Brunson, he said, What was it that the Lord taught you? Did you just have so many good lessons and you got so strengthened trusting God while you're in prison like that in the solitary confinement? Tell us some of the things you learned.

And Matt looked at him. He said, Actually, I feel like I was so weak and I was such a failure. And I felt sorry for myself a lot of the time.

And I just felt in darkness and abandoned. I was depressed. And my wife did let come see me once a month.

The only thing I wanted to know when I saw her was, Is the church praying for me? In that moment. And then he would leave. She would leave.

And I'm left alone again. There were lonely nights and lonely days. And it was just intense.

And I felt like I had no substance of my own. And I did trust God, but sometimes he felt remote to me. And one night he said, I was praying.

He told the interviewer, he said, One night I was praying. This just shocked everybody that was there, that was hearing him saying this. We thought he would say, Praise God.

He gave me strength in the dungeon. Yes. Hallelujah.

Amen. But instead, they heard him say, I was such a failure in the moment. And I felt like I always wanted to just maybe just die and go to heaven.

I didn't want to go on. I was so depressed. And all I wanted to know is the church is praying for me.

But you see, what happened is that when he was having a prayer time one night, he had a vision of a long line of people. And he was in it. He was standing in it.

And he was moving up slowly. The line was moving slowly forward. And as he was praying, I mean, you don't question this guy to say, Well, do you believe in that kind of speaking voice, you know? No.

He said, God spoke to me. He lacked wisdom. And he called upon the Lord.

And the Lord said, This line is the line of those who are in line. And they have the privilege of suffering for my name's sake. And you notice the line is moving forward, Matt.

And you're in that line. And at the front, you have the privilege of suffering. And, Matt, you're in that line and you're moving up.

And Matt realized in that moment that he had the privilege of suffering for his name's sake. And Matt Brunson stopped right there. And he looked out at all these well-dressed people that were there for a nice meal.

He says, And I want to say to all of you, you're in that line, and there's suffering in your future. And then he looked at the audience and he says, But you're not ready. What a moment.

What a moment. You're in that line, but you're not ready. Well, because we've never done these things.

We've never let His sovereignty really have our life and been in charge and trusted Him like that. So I've got to do that. You've got to arm yourself with the same mind.

I could give you a lot of illustrations in my own life. It's easy to see people that are out traveling around. You think everything is always great.

But anybody that you look at that can show you scars that are there. Paul says, I bear in my body the stigma to the scars of the Lord Jesus. Can you imagine what His back looked like having been beat with rods five times? One time would leave you scarred for life.

Five times would make you look like, I mean, I don't know what it would look like. It would be healed and then reopened and healed and reopened. And He had all these squinty eyes because maybe He couldn't see.

Maybe that was His problem. I don't really know. But He says, In all these things I rejoice, as I may be sorrowful, but I'm rejoicing.

He had this secret. Blessed is He whosoever is not offended in me. Nothing can separate us from the love of God that's in Christ Jesus.

So does God seem remote to you today? Maybe sometimes. Maybe you should say, I'm going to make the choice to rejoice. I'm going to have a joyful attitude, the gift from God.

And I'm going to realize what you're really doing in my life. You're taking me deeper than my own dedication could take me. I'm going to trust you in this situation.

If I can't understand what to do, I'm going to pray. Trust, it's a must. And I'm going to have a love for you, Jesus, that keeps looking unto Jesus, being able to say, How wonderful, how marvelous is my Savior's love for me.

So I would just say to you, dear one, lay down your sword that's been defending yourself. Lay down your sword that's been fencing with God about the way things should be done. And dare to get before His great throne and trust His loving sovereignty.

And never forget in the dark what God has told you in the light. If you're in the cellar of affliction, if you're down there because you just told somebody the truth, the day will come when God will reveal it. And you'll be able to say, All for good, Master.

All for good. And you'll understand. And you'll be glad you did.

All for good. It's all for good. One last story.

