

From My Bible

Sermon Notes
& Outlines

FOUND FAITHFUL

by
Terry D. Sellars
Pastor

Faith Baptist Church
Ludowici, Georgia

Introduction

These messages are compiled from study notes and outlines of my own and many others. I hope they are a help to you.

I'm sure that all of us have at times "borrowed" or "used" a sermon we heard or read somewhere along the way. A thought, a word, or an idea jumped out to us from another preacher and we took that thing and ran with it. You have probably used an outline from a preacher brother but ended up preaching something that was uniquely different. Same idea, it just came out differently when you preached. Using your own thoughts, experiences, and illustrations.....the message became your own.

I heard an old-time preacher once say, "*Any message worth preaching ought to be worth preaching again!*" Well, I have certainly preached some sermons again and again. I have borrowed from others to preach theirs again too. Please use these messages as the Lord leads and preach His Word over and over again!

I make no claim of complete originality for this material. Also, please remember that these messages are not expected to substitute for your own personal study of the Word of God! The thoughts and ideas are given as a catalyst to help begin your ideas on a given passage of Scripture or trigger a seed thought to get you going. It is my prayer that the "stuff" contained here will further kindle the fire of God's message that is already in your heart. Your own thinking, praying, and studying will be necessary to guide you into the delivery of His Word to your own people.

May these sermons become *messages* from the Lord that He uses in your own life as He has used them in mine.

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
And He Changeth The Times & Seasons.....	5
Alone!.....	10
Found Faithful	15
Hope For Our Nation #1	21
Hope For Our Nation #2	24
Get Ready For The Rapture	25
Friends!.....	31
Psalm 19	35
The Victory Psalm Series.....	38

And He Changeth The Times & Seasons

Text: Dan. 2:21

Introduction: In the second year of the reign of King Nebuchadnezzar, he had a dream which greatly troubled him. It appears that he forgot the dream. After the king's magicians, astrologers, and sorcerers failed to make known the dream and its interpretation, he commanded to destroy all the wise men in Babylon. Daniel managed to get the decree postponed so he could make a request to God to reveal the dream to him. When God revealed the dream and its interpretation to him, Daniel thanked God and praised Him. He said of the Lord that "he changed the times and the seasons" (Dan. 2:21).

The Lord does change the times and the seasons. Seasons in the Bible are not only references to spring, summer, fall, and winter, but also to other periods of time. There are other seasons in life: childhood, youth, adulthood, middle age, and old age; of good health and poor health; of being single and being married; of being unemployed and being employed; of living in one place and then in another.

When times and seasons change in your life...

I. SOME ADVANTAGES DISAPPEAR

Acts 24:25 And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.

Herod, as far as we know, never trusted Christ. His opportunity was in the current season, not in a prospective

one. The Bible tells us to listen to the Holy Ghost TODAY, while He speaks to our hearts. The advantages of former seasons have passed for some people. They will never again have the opportunity to live godly as a teenager; to be saved before getting into deep sin; to court like a Christian should; to start off a marriage pure and in God's will.

- A. Sometimes strength fades when the seasons change
- B. Sometimes skills fade when the seasons change
- C. Sometimes sustenance fades when the seasons change
- D. Sometimes even sensibility fades when seasons change

When times and seasons change in your life...

II. SOME AWARENESS DIFFERS

Job 12:20 He removeth away the speech of the trusty, and taketh away the understanding of the aged.

You understand and look at things differently when the seasons change in your life. The scenery is different. The colors are different. Married people and single people are aware of different things; divorced people have a different awareness; veterans have an understanding not possessed by non military people; a teenager has a different perception than a small child; college students perceive things they did not think about when they lived at home; raising your own children is totally different from analyzing how other people raise their children; sickness causes you to look at things differently than when you are in good health.

