

# God Is Our Sufficiency

by Bill Stafford

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*God is our sufficiency, and we must put our trust in Him, not in ourselves, in order to live a life that is surrendered and yielded to Him.*

**Duration:** 40:24

**Scripture:** Luke 11:33

**Topics:** "Sufficiency", "God's Sufficiency", "Living as Light"

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## Description

Bill Stafford emphasizes that God is our sufficiency, urging believers to trust in Him during life's storms and challenges. He reflects on the importance of living a luminous and transparent life that reflects Jesus, rather than conforming to worldly standards. Stafford encourages the church to be a beacon of light, demonstrating practical Christianity through godly living, and stresses the necessity of being filled with the Holy Spirit to effectively witness to the world. He shares personal experiences of revival and the transformative power of Jesus in his life, reminding the audience that true change comes from a deep relationship with Christ.

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## Transcript

I always look at the church when I go in and see how many steps there are to the pulpit. If they're over two, I get nervous. And you that get older will understand that.

Because the space of these has got a lot of steps. You're just hoping that you don't fall. But when you get old, you might wet your pants.

Unless you put a jar in your car. Well, don't look. Some of you young fellas just wait.

Bless God, I'm going to look down from heaven and I'm going to say, Lord, make him have to carry two jars. Well, hallelujah. Was that a great message? Ken Jenkins, so special.

And I come to a place like this where God's letting me be around so many great men. And all the preachers that are here are great men of God. If the call of God is on you, there's no levels of preachers.

They're just God's men. And if it ever ceases to be that way, we're in trouble. And don't be enamored with a preacher, be enamored with Jesus.

Amen? And I just praise the Lord that I get to be associated with so many great people. And so many great preachers that love me, that have stood by me. And in evangelism, I have had a great journey with the Lord.

And to be here in this conference is very special. And I consider it one of the highlights of my life is to be in this atmosphere. So I can hear from Ken Jenkins.

And I can hear from my brother Alan, even though he does intimidate me. But I will get even. I have not got that sin totally confessed yet until I get through with him.

I will get it straight then. God, I'll be right back. But anyway, amen.

There's some of y'all that just don't enjoy anything. I'm telling you, folks. Somebody said, well, Brother Bill, listen, there is a joy in the Lord.

Amen? And you say, well, you're just not having any problems. You want a swap? Amen. But one thing I want to say, Brother Michael, thank you for loving me.

Terry, for putting up with him. Amen. And for all that this whole crowd meant to me.

But there's a man here who came to me and said, we need to do something about writing a book about your life. Well, I would never have done it, never would have thought about it. I didn't think there was much to mention.

But then I got to thinking, if we could get in a book those areas of failure where you learn to trust, those storms where you learn to walk in the dark just like you were walking in the light. And if something could be written that I could leave some kind of testimony that would bless preachers and help them on the journey, then we'll do it. But only to the glory of God.

Too many is written now glorifying a person's life. I've got nothing to glory in except the Lord Jesus. And I would have quit the ministry many times.

You say, I would not have. Well, you ain't been there. Amen.

You know how I know I'm called? I couldn't quit. Amen. And you need to learn one thing, that if you ever walk with God and you ever become anything for God, dark moments and real deep problems and storms are part of your lifestyle.

And what we have to learn is, God is our sufficiency. And we can trust Him when we can't even discern Him. Because He's true.

Amen. So Dr. John Smith, he kids me about calling him doctor. But John, stand up.

I just want you to stand up. Okay? And I want all your people. All you from McLeansboro in Illinois, stand up.

Come on. They've been here, what, three straight years? Three straight years these people have come from McLeansboro and been here in this conference. And then Brother John is the man that is doing the book.

And I'm just shooting him information and being honest and truthful. And the only men that we let write in the book about me are men that will not tell the whole story. But anyway, and by the way, it's just something that I have nothing to do with.

And if God wants to do it, I'm happy about it. If it can be a blessing to people along the journey. And I have problems even talking about it because our message is Jesus and His sufficiency.

