

Finding Comfort in the Character of God

by Chuck Smith

We can trust in God's sovereignty and wisdom, and experience His love and provision in our lives by waiting on Him and trusting in His character.

Duration: 25:05

Scripture: Psalm 46:10, Proverbs 2:6, Isaiah 40:12, Isaiah 41:1-2, Matthew 6:33, James 1:5

Topics: "Character Of God"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck begins by discussing the command in chapter 41 to keep silence before God and renew our strength. He then highlights God's greatness and challenges the people of the world to come with their gods for a court trial. Pastor Chuck emphasizes that God is so vast and powerful that our minds cannot comprehend it. He measures the waters and the heavens, weighs the mountains and the hills, and stretches out the heavens like a curtain. He also warns that the great men of the earth will be brought to nothing and emphasizes the temporary nature of human power. The sermon concludes with an invitation to let the Son of God fill our hearts and satisfy our souls.

Transcript

Oh, let the Son of God enfold you With His Spirit and His love Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul
Oh, let Him have the things that hold you And His Spirit like a dove Will descend upon your life And make you whole
And now, with today's message, here's Pastor Chuck. He measures the waters in the hollow of His hand, and then He meets out or measures out the heaven with a span. That is to say, the universe, as far as its size, is measured by God with His span.

So, the span is the distance between your thumb and little finger, and thus, God, when He measures the universe, says, well, it's this wide. Now, as I said, God is so big, your mind can't conceive it. You can't imagine it.

He comprehends the dust of the earth in the measure. They say that the earth is, what, 6,000 billion tons or something like that? Measures the dust of the earth. Weighs the mountains and the hills in scales and balances.

The question, who has directed the Spirit of the Lord or, being His counselor, hath taught Him? Now, I've tried to teach God a few things now and then, but I found out that He doesn't need my instruction, and He doesn't usually listen to my counsel, and that's good for me. There are a lot of things that I counseled Him

that, later on, I found out were not too wise, and I'm glad that He ignored it. Jesus said that your Father knows what you have need of before you ever ask Him.

I'm glad that I serve a God like that. I'm glad that my God isn't so limited, impotent, and weak that I have to instruct Him. And I have tremendous difficulty with these people who talk about directing God and who say that if you pray, you can have anything you want.

The power of faith and the creative power. You can create your own realities through this word of faith. To tell you the truth, I don't want to create my own reality.

I want Him to create my reality because I could make such a royal mess of things so quick because of my limited understanding. I don't know what's best for me. I found it's much wiser and better to commit my ways to one who does know best and say, Lord, Your will be done.

With whom took He counsel or who instructed Him and taught Him in the path of judgment, taught Him knowledge, showed Him the way of understanding. God is omnipotent. God is omniscient.

He knows all things. He didn't have to receive counsel or instruction. He didn't have to be taught the way of righteousness and justice.

He didn't need anyone to show Him. Now, here is to me the height of brazen kind of foolishness when a person challenges the justice of God. And you've heard them.

I've heard them so many times. How can God do this or that and the other? And the idea is that God isn't fair. And here is mortal man challenging the justice of God.

But yet the prophet said, Who has taught Him the path of judgment? Who am I to say that God isn't fair? Who am I to say that God is wrong in the way that He has disposed of the cases that come before Him in judgment? Who am I to challenge the justice of God? Behold, the nations are as a drop in a bucket. They are counted as the small dust in the balance. Behold, He takes up the isles or the coastlands as a very little thing.

So the nations are nothing before God. They're like a drop in a bucket or like the dust in the balances. Now, the Jewish merchants sought to impress the people with their total honesty in their dealing with them.

And thus, as they would have their little balance scales and they would measure the merchandise, they would always be careful to blow the dust out of the scales first lest you be buying dust from Him. And so getting ready to measure, you know, your oranges that He's selling you, He blows and the dust goes flying and thus the nations are like the dust in the balances before God. He goes on to say, in all of the forest of Lebanon, there isn't enough wood that is sufficient to burn on an altar before Him.

And if you took all of the beast, they wouldn't be sufficient for a burnt offering. To a God that is this great and awesome, you could ignite the whole forest and use all of the beast as sacrifice. It would be insufficient.

For all of the nations before Him are as nothing. In fact, they are counted to Him less than nothing. So God, powerful, ruler, sovereign over the universe.

We're so prone to get worried and think that things are out of control. We get concerned about the nations, concerned about the power of the nations. But what are they before God? He's going to accomplish His purposes.

No nation can stand against Him. But here then is where the real paradox comes because He said, to whom then will you liken God and what likeness will you compare to Him? In other words, here were the people making these little gods. Carving out these little stone.

