

# Mid South Conference 1978-06 Fellowship in the Gospel

by Aldy Fam Fanous

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*The sermon encourages believers to rejoice in the Lord, emphasizing the importance of fellowship, worship, and the dangers of sin in maintaining joy and victory in their lives.*

**Duration:** 42:24

**Scripture:** Isaiah 56:10-11, Philippians 2:19-20, Philippians 3:1, Philippians 4:2, Philippians 4:4, Philippians 4:6

**Topics:** "Gospel"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses different levels of spiritual knowledge and growth. He describes the state of being ankle deep, knee deep, and loins deep in knowledge, but emphasizes that the ultimate goal is to be fully submerged like a swimmer. The preacher emphasizes that in this state, only Christ should be seen in the believer's life. The sermon then shifts to the book of Philippians, where the preacher highlights the importance of rejoicing in the Lord and being careful of false teachers. The preacher encourages the audience to be filled with the Spirit of God and obedient to His bidding.

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## Transcript

You're supposed to watch the director. You take things for granted. Friends, I speak for my wife and myself.

We have been very, very privileged this week with our presence in the camp and to know so many of you and talk to so many of you. And I want to thank each and every one of you for the fellowship that we have and the encouragement you gave me. We praise the Lord for this bond of fellowship that exists between the Lord's people.

There is no barrier. We have all been made to drink of the self-same spirit. Praise God.

Please turn with me to the Book of Philippians. We are still on Chapter 2. I can promise to finish Chapter 4 tonight. Again, I don't want to be in a nursery.

You're not responsible for that. Okay, thank you so much. A couple of hours.

But we spoke last night about Jehovah's songs. He is pleased in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, did the will of the Father. Father, if it be Thy will that this cup should pass from me, yet not what I will, but Thy will

be done.

And He drank the cup to the end. It is finished. It is finished.

Your salvation and mine is finished. And you accept the finished work as you accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. We come now to Chapter 3. Chapter 3 of the Epistles to the Philippians.

Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord To write the same thing to you, to me, indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe. Start with the word rejoice. If there is any person in the world, and I mean in the world, the whole world, that has the right to be happy and joyful, it is the Christ.

I still remember the chorus we used to sing when we were young. Joy, joy, joy. With joy my heart is ringing.

Why? My sins are all forgiven. I'm on my way to heaven. My heart is bubbling over with the joy of the Lord.

As I look to the dial of a watch, I can see two types of Christians. At six o'clock, the long face. The two hands of the clock, up and down.

This is not a real Christian that is joyful in the Lord. But there is a quarter to three. Happy and joyful in the Lord.

I don't know what type of a Christian you are. You ask yourself tonight. There is no reason for any born-again Christian to be unhappy.

Not only smile, but be joyful in the Lord. I do realize that you and I pass through difficult times. There isn't, I said many times, I'm not a mind reader, but I can say so many here tonight, I don't know how many hundreds, 300, 400, 500, but there isn't one single person here that is accepted.

Each one of us has his burden. Right? Right. What is your attitude here? Rejoice in the Lord.

I'm going to remind you of David at Ziklack. He came back to Ziklack and found out that the city, or the town, or the camp had been burnt with fire. His two wives were taken away.

He had no wife, no right to have two wives, but never mind. His two wives were taken away, and all his possessions were gone. Everybody was gone.

And all the people with him lifted up their voices and cried. And he, David, also cried. But we read, David encouraged himself in the Lord.

How? How can anybody encourage himself in the Lord? Remember his promises. When you remember God's promises, you get over your difficulties. You are filled with joy.

As you remember the promises of God, you are filled with joy. What do you think of Joseph? Sold by his brother. Betrayed by his own brother.

Brought down to Egypt. But yet, he was honest and true to his Lord. And the way to Egypt, the way to prison, even the false accusation which was held against him, all these turned to his own good.

He changed prison with the throne of Egypt. Why? Because this is the end of the Lord. I think of Stephen.

He was being tried before the third heathen. He knew it was a foregone conclusion. He knew he was going to be stoned to death.

And yet the people looked at his face. It was like the face of an angel. Why? The joy of the Lord filled his heart.

And when he knew that his time was over and he was going to be stoned to death, he could cry, I see heaven open! I see heaven open! And the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God. When the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven, he sat down at the right hand of God. Stephen did not see him sitting.

He saw him standing. Why? He was receiving Stephen. Welcome home, Stephen! And he was filled with joy.

The joy of the Lord is your sin. I want to remind you of a third person. Not a third person, but I mean third personality.