These changes in seasons can be good for you:

- A. Your awareness of people changes**

1. Your understanding of the needs of people increases.

B. Your awareness of problems changes

1. You are more sympathetic toward others.
2. You learn to be more patient.

C. Your awareness of priorities changes

1. Most older people tend to have more conservative values.

People who have been near death are more likely to have completely different priorities than they once did.

When times and seasons change in your life...

III. SOME ADAPTING IS DEMANDED

Philippians 4:11-13 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

A. We need to be content in the new season

1. You CAN handle the change of being over 30, over 40, 50, etc.
2. ... of being married, singled, divorced, or widowed.
3. ... of being unemployed, retired, or back working.
4. ... of being in poorer health.
5. ... of serving God in a new church, or in a new capacity

B. We need to be consistent about some things even when the seasons change

1. Our duties do not change just because we get older.
2. Our doctrine should not change just because we moved from one place to another
3. Our devotion should not change just because our health is not what it once was.
4. Our dedication should not change just because we are retired.

C. We need to be courageous when the seasons change

1. Some seasons (especially winter) are not for cowards.
2. Gird up your loins and prepare for old age, sickness, and death.

D. We need to be conquerors when the seasons change

1. We do not have to be defeated in the new season, no matter how rough it is (Phil. 4:13; Rom. 8:37).

When times and seasons change in your life...

IV. SOME ADVENTURES ARE DELIGHTFUL

Proverbs 20:29 The glory of young men *is* their strength: and the beauty of old men *is* the gray head.

A. Expect it

Look forward to it just like you would to a vacation to an exotic place or an opportunity to have a delicious entree in a restaurant for the first time.

1. ... in your new age group
2. ... in your new health condition
3. ... in your new marital status
4. ... in your new place of employment

B. Embark on it

1. Living for Jesus can be the most exciting thing you have ever done in ANY situation!
2. You have a brand new opportunity! TAKE IT!
3. Don't neglect the adventure of this season! Now is the time to DO something!

C. Enjoy it!!!

1. This season is NOW! Get the most out of it!
2. Write a journal! Take pictures! Don't forget a thing!
3. You can bring an education and enjoyment to others later by your participation in this adventure!

Alone!

Text - Psalm 102: 6, 7

Introduction: All of us suffer at times from loneliness, but not everybody confesses it or complains about it. The etymological basis of the word alone comes to us from Middle English, it means "completely by yourself"[13th century. *all one*}. As if to say, "The total present is "one", that being yourself only."It could also be interpreted "in the midst of "all", you stand by yourself." Either interpretation of "alone" would be correct. You can be alone by the literal absence of everyone from you or you can be in the midst of a crowd and be alone. The second way of being alone can be the most devastating.

I believe this is what Jesus felt when He said, *"From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?" (John 6: 66, 67).*

Our Lord experienced rejection from the multitudes and now He speaks to the disciples in a lonely tone, asking if they, like the others will go away. Even in the midst of the crowd, Christ foresaw one of His closest disciples forsaking Him when He spoke these words, *"And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice."* (Mark 14:30). the prophecy of the future forsaking of Jesus by those who were supposed to receive Him, it says, *"And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends."* (Zechariah 13:6). John 1:11, teems with heart-break as we consider the sad words, *"He came unto his own, and his own received him not."*

Our Lord was certainly no stranger to loneliness, as we can see from the preceding Scripture. He also feels everything we feel when we go through a lonely time. The Bible says, *"For we have not an high priest (Jesus) which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."*(Heb. 4:15).

Why does loneliness arrest our attention? I would submit to you that it is because:

I. There is Pain In Loneliness.

You can hear the sigh of the one speaking and almost see the tear in the eye when we read these words, *"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger."* (Lamentations 1:12).

The rejection of the crowd is intensified when one begins to "smack" under the rejection of his or her peer group. To make matters worse in the eyes of observers, as illustrated in the trials of Job, the credibility that would bring sympathy and fellowship is lost. Hear and feel the pain of the Psalmist, *"I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me. I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel."* (Psalm 31:11,12)

II. The People God Used In Loneliness.

A. Abraham:

Isaiah 51:2, *"Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him, and blessed him, and increased him."*

B. Jacob:

Genesis 32:24, "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day."