Here's my God. Set Him on the table. Put chains on Him and all.

And here's God. Represents God who measures the oceans in the hollow of His hand. Who meets out the heavens.

And you say, this is a representation of God? This funny looking little thing with a big fat stomach. Who will you liken God to? That is why God strictly forbid them to make any image or likeness or try to make any likeness of God. That's why it was forbidden.

Because He is so vast that there is nothing that we could make that would be at all a likeness of Him. So vast that our minds cannot even comprehend Him. And He defies being likened to anything that we might carve with our hands.

But He says, the workman melts a graven image. The goldsmith spreads it over with gold. And he casts silver chains to hang on it.

He that is so impoverished that he has no offering to give chooses a tree. In other words, I don't have enough money to have a little golden idol. And so I just get a tree.

I get a cedar tree or something that won't rot. And he seeks a cunning workman to carve for him a little carved image that it can stand there and represent God. Now, isn't it interesting that all over the world in the pagan cultures, they have tried to make the likenesses of their gods out of stone or out of wood.

And you can go to the different tribes and the cultural groups and you see their gods. I think that it is quite laughable that when Jacob finally left his uncle Laban with his two wives, the daughters of Laban, and their servants and their goods, that they sort of snuck away when Laban was gone. And when Laban heard that Jacob had taken off, he went pursuing after him.

Now, one of Jacob's wife, Rachel, she ripped off some of the gods of her dad, these little idols that he had. And so when Laban caught up with Jacob, he really rebuked him for leaving. But he said, the worst thing is you stole my gods.

And that I find very amusing when a man has a god that can be stolen. But many do. Have you not known? Haven't you heard? Haven't they told you from the beginning? Have you not understood what has been said? It is God who sits on the circle of the earth.

The inhabitants of the earth are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a curtain. He spreads them out as a tent to dwell in.

Here are men making these little images and wood and all, and they're saying that's God. He said, no, no. Haven't you heard? Don't you know? Don't you understand? God is so vast.

He stretched out the heavens like a curtain. We're like grasshoppers before him. He can bring the great men of the earth to nothing.

He makes the judges of the earth empty. Yea, they shall not be planted. Yea, they shall not be sown.

Yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth. And he shall also blow upon them, and they shall wither, and the whirlwind will take them away as stubble. Man, great, powerful.

They're gone. Hitler. Mussolini.

All of their bragging. All of their boasting. But the grass withers.

The flower fades. And here he said they're blown away in the whirlwind. To whom then will you liken God? What will you liken Him? To whom will He be equal? Sayeth the Holy One.

Lift up your eyes and high behold. Who has created all of these things? Look up at the sky. Who created it all? Now here is where the whole fallacy of evolution comes in.

The denial of the Creator. And Paul the Apostle said, professing themselves to be wise they became fools because they worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator who was blessed forevermore. It's foolish to worship creation.

You should worship the Creator. And so look up. Lift up your eyes and high.

Behold, who created all of these things that brings forth the host of stars by their number? And my, we have no idea how many stars there are out there in the universe. We know that there is estimated to be over a billion stars in our Milky Way galaxy. But we also estimate that there's more than a billion galaxies out there in space.

Who brings them all by number and then even more He calls them all by names. By the greatness of His might for He is strong in power. Not one faileth.

So what are you going to liken a God like that to? What kind of an image can you make that could represent Him? Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, my way is hid from the Lord? What do you think that you can hide yourself from God? What makes you think that God doesn't know what's going on in your life? Who are you to think that you can actually hide from Him? My judgment is passed over from my God. God, you know, I slipped one over on Him. He didn't see it.

He doesn't know. And there's a lot of people think they're getting by with their evil. They actually think that they're getting by with what they're doing.

God is very patient and God is very long-suffering. And many times people misinterpret that patience as blindness. God doesn't see.

He got by with it. Or ignorance. God doesn't know what I did.

I'm getting by with my evil. I'm prospering. I'm getting by.

My judgment is passed over by God. He didn't see it. I put one over on Him.

No way. No way. Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, Yahweh, the creator of the ends of the earth, now He's the creator of the universe.

Look up, see. But He's also the creator of the ends of the earth. He doesn't faint.

He is not weary. There is no searching of His understanding. There's no way that you can comprehend the vastness, the greatness, the awesomeness of God.

He gives power to those who are fainting. To those that have no might, He increases strength. This vast, awesome God who created the universe is interested in you.

As weak and frail as I am, God is interested in me. And God loves me. That's the thing that I find difficult to comprehend.

The wonder of it all, to think that God loves me. This awesome God who calls the stars by the name, who stretched out the heavens like a curtain, who measures the waters in the hollow of His hand, who meets out the universe with His span, He loves me. And when I am weak, He strengthens me.