But anyway, if you'll open your Bibles to the gospel of Luke and verse 36. And gospel of Luke, verse 36. And just let me talk to you for just a moment.

And I'll be through by 1130. I'll be through in 20 minutes. Luke 11.

Luke, did I not say? Well, Luke, you all just get to Luke. Amen. And then pray for discernment.

Amen. Luke 11, verse 33. I think I said, did I just say verse 36? Woo! Sing your moment.

Amen. I love them and I enjoy them and I'll call attention to them. Amen.

Luke 11, and verse 33. No man, when he hath lighted a candle, put it into a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light. The light of the body is the eye.

Therefore, when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light. But when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness. Take heed, therefore, that the light which is in thee be not darkness.

If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light. And when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light. I want to talk to you for just three things from this word, and I pray the Spirit of God can speak through our hearts.

And I really, while Brother Allen was speaking and while Brother Ken was talking today, and so many things Brother Ken said that just leaped out at my heart and just spoke to me. And that was the animals, they process by sound. It's what they hear.

That's what gets their attention. Is that on a message to the church today? What is our problem? We're not hearing. We're hearing a preacher, but we're not hearing God.

Because we can't hear God without changing. And for a man to stay like he is all of his life and never change, then that man is not hearing God. He may be preparing sermons, he may be good at it, but he is not hearing God.

Every time we hear God, we will move in a new dimension of Him. God just don't speak for foolishness. He speaks to bring us to a new light of who He is and wake us up to areas that we've even forgotten, that we need to appropriate so we can go on with God, so that our life will not be a life of arrival, but a life of pursuit.

We'll never quit pursuing. And here in the text, let me talk to you about this little phrase, which is no part dark. No part dark.

And I want to speak about three things. And I just wrote down some things here that Gladstone said before I begin. But on the top of this I put, For the longing in my heart has remained all these years that practical Christianity is only known through godly living.

The only revival that the world can see is through godliness and holiness in me and you. Because we are the light. We don't have any light.

We are a reflected light. But we are reflecting the light. I'm merely a reflector.

Amen. And the light is in me. But then I thought about what Gladstone said, and I don't even know where I got this.

I wrote it down years ago, and these come off of old notes. My only hope for the world is in bringing the human mind into contact with divine revelation through practical Christianity. Let me read it again.

My only hope, this is Gladstone, the great Christian English statesman. My only hope for the world is in bringing the human mind into contact with divine revelation through practical Christianity. Now you say, what does that mean? The world has no way of knowing anything about Christianity except as they see it in us.

Are you hearing me? God has had to deal with me with so many things, and I want to just get through this on time. But listen to me. I thank God for the work of the Holy Spirit.

And I've kind of tore up because, ladies and gentlemen, I want to finish right. And I want to finish full of God. I want to cross the finish line with a baton.

And I want Jesus to be pleased. But let me tell you, some of my biggest battles is now. They are so different from what they used to be.

But they're there. But I want to tell you, thank God that I have in me the sufficiency of Jesus. And I will never fail unless I get in my own self-sufficiency or my own dependence and preach just because it's worked before, it'll work now.

No, I must be fresh from the griddle of glory, preaching and lifting up an anointing of the Holy Ghost. Here's another thing that Gladstone said. The early church out-conquered, out-thought, out-lived, and out-died the pagan world for the cause of Christ.

You didn't hear it. I've got to do it again. My sermon goes longer if you don't grab it the first time around.

The early church out-lived, out-thought, out-died, and out-conquered the pagan world through the power of the Holy Ghost. So what is our greatest need to a pagan world? It's to out-thought, out-think, out-live, out-die the pagan world to where they'll find that the only hope this world has got is the light that believers have through the light of the world, the Lord Jesus. So three things I want to say.

Number one, He talks here about a life that is luminous. He said you don't light a candle and put it under a bushel. You light a candle and put it on a candlestick.