C. Moses:

Exodus 3:1, "Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb."

D. David:

I Samuel 17:28, "And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness?...."

E. John the Baptist:

John 1:23, "He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias."

F. Paul:

II Timothy 4:16, "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge."

G. John the Beloved:

Revelation 1:9, "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ."

F. The Lord Jesus Christ:

Matthew 14:23, "And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone."

John 6:15, "When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone."

III. The Purpose In Loneliness.

I cannot be presumptuous at this point, because I realize that many times loneliness is self-afflicted because we can become incorrigible and mean-spirited. But what I am dealing with here is the type of loneliness that you did not chose, but rather was a Divine appointment with a Divine purpose. Why, you may ask would God want me to be alone?

There is going to be an effect caused by mere "trafficking" in this world of ours, so when God wants to raise up a person to represent Himself, He will often pull him away from the traffic of the world system, so that this person will be affected primarily by God alone. When God is calling a person out, He will see to it that their life is unadulterated by the effects of man.

When God had a message for Moses and David, He put them on the backside of a wilderness tending sheep. When God raised up John the Baptist to herald the coming of Jesus, He orphaned him and raised him in the wilderness. When God wanted to define the doctrine of salvation for mankind, He put His Apostle Paul in jail, with a ready pen. Before our Lord began His ministry, He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness (Luke 4:1). When our Lord had a final revelation for man, He isolated John on the Isle of Patmos.

The one saving point of this thought is that as a follower of God, you will never be truly alone. Please allow God to address this by His Word: "*When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.*" (Isaiah 43:2).

Found Faithful

Text – 1 Cor. 4:2

Introduction: The State of Wyoming is the home of the Yellowstone National Park. One of the interesting places in this park is the "Old Faithful Geysir." About twenty times a day a huge spray of water comes out of the ground, reaching a height of about fifty yards. The temperature of the water is above 200 degrees, and the steam is about 350 degrees. The huge mass of water continues for about three to five minutes, and six to eight thousand gallons of water spew into the air. The place is called "Old Faithful" because that activity has been going on non-stop for centuries.

Paul wrote a letter to the people in Corinth, stating that they were to be faithful. The text is a great one, "***Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.***" The dictionary states that one who is faithful is "firm, constant, steadfast, loyal, and true." The requirement is not that one be successful, rich, or famous. The word is faithful.

“**FOUND**” indicates that it is someone that is looked for. This same word “found” is used elsewhere in Scripture to describe:

- **Mother found** to be with child
- **Wise men found** Jesus
- **Seek & ye shall find**
- **Find** rest unto your souls
- **Found** pearl of great price
- **Found** David, a man after mine own heart
- **Luke 15...Found** Lost sheep, lost silver, & lost son

We should follow the example of Noah who preached for

one hundred twenty years. We should be like Abraham who followed God across the burning sands of the desert from his old home to his new one. We should be like Paul who said, "I have kept the faith." Remember the words that are found in the book of Revelation about "being faithful unto death and receiving the crown of life."

I. We Are To Exalt The Lord Psalm 19 / Isa. 55:12

We are to exalt the Lord. In fact, we are to exalt and glorify God in all that we do. We are to lift up and magnify His wonderful name.

Creation exalts and praises the Lord. **Psalms 19:1** states, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork." **Isaiah 55:12** declares that the mountains and the hills break forth into singing and all the trees of the field clap their hands because of the wonders of God's work.

God's people are to exalt and praise Him. I remember a country church in Georgia where, during the years, especially during a revival, the church had what was called an "A-men corner." A few of the older men sat in that spot and they came in with a strong "A-men" as the preacher spoke. They had the duty to praise the Lord, even if others failed to do so.