Please stand with me. This is a very, very outstanding case. Daniel, chapter 1. The book of Daniel, chapter 1. Please look at verse 6 and 7. Or rather, 7. Unto whom, that's Daniel and his friend, prince of the eunuch, gave name.

And he gave the names of Daniel and his friend. What was Daniel doing there? What was he doing under the supervision of the prince of the eunuch? Have you ever stopped to ask yourself, was he a eunuch? Not before he came to Babylon. But according to the oriental custom, anybody who joins the service of the royal court in what you call the harim department has to undergo a surgical operation.

What did Daniel do? What was his attitude when this happened to him? I hope you understand what I mean. I'm sure you do. Did he shake his fist to God and say in defiance, I have been honest to you, and this my reward? No.

He purposed still in his heart to be honest and true to his God. He had power. He had strength.

The joy of the Lord is your strength. And God saw him through. Three times we read in his visions, You are beloved.

According to the law, a man with this description was cut off the congregation of the people. But to assure him, God gave him the greatest vision. And three times he said, You are beloved.

Friends, we have every reason to be joyful and happy in the Lord. Finally, brethren, rejoice in the Lord. Rejoice when? In chapter 4 verse 4, Rejoice in the Lord always.

Always. In every circumstance. In tribulation.

Rejoice in the Lord. There's only one thing that will rob you of your joy. One thing.

And that one thing is called sin. Sin in the life of the believer? Yes. It can happen, friends.

It can happen, friends. It can be the case probably with someone here tonight who is not joyful in the Lord because the joy of the Lord is gone from him because of something which is not according to God's will. David was joyful all his time except when he committed that sin.

And he said, Restore unto me the joy of my salvation. Restore unto me. It has been not salvation taken away but the joy of salvation was not his when he committed that sin.

The people of Israel were triumphant in Jericho. Jericho was a fortified city. A great fortified city with walls around it.

And yet the walls of Jericho tumbled down. And when they left Jericho they came to a place called Ai. Ai was a small city compared to Jericho.

And they said, Well, not all the army will go. Only a section of the army will go. And that section of the army went and yet they were defeated before the people of Ai.

And Joshua fell upon his face before the Lord. Why, Lord, hast thou allowed this? Why is it that Israel will run away before the enemy? And what did God say to him? Arise, Joshua. There is sin in the camp.

There is sin in the camp. Therefore there is no joy. No victory.

No triumph. There is sin in the camp. Maybe this is for you.

Maybe for me tonight. You are not joyful. You are not victorious.

You are not leading a life of victory. Why? Because there is sin in your life and my life. I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly.

If you are not enjoying the more abundant life tonight in Christ Jesus. The fault lies with you, friend. Maybe the Holy Spirit is putting his finger tonight on something in my life or in your life which is not according to his will.

Friend, there is only one thing that you can do. Cut it off. Cut it off.

That the blessing may flow. That you may enjoy the victorious Christian life which is your portion in Christ Jesus our Lord. You know there is a law called the law of gravity.

I have a piece of paper in my hand. I lift it up. If I let it go, it will fall down.

Why? The earth is pulling it. It's pulling it. There is a law of gravity.

And the law of gravity says that things are pulled down to the earth. You look at the birds flying in the sky and say, Ha! What is that law of gravity? Look at this small bird flying in the sky. If the law of gravity is there, how could it fly and defy the law of gravity? It being so small and the earth is so big.

Well friend, the law of gravity is still there. I can't prove it to you. I won't be able to do it anyway.

But even if I am, well if I am able to do it, it will come down. A bloody mess. Why? Why? There was life.

There was a heart beating in that bird. And when the heart stopped beating, the bird came down. I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly.

Are you enjoying the more abundant life? In Christ Jesus our Lord. Yes, the joy of the Lord is your strength. Joseph in Egypt, Stephen before the Sanhedrin, Daniel in Babylon.

They enjoyed the joy of the Lord because they were in touch with the throne day by day. I know the difficulties come my way but as I said before, there is no accident with the Lord. Nothing happens haphazardly to you in your life.

Nothing. And I say it on another story. All things without exception work together for good to them that love God even to them that are called according to His purpose.

You name it. Between you and the Lord. All things work together for good to them that love God and we praise God for the assurance that we have.

But please note in chapter 3 when he says, Finally my brethren rejoice in the Lord he does not continue the line of thought. He stops at the end of verse 1. Then he comes again in chapter 4 and picks up the line of finally. Why? Because the Holy Spirit reminds him of some very special message for you and for me tonight.

Three times the word beware appears in the following verses. Verse 2 Beware of God. Beware of evil workers.