Why? So that they may see. And He's talking to the disciples, trying to teach them that the Christian life is nothing more or nothing less than Jesus being Jesus in me and through me. You say, well, what about your lifestyle? I only have one question that I have to ask.

What does Jesus want? What does Jesus say? You say, but Brother Bill, there's a lot of things that I think is not right. They should nothing go on in my life that would be anything that would bring dishonor to the name of Jesus. And that's why I talk to people about their dress, that I'm not a legalist, but I will tell you

this.

I don't believe that immodest dress can glorify God. And what Michael said yesterday about drinking, social drinking, Ladies and gentlemen, I've gloried in my heart that we've still got a few that's not vowing to a pagan world. You don't outlive the world by acting like them.

And the church is any more powerful than when she's the weakest, depending upon a holy God. And the more the church is criticized, and the more the church is low-rated, the more bones and da Vinci codes they bring up, merely brings us to the greatest point of our life, that out of all that, God could send revival that could shake America and shake the infidels and shake the radicals, Democrats and Republicans. Amen.

That we may see a mighty revival of the church and many swept into the kingdom of God. We are the light, but we're merely reflected light. We have no light of our own.

Our light is imputed light. He's Jesus, the light of the world. And he lives in me.

I'm not inhibited because I'm inhabited. Murray McChain said, A Christian is just a person who makes it easier for others to believe in God. That's a Christian.

That's not these little mealy mouths that join the church and run back to the same lifestyle. Jesus elected us and saved us to obedience. A man that's not obeying has no assurance of his salvation.

Hello? When you get quiet, I get nervous. A person that is not obeying and hungering for God either is so backslid he knows nothing or he's in darkness and lost. Because Jesus saved me to obey, to walk with him, to keep death to myself, and remember that I don't die because I'm trying to die.

I did die. I am dead. And we need to conquer Romans 6 and get that in our hearts so we can faith our death, so we can live his life.

Amen. Hallelujah. I didn't even have that written down here.

Please, somebody remind me of that when I finish. Look at today's approach. We've got to restate our creed.

We've got to find another approach to evangelism. We've got to find another seminar on motivation and church leadership which will work in the church or the world. And these fellows that speak in the church speaks it to the yacht club.

It works either place. Amen. Some of you won't like that.

That's all right. I'll be gone in a minute. We must engage the culture.

I don't know what they mean. Jesus did not engage the culture. He contradicted it.

He confronted it. And he became their problem because they did not want to walk in the light. They did not want to come to him.

So out of darkness, they tried to find them a religion that would fit them without admitting they're a sinner and coming to Jesus Christ. We must never lose our power by trying to be worldly like the world. It won't work.

We must be separate people. You see, a lighthouse, a lighthouse is not known by its structure. It wasn't built for beauty.

The structure of the lighthouse is of no value except just to talk how nice it is. The very power of the lighthouse and its responsibility is the light. It's a warning and it is also a direction.

It's the light that's important. We are so busy engaging the structure, trying to figure out a new approach, believing that we can really improve on what the men of God have done in the past. That's why I enjoy it.

And I don't go back in the past about revival. I've been in some meetings of God that went five weeks. I've seen meetings that went to 3.30 in the morning and people wouldn't leave.

I've seen no moving of God where people would stay at the meeting and then go out and get people and bring them in and we'd have people saved up to the morning hours. I remember in Louisiana, whenever I was in that meeting that went five weeks, is in that first week, and this is the backwoods of Louisiana, I mean the backwoods. You'd have to hunt it to find it.

But when revival broke out in an old ex-Catholic dance hall in the corner of nowhere, only one little store that sets on rock stilts was all that's there. And yet in that boy's home where Bill and Eddie Smith would, I'm sorry, where Ed and Billy Smith, senior moment, would bring kids from the juvenile courts, put them in that house, and raise them for the glory of God by faith, save the state's millions of dollars. And I lived in that house in a beautiful place where I stayed with Ed and Billy Smith and with 32 young boys that come out of juvenile system and they raised them and taught them, took them to church, fed them, clothed them, prayed with them, and beat the daylights out of them.