Psalms 22:3 states that "**God inhabits the praises of His people.**" He makes His home in the place where we talk of Him and exalt His name. **Psalms 137:6** states that if the writer didn't love God's house above every other place that his tongue would cleave to the roof of his mouth.

A dramatic scene appears in the Luke 19:27-40. The last week of the life of Jesus was quickly coming to an end. Soon He would be crucified. As he rode a donkey down the slopes of the Mount of Olives toward Jerusalem, multitudes

followed and ran before Jesus. They tossed down their jackets and broke off palm branches from trees as they praised God, saying, "Blessed be the King who comes in the name of the Lord." Some Pharisees said to Jesus, "Rebuke your disciples." Jesus answered, "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, **the stones would immediately cry out.**" Our duty is to recognize God and exalt His name in all we do.

II. We Are To Evangelize The Lost

We are to evangelize the lost. Jesus said, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost." Once Jesus shared a parable about outreach. The words have been reverberating across the centuries, "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled" (Luke 14:23).

One member of a church became excited when his pastor challenged all of them to get busy and involved in visitation in their town. Once a week a large group goes out, knocks on doors, witnesses, leaves tracts, and invites people to accept Jesus as Savior and come to God's house. After a few weeks, one church member said to his pastor, "You know, the best way for me to get out from under this weekly job is for me to 'get into the ministry' and send others out." Yes, we can go.

Larry Gross is a man who carries a cross all over South Texas. One Sunday night he walked up and down San Bernardo Street in Laredo, Texas, giving out hundreds of tracts, and talking to people about Jesus. The people looked at Larry carrying the big cross, and they never give any negative reaction to any of the testimonies that were shared along the way. Hundreds and hundreds of young people lined that street for about five or six blocks during the warmer nights until 11:00 p.m. Then the police "shoo" them away and tell them to go home.

After the special night of visiting, the following day a quick trip was made to the Laredo Times office. An interview was arranged, and Larry's picture carrying the cross, came out in the newspaper. Thousands in Laredo, a town of 250,000, plus many others across South Texas, saw the front page picture and long write-up. We can find many ways to "evangelize," if we try.

III. We Are To Edify One Another

We are to edify one another. We can **build up** each other. Romans 15:2 states, "Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up (edify)."

An experience became indelibly inscribed itself into the mind of one pastor . An old flea-bitten, lazy dog lay beneath a bush near the door of a restaurant. A couple was about to enter the building. The lady said some kind words to the dog, and that animal responded with alertness. He really took on new life by a few words that he heard spoken to him.

A little while later, the man and woman walked out of the restaurant. She had a little food that she gave to the dog. He ate the food almost as fast as a freshman in high school can eat a plate of food in the school cafeteria. The couple walked on toward their room at the motel. The dog trotted just behind them. He had really been "edified." His life for the next week had been changed, no doubt.

Solomon wrote, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Prov.25:11). Good words can make a difference in life for any of us.

We can encourage children who come to Sunday School. One SS teacher was saying some good things to her Sunday School class one day. One of the little fellows asked, "But

do we always have to pay when we come to Sunday School?" Find a way to encourage them.

Sunday School teachers need encouragement. Some teachers serve for ten, fifteen, and some thirty and more years. Let's give them a big word of appreciation for their work. The hours they spend preparing lessons, contacting their members, praying, and working - - well, they merit our appreciation.

What about the musicians? We need to have a banquet once a year in honor of all the workers - - deacons, musicians, elders, ushers, teachers, and all the rest. Those who may not teach or lead in some other way add much to the life of the church. We need to "build/edify" these saints.

IV. We Equip People To Serve

We **equip** people to serve. **ALL** are equipped to some degree. The challenge is always before us to help everyone be prepared to serve.

We equip others by following the perfect role model. Who could that be except Jesus? Act 10:38 states that "Jesus went about doing good." Jesus reached out to the crippled, the blind, the suffering, and the outcasts.

On the night of the Passover, Jesus sat at the feet of His disciples and began to wash their feet." He took a "servant's place." We learn that in God's kingdom no place is too small or too big for us. We can serve wherever a need exists.