Beware of the concessions. Three times. Beware of dogs.

Beware of evil workers. Beware of concessions. Who are the dogs? And the evil workers? And the concessions? We read in Isaiah that these are Isaiah 56 verses 10 and 11 These are the false teachers.

The false shepherds. You read the reference when you go home. Isaiah 56 verses 10 and 11 False teachers who look after their own interests.

Who spread false doctrines. Are we at a time tonight when there are false teachers? And how? Beware of false teachers. They are dogs that do not bark.

They look after their own interests. They don't care about the sheep. Beware of false teachers.

We are the circumcision. Now I have been asked many times and I wish to say it openly here. Circumcision in the Old Testament is not a type of baptism in the New Testament.

It is not. Baptism in the New Testament has not been foresight or shadowed by circumcision in the Old Testament. Circumcision in the Old Testament was a reference to the putting off of the flesh at the cross of Calvary.

We have been circumcised by the death of Jesus Christ our Lord. And this death of Christ circumcises our heart and our ears to listen to the living God. Circumcision in the Old Testament is a type or was a type of the putting off of the flesh at the cross of Christ.

We are the circumcision. We have accepted the end of all flesh at the cross of Calvary. And we worship God by the Spirit.

We worship God by the Spirit. I read the other day Isaiah 6. I read it thousands of times before. But this time it was almost new to me.

The angel there he had six wings. With four wings they covered themselves. A type of worship.

With two wings they covered their feet. With two wings they covered their faces. And with two wings they flew.

With four wings two-thirds of their being were used for worship before the Lord. And with two wings only they flew. Service never takes the place of worship.

Worship comes first. The source of your power as a Christian. The source of your joy.

The source of your energy. Worship. Before the Lord.

And there is no better time to worship the Lord as much as around the Lord's table. It is so important. There is no excuse at all for being absent from this time of worship.

For arriving late at this time of worship. Yes. Sixty-six and two-thirds and how much? Two-thirds, that's right.

Two-thirds of their being was occupied with worship to the Lord. And only one-third, thirty-three and one-third with service to the Lord. Yes.

Then, number three, he says in verse three, we have no confidence in the flesh. And I wish to stress this very much. Friends, the flesh of the believer is no more to be trusted than the flesh of the violent sinner.

Young men, do you hear me? The flesh of the believer is no more to be trusted than the flesh of the violent sinner. I have no confidence in the flesh. The flesh will return to sin.

You give it the chance. Give it the opportunity. It will fall back.

We trust not in the flesh. It is like the fall of a habit. The psychologist will tell us that a person is ninety-nine and nine-tenth percent habit that walk on his feet.

And I say rise to that. Habit is a very binding power. You try to get rid of it.

You cut off the H. You still have a bit. You cut off the H-A-B. You still have it.

That's right. That's the flesh. It's still there.

The flesh is still there. You kid yourself when you say I have reached the stage of holiness. I cannot sin anymore.

I have confidence in the flesh. We have no confidence in the flesh. My confidence is in my Savior, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

And as I am in touch with the Lord day by day, I experience the victory that I have in Jesus Christ, my Lord. Again, excuse me for referring again to Genesis chapter one. It's a great design for the believer.

The new creation in Christ. Light in the Lord. Separation from the world.

Fruit comes. Growth comes. The image of God comes.

And then comes rest. Rest. When all is accomplished, when you mirror back the image of Jesus Christ, our Lord, and the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, you enjoy the rest.

There remains, therefore, a rest for the people of God. If you are not enjoying the rest of victory, the land of Canaan has never been meant to be a type of heaven. When the people went to the land of Canaan, they were driven back from it, out of it again.

They had trouble in the land of Canaan. There'll be no trouble in heaven. The land of Canaan is a type of the rest which remains for the people of God.

You enjoy it as long as you are in perfect harmony with the will of God. But you step out of the will of God and you're in for trouble. Yes.

And he says, verse 8, please. That's chapter 3 and verse 8. Be doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and to count them but done that I may win Christ and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith, that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his suffering, be made conformable unto his death, if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. What does the apostle mean? Does he mean that he has not known Christ yet? Has he not attained unto the knowledge of Christ yet? Oh no, that's not what he means.

What did God apprehend Paul for? Paul was apprehended by Christ to bear the name of Christ before the Gentiles and before kings, and this is the object Paul has in mind, before him. This is the goal to which he was striving, to reach unto this thing for which he was apprehended by Christ Jesus. And there are three stages of knowledge for the Christian who has known Christ as his spiritual Savior.