And this little world that says you can't do this, I'm telling you, ladies and gentlemen, we're raising a bunch of pagans and you talk about me a youth movement? Ladies and gentlemen, I see youth rebellion. Amen. I walk into a church and they don't even speak.

They'll stand in the hall and won't move out of the way. I want to grab a hat and turn it around. Excuse me.

Got the bill the wrong way. Amen. Why? We are living in a day when people want to be Christians and not surrendered and yielded and dedicated.

And that don't mean we've always been right. But I've got news for you. You won't have revival with a bunch of people that don't know brokenness and yearliness and tears and heartbreak.

Amen. We need a revival in the church of quitting trying to condone lifestyles and condone Him who is our life. And that's the Lord Jesus.

That meeting broke out. I left it and said, I'll go home. If it stays without me, I'll come back.

And for one week I was gone and they filled that place to capacity and people kept being saved. I canceled three of my best meetings, made enemies out of three preachers that I never got to be with again and went back to a revival meeting because God sent me and went back to the backwoods of Louisiana and for three, for four more weeks we saw glory after glory. And one I remember was Milton Johnson who got saved and his wife got so mad he got saved during the first week.

She was livid. And whenever Michael would read his Bible she just went bananas. She hated it.

Until about the third week I was in my trying to get a bite to eat about 11 o'clock at night was having an afterglow session. People coming up there just to praise the Lord. And I was trying to eat a bite and about this time Milton came walking in and said, Brother Bill my wife's out here.

I said, I don't want to talk to her. He said, She's under conviction. She's lost.

She's sick of herself. Brother Bill she won't get out of the truck unless you come out there. I walked out there and opened the door and Carolyn leaped over, just leaped and grabbed me and said, I'm a hellion.

Brother Bill tonight is saved. I said, Sure. And I took her to the room and led her to Jesus Christ.

Out of that one woman through phone calls we had people getting saved till 4.30 in the morning. Whenever the lost would come in the door Ed Smith would say, The delivery room is right down there. So I'm not talking through my hat.

I'm going to tell you we won't have revival trying to bow and get down. We'll have revival when we wake up that we put our candle on a candlestick. Why? So they may see who Jesus is Lord of all.

And they haven't got a thing we want. Amen. Alright.

The other day an old boy told me that Bono was a Christian. That's you too. He ought to be you three or four.

I've heard him on TV in their little conversations and he used the F word so many times it made me sick. And yet you tell me he's a Christian. That's a bunch of garbage.

Amen. And some of you won't, I don't want you to say, Well now brother Bill people can't be perfect. No.

But if Christ is in them they'll get sick of all the imperfections that doesn't glorify Jesus and through a lifestyle they will never be perfect but they'll always be pursuing and broken over the Lamb of God. Amen. Alright.

Not only the life that's luminous but a life that's transparent. He said no part dark. He said everything about you is just, and Alan said it.

When the Holy Spirit came to live in me He didn't come and live in me just to convict me and convert me. He come to live in me to deal with myself. And He's constantly bringing up dark areas.

Stuff that I think is alright. He's always bringing up stuff that I think, now bless God, now come on Lord, I can't be perfect and you know I make mistakes and you know that dude deserved what I said. But you know what the Holy Spirit does? He just keeps sitting there and brooding and convicting and will not let me go.

Why? Because I can't walk with God unless the dark areas are brought to the light. If we confess our sin the same blood that saved me is the same blood that keeps me clean. Excuse me.

Amen. You're talking about the blood of salvation. Hey, that same blood avails to where I have an advocate.

I have one I can run to. I can plea. He'll plea my case.

He's my lawyer. He's my go-between. He hears me.

I have access to Him. But the sorriest day in my life is whenever I begin to harbor things and say, I don't want to deal with it. I will not deal.

Ladies and gentlemen, we must deal with everything that's darkness. Are you hearing me? Not a question of legalism. Everything now is legalism.

You can't take a stand on liquor like you did. That's legalism. A bunch of hypocrites.