We become equipped with "on the job training." We learn to do by doing.

V. We Extend God's Kingdom

We extend God's kingdom. The final word is to extend God's work. We want to be fruitful. We want to see growth in God's cause. How do we do it?

We start at home. Acts 1:8 states, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in Judea." That speaks of the county seat and the county seat town. That reminds us of home. That's the best starting place.

Jesus taught this great lesson. When Jesus changed a Gadarene demoniac, that man wanted to go with Jesus and the disciples. Jesus said to him, "No, go back home and tell your friends what great things the Lord has done for you" (Mark 5:19). Home missions is a big field. We need to reach the sons and daughters, the grandchildren, the cousins, and the in-laws and out-laws, too! We go beyond where we live. We go "to the ends of the earth." Why? We endeavor to extend God's kingdom.

If we can't go, we can give and we can pray. We can reach out... Do we have time for one challenge? Let's do what God wants us to do starting with our neighbors. Are you ready to make this commitment? Now!

Hope For Our Nation #1

Text—2 Chronicles 7:14

Introduction: We are a part of the greatest nation on the face of the earth. From the coast of California to the coasts of North Carolina you will find some of the most beautiful land that can be found anywhere in the world. Geographically we are in good shape, but spiritually speaking we have gone backward rather than forward. What can we do? Where is the hope for our nation? It is in properly responding to this verse—“ If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land (2 Chron. 7:14). There are four things God’s people are told to do and He says in response that He will do three things.

I. What We Are To Do?

A. *Humble Ourselves-* The Bible says, “God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble” (I Pet. 5:5). The truly humble person realizes where God has brought him or her from, and adjusts the attitude accordingly. Those who are not humble, live their lives in the realm of self and the domination of “me-ism.” The Bible says, “Pride cometh before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall”(Prov.16:18). A “haughty spirit” is a lofty and arrogant frame of mind. It is the opposite of dependence.

B. *Pray-* We go to God in dependence, asking Him to give us mercy from the judgment we deserve. If you read prior to 2 Chron. 7:14, the judgment of God was about to fall upon the people of Israel for their sins. America would be in worse shape than it is if there were not prayer warriors

who can ring the bells of heaven and call down the help of God. Remember Abraham's prayer over Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen.18). Prayer can hold back the judgment of God on a nation.

C. *Seek My Face-* The face indicates approval or disapproval. As a needy people, we should be so living our lives that we will have the approval of God upon our lives and our nation. It is my prayer we will have more politicians who will seek God's will for their own personal lives and for our nation. If we seek the Lord He can be found (Isa.55:6). "Seek the Lord and ye shall live" (Amos 5:6).

D. *Turn From Wicked Ways-* We should turn from our wicked ways, our acts and attitudes that have offended God, and return to the God we have resisted or rebelled against. Sin is the biggest problem America faces today—the sins of greed, of pride, of lust, of waste, etc.

II. What God Will Do

There are three things He promises if we respond properly.

A. *He Will Hear From Heaven-* If America needs anything today, it needs to hear from Heaven. There are still a few folks that desire to hear from the Glory world.

B. *He Will Forgive Our Sin-* We have a sin forgiving God. The woman caught in adultery is a prime example of that fact.

C. *He Will Heal Our Land-* America needs healing today. She needs to stop living beyond its means and look to the Lord for healing. It is important who we have in office, but

the ultimate healing in our land does not rest in one particular political party. God is a healing God.

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

2 Chronicles 7:14

- 1. God Hates.....Pride.....in its Root / Reach / Ruin**
- 2. God Hears..Prayer..Effectual / Fervent / Righteous**

James 5:16 Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

- 3. God Humbles.....People (His)**
- 4. God Heals.....Place (Land, i.e. “nation”)**

Hope For Our Nation #2

Text—Ephesians 2:1-10

Introduction: In this chapter you have two extremes: the **horrible condition** of the unbeliever and the **heavenly position** of the believer.