He gives me might and power. Now even the youth shall faint and be weary. The young men shall utterly fall, but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.

They shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint. And so the glorious promises to those that just wait upon God. Waiting upon Him, my strength will be renewed.

The command of chapter 41 is, keep silence before me, O islands. Let the people renew their strength. Let them come near and let them speak and let them come near to judgment.

Now, the Lord has declared the awesomeness of His greatness in all. Now, He's challenging for the people of the world to come with their gods. Let's have a court trial.

Let's come in judgment. And God, now declaring of what He has done, said, Who raised up the righteous man from the east and called him to His foot, gave him the nations before him and made him rule over the kings. He gave them as the dust to His sword and has driven the stubble to His bow.

He pursued them and passed safely even by the way that He had not gone with His feet. Who has wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I, the Lord, the first and with the last, I am Him. Who raised up this man from the east? The man from the east was Cyrus.

Now, this is 150 years before Cyrus was born. God is talking about him as though it would already happen because God knew Cyrus was going to come along. In fact, in a couple of chapters, in the 45th chapter, He will name Cyrus.

Then you might know that I'm God and call you by your name. Even though you have not known me because you don't even exist yet. God called him by his name.

150 years earlier. And so God said, Who is it that raised up this man from the east, gave the nations before him, made him rule over the kings. He gave them as dust to His sword and driven the stubble with His bow.

He pursued them, passed safely. And by the way, He had not gone with His feet. Who has wrought this, done this? I am the one who did it.

I'm the first and with the last. I am He. Now, the coasts of the Mediterranean saw it.

It was interesting that there were the power of the east under Cyrus who conquered the Medes. And then he began to move towards the west and Egypt and Lydia, they confederated together to meet Cyrus and were defeated by him. But the interesting thing, when Cyrus defeated them, then they decided to change their gods.

It must be because he has more powerful gods. And so they got all the craftsmen. Let's make gods like his, you know, because they're more powerful than our gods because he wiped us out, you know.

But the Lord said, I'm the one that did it. Now, this confederacy of Egypt and Lydia and all, they helped each other, their neighbors, in trying to stand against Cyrus. And they were encouraging them.

They said, be of good courage, come on, we can do it all. So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith. And he that smoothed with the hammer encouraged him that smote with the anvil.

And they said, it is ready for the soldering. And he fastened it with nails that it should not be moved. And so they made these gods.

Come on, these gods will help us. Let's make gods like theirs, and they'll help us. And they said, the interesting thing, they made the gods, and then they had to fasten them with nails lest they fall over.

But thou, Israel, you are my servant Jacob, whom I have chosen. So the relationship, a servant but chosen of God. Servants who have been chosen by God for this glorious relationship that we have with him.

God chose you to have this special relationship with him. And he says, the seed of Abraham, my friend. Now, isn't that a neat thing for God to call a man, hey, he's my friend.

I love that. Jesus said, I no longer call you servants, but I call you friends. I love that.

Friend of God. We'll return with more of our verse-by-verse venture through the Bible in our next broadcast as Pastor Chuck continues to guide us through the fascinating book of Isaiah. And we do hope you'll make plans to join us.

But right now, I'd like to remind you that if you'd like to secure a copy of today's message, simply order Isaiah chapter 40, verse 12 when visiting thewordfortoday.org. And while you're there, we encourage you to browse the many additional biblical resources by Pastor Chuck. You can also subscribe to the Word for Today podcast or sign up for our email subscription. Once again, all this can be found at thewordfortoday.org. If you wish to call, our toll-free number is 1-800-272-WORD.

And our office hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific Time. Again, that's 1-800-272-9673. For those of you preferring to write, our mailing address is The Word for Today, P.O. Box 8000, Costa Mesa, California, 92628.

And now, on behalf of The Word for Today, we'd like to thank all of you who share in supporting this ministry with your prayers and financial support. And be sure to join us again next time as Pastor Chuck

continues his verse-by-verse study through the Bible. That's right here on the next edition of The Word for Today.

And now, once again, here's Pastor Chuck with today's closing comments. And now, may the Lord be with you and bless you and cause you to be enriched as you walk in fellowship with Him this week. And may you have that quietness that comes from confidence in God that He is going to work and take care of those things that concern you.

And so may it be a blessed week, growing in your knowledge of Him, experiencing His love and His closeness. Looking for direction and understanding? Our world values knowledge, but people don't always strive to know the most important things. The truth is, you may be extremely knowledgeable about something, but if you don't have the wisdom of God, you're missing the most important knowledge a person can ever hope to attain.

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