You old fundamentalists. And you know what? In one of the biggest churches in Atlanta a staff member in a conference of thousands of preachers and staff members one of the staff members of that church held up a wine bottle and said, here's the kind of church supposed to be Christian church. I'm talking about supposed to be one of us.

That's what we are. You don't know what it's like to sit among five fellas and all of them saying, you're an old fogey. You're an old man.

You'll never reach this world. I said, you're dead and you're dark and you'll never have any light because God will not get on you if you have got to bow to the world and its schemes. You say, but Brother Bill, that's all right.

These are landmarks. These are signposts. These are things I'll never compromise.

Amen. You say, but Brother Bill, you're just too hard nosed. Ladies and gentlemen, the world has never won the world by acting and living and associating with what they do.

We associate with them but merely to let them know the light that's in us. We don't need... Somebody said, well, do you ever drink? I did. But when I got saved, I didn't quit.

I just changed fountains. Now... I scared the daylights out of you, didn't I? Who was that? Was that... What was that? Billy Sunday? Who said a dram drinker, a little whiskey drinker, a little dram, I guess you know what that is. If you don't, I'll tell you later.

A dram drinker is as much kin to a drunkard as a pig is to a hog. Give him time, he'll make one. We can't preach like that, Brother Bill.

We'll be offensive. Well, you're preaching to offenders. Every one of us seated here where it was an offense to a holy God, He saw me as an offense.

And I want you to know, when He gave His Son, He became, between God and me, the one that could pay the debt to satisfy the holy demands of a righteous God to where He would never compromise His righteousness, He could never get to me, but Jesus stepped in between and reached to God with a perfect life and a sinless life and a life of God-level. And He died on the cross and reached me with His humanity and pulled me to the cross where I could find mercy. The cross is what we need to keep preaching, folks.

The cross where I first saw the light. Are you hearing me? The only thing I hate about these lights, I slobber when I preach at times. And I just saw some go right there and all the lights just magnified.

At the cross, God treated His Son with everything I should have had. And Jesus paid it off. How can we ever get over that? If a person don't know that about the cross, which most of them do not preach, God loves you.

He really loves you. I want to say to you, you know how much God loves you? You know how much God loves me and you? He put on His Son all the hell I deserve. And Jesus paid my debt.

All to Him I owe. Don't get over it. It will drive you.

It will keep you in the light. It will keep you on fire for God. And once you start getting cold, run back to the cross.

And say, dear God, I'll never get over it. You say that in every message. I try to get the cross in every message.

I'll tell you why. Because so many are not saying a thing about what it costs for me to be saved. And I'm not the important one, God and Jesus is.

I'm just in on it by grace. Hallelujah. The Holy Spirit convicts, converts, seals, secures, and the one day will present me.

I'm such a saved person, it's pitiful. He exposes me along the journey. All my life I've been taught that I need to imitate the Christian life.

Even that book written by Sheldon, was it? Sheldon that talked about the Christian life, it was more imitation. And I thought that was it. No, I don't imitate.

I participate. I'm attached to Him. He can't live, I can't live without Him.

I'm born of His bones. I'm one with Him. Father, Son, Family.

Amen. You're getting it? And the next time you think for a moment you can't make it, remember, quit imitating and start participating. Because He is our life and light and Lord and all.

Amen. Now, what time is it? Oh Lord, I lied. My wife said quit telling people you're going to quit on time.

Well, that's lying is another one of my vices. William Law said, until we are renewed in the spirit of our mind and illumined in every virtue and legalistic convictions that we practice are merely practices grafted on a corrupt bottom. Anything that I have as a conviction that robs me of Christ-likeness, I need to die to that conviction.

I'm in some churches where the music is rock music. I mean, my, it runs, but I have to sit there. I mean, rock.

I don't mean contemporary. I mean, when they hit that person, I just sit there and shake. You say, well, we've got to reach everybody.

Well, you're killing me. What do you say? I don't say nothing. I'm there to preach Jesus.