Nothing could be lower than the condition of the man without Christ, and nothing could be higher than the position of the man in Christ.

- 1) The People Whom God Saves! (1-3)**
- 2) The Power By Which God Saves! (4)**
- 3) The Position Of Those God Saves! (5-6)**
- 4) The Purpose For Which God Saves! (7)**
- 5) The Plan By Which God Saves! (8-9)**
- 6) The Performance To Which God Saves! (10)**

Our works manifest our salvation, and it is by our works that we glorify God. What glory would God receive if salvation left us to continue in the works of the flesh? But when grace can take someone who walks according to the course of this world and so radically change his life that he now walks in newness of life, God is glorified.

Get Ready For The Rapture

Text: Titus 2:13

Introduction: What is this world coming to? We hear of very unusual changes in the weather . Nations are exploding atomic bombs Children are taking guns to school and shooting down other children in cold blood. This world is coming to THE END, brother!

Although I believe the Rapture of the church is not preceded by any signs, but could have taken place even in the apostle Paul's day, many of the current events may be setting the stage for certain prophecies which have their fulfillment in the Tribulation Period. Like never before, you and I should make it a priority to ... GET READY FOR THE RAPTURE!!!

I. THE RAPTURE IS A SECRET

1 Corinthians 15:51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

Ephesians 3:3-6 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

A. It is related to the body of Christ

1.The rapture is not the rapture of Jews; it is the rapture of the church, Christ's body.

B. It was restricted from the view of prophets

1.They saw what we call the REVELATION, not the

RAPTURE.

C. It was revealed to the apostle Paul

1.The mystery of the Jew/Gentile body of Christ was revealed to the apostle Paul, although the body began before he was even saved.

2.He also gave us the revelation of the Rapture into heaven of that body and of our conformation to the image of Christ at that time.

D. It is ready (imminent)

1.The rapture could have occurred in Paul's lifetime without disrupting any prophecy. It could happen NOW.

II. THE RAPTURE IS SWEET

1 Thessalonians 4:18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Titus 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

The term "blessed" means joyful or happy. The Rapture is "that BLESSED hope."

It is sweet because of :

A. The return of the Savior

B. The reunion of the saints

C. The removal of sin

1.Positionally, that was taken care of on the cross.

2.Practically, it awaits the soon coming of our Lord!

III. THE RAPTURE IS SELECTIVE

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17

A. It will take up the real believer

- B. It will take up the real building
- C. It will take up the real body of Christ
- D. It will take up the real bride of Christ

IV. THE RAPTURE IS SUDDEN

1 Corinthians 15:51-52 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

- A. It will happen too quickly to predict
- B. It will happen too quickly to perceive
- C. It will happen too quickly to prepare

Thank God I Am Saved

(A Thanksgiving Message)

Text—Philippians 4

Introduction: My birthday, Dec. 1, 2013, Sunday a.m., Randy Folsom....best friend from high school days, graduated in 1973 with me, attended our church services to be here for my birthday (58)...his birthday is Dec. 2, the day after mine...such a great friend! While talking after church he remarked, "you sure are blessed!" Yes, I am! In Philippians 4, we have seven "blessings" pointed out to us by Paul.

1—POSITION

In Philippians 1:1, Paul speaks about "the saints in Christ Jesus." The little word "in" is used many times in the Word of God. Paul used it in this first verse. It suggests the believer's position in Christ. God's Word divides men into two classes. Men are either **in** Christ or they are **out of** Christ.

2—PRAISE

"Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice." Phil. 4:4. If the Lord Jesus Christ has saved us, and our names have been written in the Lamb's Book of life, we have occasion to rejoice with "joy unspeakable and full of glory."

3—PRAYER

This is the greatest blessing of all. No one outside of Christ can experience and enjoy the ministry of prayer. Prayer is the blessing of the child of God. What a comfort it is to know that we can commit everything into His hands. We have the privilege of trusting Him for all things. Psalm 37:5. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him, and he shall bring it to pass."