I was preaching at First Baptist Atlanta. I'd been there a lot of times before. I knew them and they knew me.

And I preached some of this from another place in Romans 5 about trusting God and repenting when we're kind of bitter at God or angry at God. It's hard to pinpoint it. But he was kind of angry with God, kind of bitter.

It's easy to get that way. I gave an invitation. This is a church with a couple thousand people in it.

And I remember people flooded the altar because I says, It's time to come down and confess your bitterness to God, to Him, and ask Him to cleanse you from a heart that's been restrained from following fully because you've been hurt a lot of times. You need to see the real understanding of things. And I remember I gave this invitation.

People began to flood the altar. And then there was this woman in a red suit. She was magnificently dignified.

She came walking down the aisle. She didn't go to the altar. She came to me.

She put out her hand like this. And I took her hand and she said, Al, today God has shown me that I've been angry and bitter at Him for many years. My husband was the chairman of the deacons here, a great man of God.

And for years God used him here in this church on the mission field. And we were walking out the back of the church there after a Sunday morning. And he had a heart attack at the top of the stairs.

He was dead before he hit the concrete. And he rolled down the stairs of the church. And I watched him.

They took him away. He was gone. And she looked at me and tears filled her eyes.

And she said, I think I've been angry at God ever since. And I said, what's the Lord saying to you, dear sister? She says, repent and trust Jesus. And I pointed there.

She got down and she had a sure enough good time for God. And the Lord healed her heart. I think it wasn't long after that that she joined him.

But I just want to say to you, don't be afraid of what the world is afraid of. Fear that you come short of what God has for you, seemingly. You won't.

But you could, I was telling Roy today coming here, I said, one day we'll see. There's tears in heaven. And God will wipe them away.

But I think there will be tears because of all the moments we could have had if we just had made the right choice. And we missed it. We missed it.

Because of self-pity or fear or whatever else. But, see, we put those away and make a choice to rejoice because we understand that he's making us saint. You're in the quarry.

This is a laboratory for his truth. And the day will come when he will present you faultless and blameless before the Heavenly Father. Saved by the blood of the Lamb and kept by the Holy Spirit and buttressed and cleansed by the Word of God.

And now enter into the joy prepared for you from before the foundation of the world. That day is coming sooner than you can imagine. We were talking out back how quick 40 years goes like that.

Boom. Hadn't seen some of these people in 30 years in these meetings this week. But it seems like just a heartbeat.

And before you know it, you'll be standing before him. We all shall give an account before his bema seat. He's not going to condemn if you're a loving, if you're a lover of Jesus and a son of God.

But I'm sure we'll all be amazed at his grace in that day. So rejoice in it now and dare to follow fully. This is not going to be a rerun.

This is not going to be graded on a curve. He has got you in one run through this race. So make it count.

Redeem the time. Pay whatever price you have to to let God be God. And let your life become Christ in me.

Here's your body, Lord, today. I'm flying home to Atlanta tonight. Lord, I'm excited.

I love flying on airplanes. I haven't flown much since all this junk went on. I haven't been able to.

I mean, you can plan a meeting and they'll cancel it before you get there. But I'm excited. It's like fishing in a trout hatchery.

I mean, I'm serious. It's such a joy to know that my whole steps are filled with divine appointments. And you're going to put somebody right beside me or in the airport or somewhere.

Let me listen. And let me give a word from Heaven to hearts. It may not be harvesting.

It may be sowing. It may be crushing a hard rock. Say, you shouldn't feel that way.

I don't blame your wife for leaving you. To say to a guy, she shouldn't have done it ultimately. But you've been acting like a jerk.

They hate your guts. But say, you've done your job. You've crushed that thing.

And then along comes another laborer and comforts him. Oh, bless you, poor guy. And gives him the Word of God.

And God harvests that soul. Be part of the harvest. He left you here.