I lift up the cross. What do you want to say? I ain't telling you. Amen.

The delivering power of redemption work of Jesus is the very center of my Christian life. He has delivered me. He is delivering me.

He'll keep on delivering me until I land on the shores of glory. If the Son makes you free, you're free indeed. It didn't say if the Savior makes you free.

It said if the Son makes you free. There's more than just Savior. He's the Son.

I'm His brother. We're kin, blood kin. We belong to each other.

Hallelujah. Holiness is not human life at its highest level of development, but divine life brought down to the lowest level of condescension. Salvation didn't lift me anywhere.

It brought God to me from sinking sand. He lifted me. That's fine to sing as long as you realize He's the lifter and He's the life.

And the only good thing about me is He in me. So it's not... You see, everybody thinks human life gets better. God, you can't change your flesh.

Even God can't. God can't change my flesh. It's unredeemable.

He has to die. That's why He went to the cross. Not just for my sin, but for my self-life.

Amen? Learn it. Some people walk up and, you know, I've preached with them. I don't know how I got there.

Don't think I'm bragging. For God's sake, I'm not. When you're thrust into a place to where you're standing there and here's all your heroes, and now then you're going to preach.

You say, boy, I'd love to be there. I got news for you. I wanted to run.

Even Leonard Ravenhill was in that crowd. What a man of God. But you listen to me.

You listen to me. I had to learn that my adequacy was not that God needed me or found something in me He could develop. He imparted and imputed to me divine life, and He came to live in me so I could be, through Him, everything I need to be no matter where, because He is my sufficiency.

Amen? All right, last, and I'm through. It's a life that is luminous, a life that is transparent, and the life that is burning, and I'll wind up with this real quick, and I'm through. It's a life that is burning.

On those candlesticks, if you remember, in the Old Testament, they had to keep them trimmed. Am I right? And they had snuffers. Now, in East Tennessee, you've got to explain that because they think that's something you dip.

And I'm from East Tennessee. I learned to preach in East Tennessee, and when I first started, it was, Ha! You know, praise God, He said, Ha! You know, really? I'm not lying. You don't believe it? Drive through Sweetwater about midnight some night and listen to the radio.

They hee-haw their announcements. You're going to hell, praise God. I'm not making fun.

I was one of them. Still am. I like them.

Amen. They'll say more than five minutes hee-haw and then some of these others will say a whole sermon. Amen.

You may not like the way they say it, but at least they stayed with Jesus. Oh, well. Those snuffers were made so they could take it up under the candlestick and flip that that has been consumed and put it in the snuffer and carry it out.

You see, what God's trying to teach us is, I'm just a light, but I'm merely a light to be consumed so that He can keep trimming off and even those ashes that fall, even those ashes He'll resurrect out of nothing and touch a world for God. We're just ashes to the power of God and you'll never walk with God if you keep trying to burn the same old ashes. You've got to let God trim the way.

Why? Because as you walk with Him, He consumes us. But in that consuming, He pours out His light. I love you.

I went over 10 or 12 minutes. I'll give you a love offering if you need it. But listen, listen to me.

I can't help. My humor just pops up. I know some of you think I say it's the wrong place.

Well, I just don't know where to say it. If I don't say it when it pops up, I'll never say it. Now, while you do this, it's all right to be full of Jesus and show and express to each other that you care about each other.

And what everybody needs in this building is to know somebody cares. Amen? And Brother Michael, I'm going to have to go. I really do.

I want to stay. I hate to miss Johnny Hunt and Michael again. I believe it's the best preaching I've heard Michael ever do.

And he's always been good. But I'm going to tell you, the reason why I hang around here is this. He's the one man left in this generation behind that is preaching the message of revival.

Nobody else is touching it. Probably some. But I'm going to tell you, I'm hanging with him till I die, if he wants me, because I just want to be to him what he needs to lift him up and support him.

And I love you, brother. And I'm there. I'll be there till I die.

If I can't come, I'll get long distance and do a video from my bed. Amen.

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