Turn with me, please, to Colossians chapter one. The epistles of the Colossians, chapter one. Paul is writing to the believers at Colossae and look at verse six.

It speaks of the gospel of Christ which is come unto you as it is in the world and brings forth fruit as it doth also knew since they heard of it and knew the grace of God. That is the first stage of knowledge. And let me say something.

To anyone here tonight who has not known yet the grace of God, now is your time. Now is your time. The grace of God that can save you and bring you salvation for by grace are ye saved.

Nothing that you can do. It's all done for you. It is finished, said the Lord.

Your time here you don't know. How long are you going to live? I'm not prophesying here, but I will say with all the authority of God's word, after, at the very most, after one hundred years I'm being very generous with you and with myself too. After one hundred years at the very most, not one of us, young or not so young, will be here on earth if the Lord tarry.

Right? That's true. But how long is eternity? How long is eternity? Someone has said if each grain of sand in all the desert and the seashore and the mountain, if each grain of sand represented one million years, and if each drop of water of the rivers and the lakes and the seas and the oceans and the waterways represented one million years, and if each blade of grass in all the world represented one million years, if all these million years were subtracted from eternity, eternity would not have lost anything. How long is eternity? Do you compare a life which at the very, very most, a hundred years will be, with this kind of eternity? Be wise, my friends and I, and come to Jesus Christ.

Accept Him as your Savior. You knew the grace of God. I can never, I'm giving a cut blunt here, I shall never forget an experience I had at a place called Bromelos in Egypt.

It was my custom to take school boys for a summer camp for two weeks to live under canvas, and we had games and competitions all the time of the life, and of course Bible studies. One year I took 52 children, 52 kids, boys, because in that part of the world we had boys' school and girls' school separately. How do you like that? We do.

All right, anyway, I took 52 kids, a few officers, helpers, and one day I had a letter from a nearby camp for the Faculty of Engineering asking us, or telling us, for a game of volleyball on our ground. We accepted. Their team came along and played our team, and you can picture to yourself what was happening.

Their team, 19, 20, 21, 22 years old at the most. Our team 16, 17, 18, 19 years old at the most, and they had fun, jumping, laughing, playing, joking, all they had was the time of their life. The game ended about 12 o'clock, and the visiting team went to the tent, and our team came to our tent for lunch.

About 15 minutes later, no more, I heard whistling, crying, shouting, and people running, so I went out of my tent and ran with the people who were running. I didn't know why I was running. Everybody was running, and I was running too.

Until I came to a group of people standing by the beach. What happened was this. Two of the visiting team said, one to the other, instead of walking to our tent, let us swim to our tent.

And one of them fell in trouble when he was swimming. The other one went to his rest. They were not swimming, both of them, and they pulled each other to the deep, and they were drowned.

They were actually, literally drowned. I pushed my way through the people, and I saw, so I can close my eyes tonight, and picture what I saw. Those two young men, 21, 22 years old at the very most, lying lifeless on the shore.

If I had come to them and said, friends, be ready, because in 15 minutes you will be in eternity. What do you think they would have said to me? None. We are young, we have a long life ahead of us yet.

You are a pessimist. I was not a pessimist. The Apostle James asked the very important question, what is your life? What is your life? Is there someone here tonight who has not known the grace of God? Jesus Christ, our Lord, is standing here tonight and inviting you, come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I'll give you rest.

The second state of knowledge is found in verse 9, Colossians 1, 9. For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, will not cease to pray for you and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will. The knowledge of His will. You, child of God, make it your prayer that you know His will for you, and His will for you is your sanctification.

This is the will of God for you, even your sanctification. Thirdly, I have no time to spend to elaborate on this. Verse 10.

That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God. Increasing in the knowledge of God. You know Him as a friend.

You know Him, you knew Him as your Savior. You are knowing His will day by day, and you should know Him as your God, as your Lord. He is Lord of my life.

The ecstasy of the knowledge of Christ, my Lord, that I may know Him. Yes, we praise God that we know Him as we are filled by the Holy Spirit. I have a beautiful picture that you can refer to at your leisure.

In Ezekiel 47, we see a river of water flowing from the altar typifying the Spirit of God, and there are three kinds of persons there. Someone is standing there, only ankle deep. We have all been sealed with the Spirit of God, and I say it and I repeat and underscore it.

You are not a child of God if you are not sealed with the Spirit of God. The moment you receive Christ as your Savior, you are sealed with the Holy Spirit. There is only one sealing, one baptism, not to be repeated.

You are baptized with the Spirit of God into the body of Christ through faith in Christ once and for all. But there are many fillings. You are filled with the Spirit of God as you are obedient to Him day by day.