Why didn't he drown you at baptism? To be with Christ is better. To die is gain. But he left you here with the privilege of trusting him in the good places and in the hard places.

Well, I've got to quit. But I want to ask you, are you angry at God? Does he seem remote to you? Maybe it's time to settle that right in your seat where you are. I don't know what you do here after the service, but I know that you can come to the altar.

If you wanted to, I know that because I know Mike. And you can come and say, Lord, I repent of just being a harboring thing. Don't judge someone that comes forward.

Don't try to say, boy, they are terrible. No, but just deal with God yourself. Well, let's pray.

Father, in the name of Jesus, we thank you for your mercy and grace. Not one of us could stand and say we deserve anything at all from you except for certainty of judgment when it all comes down. But your love endures and your mercy endures.

And we've come together here today to just hear from your word. I pray that each one of us will get involved in reality and make a choice in everything to be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication. With thanksgiving to let our request be made known to God, knowing that you are the Lord and you are sovereign and we can trust you.

May we choose to rejoice in who you are and that you've let us live to be yours. And may we realize that you're not just making us happy for a few years. You're preparing us for the place you've prepared for us.

And may we cooperate with you even when we don't understand and keep our eyes on you and let your peace that passes understanding put a wall around our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Meditating in your word day and night and walking in a matter that brings you glory. Now Lord, as we just wait before you for a moment, maybe there's some that want to come and kneel and just confess to you that they want to trust you.

They want to be yours. They want to belong to you. Maybe there's some that need to confess that they've been angry at you or remote because they thought you hurt them when it was somebody else or some devil.

But today they want to clear it up like that woman at First Atlanta who cleared it up and the clouds blew away by the Spirit of God. So bless this time as we wait before you and help people in their seats even to say, Lord, cleanse my heart and let me be a Christian that in everything I can truly be thankful and rejoice and walk in the beauty of holiness. In the name of Jesus, let's just continue the attitude of prayer.

And if you need to slip to this front, you just do it. He'll give it what you need. He won't scold you.

He'll meet you at the altar of the cross. Maybe just in your seats, you need to say, Lord, clear my decks. I'm like a man on a ship that's got furniture all over the decks of the ship.

I just get rid of it in Jesus name. We're just waiting on the Lord. If you need to come, you come in your seat, you do whatever you need to do.

Oh, to Jesus I surrender all. To Him I freely give. I will ever entrust Him in His presence daily.

Make it your prayer. I surrender all. I surrender all.

All to Thee, my blessed Savior, I surrender all. Can we just sing that with her? I surrender all. Let's sing it.

I surrender all. Sing it. Sing it to the Lord.

I surrender all. All to Thee. All to Thee, my blessed Savior, I surrender all.

Can you do it one more time? Pray it to Him. Pray it. Lift your hearts to Him.

I surrender. I surrender all. I surrender all.

All to Thee, my blessed Savior, I surrender all. Father, we thank you for the still small voice, full of grace and truth, mercy overflowing, tender, abundant, and new every morning. And you're calling us to launch

out into the deep and let down our net for a great catch.

We've cleaned our nets and we have them all in order, but it doesn't make sense. We thought we knew how to fish, but at your word, we respond. And when we do, we're going to be surprised at the fruit and the catch that comes.

So we ask you to summon our hearts with the mercy and grace that you send forth your light and truth and let them lead us into your footstool, to your temple. And may we leave here today with blessed assurance that passes understanding because you're the supreme and sovereign Lord of the universe, and that fact is our sanity. You'll finish every work you begin, and you'll do it well and perfect and lacking nothing.

So teach us to pray. Teach us to listen. Teach us to surrender.

And thank you for being a gentle shepherd, gracious Lamb of God. But we also thank you for your spankings and your chastenings that teach us about our pouting and our reluctance and rebellion. Teach us how to repent and trust you moment by moment with the joy of the Lord.

In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/vV4L9QHnhog.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/al-whittinghill/why-cant-i-be-thankful/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net