But there are certain Christians born again having the Spirit of God, but they are only ankle deep, cardinally minded. All they do is they do in order to appear before the people. They give to be known as givers.

They preach to be known as preachers. They serve to be known as servants. But we praise God.

There is another state of knowledge. Ankle deep, needy, then loins deep. Then there is this type of Christian who is really swimming.

He is submerged with water. A person that is swimming, how much of him appears above the water? How much? Only his head. And who is the head of every man? Christ.

Only Christ is seen in me. Only Christ is seen in the victorious Christians. Only Christ is seen in the spiritually minded Christians.

He must increase and I must decrease. Friends, are you filled with the Spirit of God? Are you obedient to His call? Are you obedient to His bidding? Yes. We praise God that we can have this wonderful experience of experiencing the rest we have for the people of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Then we go on to chapter 4. If I may spend just 2 minutes only or 3 minutes on chapter 4. Verse 6. Be careful for nothing. How? How can I be careful for nothing when I have bills to pay and people to cope with and duties to cope with and a rush and a full program and 105 letters a day to answer. How can I be careful for nothing? Yes.

As we look up to Him, we certainly can be careful for nothing. Take your burdens to the Lord and leave them there. And He'll take care of it.

I'm sure you have many experiences when you have really known this experimentally in your life day by day. But pardon me for reference to a personal experience. We own our meeting place in Beirut.

But we don't own our meeting place in Cairo. We hire it. We rent it.

And we pay the rent monthly. The building belongs to a Muslim. One month we didn't have the rent.

And of course I'm aware of this that be careful for nothing. But we had to pay the rent. Each month at 9 o'clock without fail you could set your watch at 9 o'clock at the red tap-tap of the door.

It went and we knew it was the landlord coming to collect the rent. 25th of the month, no rent. 26th, no rent.

27th, 30th of the month, no rent. Why? 31st, no rent. What shall we do? Be careful for nothing.

Well I must admit that I was careful for something. The following day at a quarter to 9 I heard the rat-tat-tat at the door. I said, my word.

Every month he comes at 9 o'clock. Now that there is no rent, he comes at 9 quarter to 9. Be careful for nothing. I opened the door what I found.

Not the landlord, but an official from the government. He handed me a green paper in which was written the landlord is behind with his tax. Please be kind enough not to pay him the rent.

But wait until the tax collector comes to collect the tax. You may be sure that I was kind enough to wait. Be careful for nothing.

But in everything with prayer, with supplication, let your request be made known unto God. And the peace of God which passes all understanding will garrison your mind and your heart in Christ Jesus our Lord. Praise the Lord.

Thank you. Thank you. Who can cheer the heart like Jesus? By his presence all divine, true and tender, pure and precious.

Oh, how blessed to call him mine. 324. 324.

Let's sing the first, third and fifth stanzas. Who can cheer the heart like Jesus? Before we have a word of prayer, we would appreciate the song books being gathered up. Now these song books circulate to the various conferences during the summer months and we are thankful to have them here at Mid-South.

We would appreciate you helping and gathering these books up and putting them in the boxes behind the piano. And after our time of fellowship at the snack shop, when you hear the bell, you men come on through the dining hall, get the benches and we'll have our campfire service outside. Shall we look to the Lord once again in a word of prayer? Our Father, we thank thee for this wonderful week.

We realize that we could have spent our money in other ways. We realize that there are those here with only one week of vacation perhaps and they could have been at the mountains or at the beaches or in other ways spending their money. But Father, we thank thee that things have worked out within the counsel of thy will that we be here for this wonderful week together.

We thank thee for our fun time, for the recreation, for the good fellowship. Above all, we thank thee for the wonderful spiritual diet we have had this week. Father, our hearts have been lifted to thy very presence as we have heard thy faithful servants proclaim thy words and exalt the Lord Jesus Christ in our midst.

But Father, we realize that the important step now is to allow the Spirit of God to make it all real in our lives. We pray that the Holy Spirit of God will have his way with us. We thank thee for each one and as we have heard tonight and as we know to be true, each one of us has burdens, difficulties, obstacles, but we

know that they're not beyond the grace of God.

So we thank thee, Father, for thy abiding presence and for thy sustaining grace and thy keeping power. We commend ourselves to be praying for each one here and for each home represented. We pray for the campfire which is to follow a time whereby we, the men and women of this camp who know the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior will be able to give a word of testimony as we sing the choruses.

So we pray that that will lead in all that will be said and done at the campfire service too. We commend ourselves to thee, Father, thanking thee and praising thee in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Amen.

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