4—PEACE

“And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” (verse 7) The wicked have no peace. Peace comes by Christ through His death on the cross of Calvary.

5—PRESENCE

The presence of our God is with us day by day. “And the God of peace shall be with you,” verse 9. In the hour of trouble, trial and tribulation He is with us. Our God hath declared that He will “never leave us nor forsake us.”

6—POWER

“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me,” verse 13. We are nothing in ourselves. We are utterly helpless. “For without me ye can do nothing,” John 15:5.

7—PROVISION

“But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus,” Verse 19. The God who provided salvation for us, in the per-son of His own Son, has promised to provide for our every need.

Friends!

Text-Proverbs 17:17; 18:24

Introduction: Probably one of the greatest movies of all time that dealt with the topic of friendship was Frank Capra's *It's A Wonderful Life*. Throughout his whole life George Bailey showed himself to be an exemplary friend and family member. He made sacrifices for the good of his family, friends, and the community of Bedford Falls.

There was a villain in this movie by the name of Mr. Potter. He stole money that led George Bailey to the brink of suicide. That's when Clarence the Angel appeared, and showed George Bailey how important he really was, and that he really did have a wonderful life. The final scene of the movie is a gathering of all of George Bailey's **friends**. They were there to support him emotionally and financially, did you notice the toast that Harry Bailey, George's Brother, gave? "To my big brother George, the richest man in town." George Bailey was rich in friends!

Did you notice what was written on the inside of the book Clarence left? It said, **"Remember, no man is a failure who has friends."**

When you have true friends you are truly rich and you are not a failure.

Let's look at some of the positive aspects of friendship. As we do, we want to remind you of the best friend of all, the Lord Jesus Christ.

FRIENDS ARE SELECTED

It has been said that you can choose your friends but you can't choose your family.

It makes sense to choose your closest friends well.

They will have the greatest influence on you.

They will either build you or pull you down.

They will either encourage or discourage you.

They will either help you or hurt you.

I've seen many go downhill because they have hung with the wrong kinds of friends.

I've seen many experience God's best because they chose the right kind of friends.

John 15:16 - *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you...."*

If you are wise you will select your friends carefully. You will not select friends who will bring you down, but those that will build you up and that you can build up.

FRIENDS STICK

True friends stick with you. You stick with them. When things are going well, your friend is there to enjoy it with you. When things are going poorly, your friend is there for you.

Proverbs 18:24 - *A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.*

You can tell a person is a good friend when he sticks with you.

You can tell that you're a good friend when you stick with them.

FRIENDS SACRIFICE

My friends have made sacrifices for me. I have made sacrifices for my friends. **A friendship that costs nothing**

is no friendship at all.

Jesus said in John 15:13, *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*

This is exactly what the Lord Jesus did for us. He laid down His life for His friends.

To be the friend of Jesus will also mean sacrifice.

Luke 14:26-27 - *If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. [27] And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.*

To be Jesus' friend will require sacrifice.

The sacrifice of time

The sacrifice of talent (used for Him).

The sacrifice of thought (that pleases Him)

The sacrifice of treasure

The sacrifice of tasks done for Him

It may cost everything to be Jesus' friend. It cost Him everything to be your friend.

If you will not sacrifice for a friend, you are not much of a friend. If your friend will not sacrifice for you, he is not much of a friend.

I am not suggesting that we can always do what our friends ask. If a friend asks me to do what is illegal, immoral, or in any way contrary to the will of God, I should not make that sacrifice.

The final scene of the movie is a gathering of all of George

Bailey's **friends**. They were there to support him emotionally and financially. you notice the toast that Harry Bailey, George's Brother, gave?"To my big brother George, the richest man in town."George Bailey was rich in friends!

Did you notice what was written on the inside of the book Clarence left? It said, **"Remember, no man is a failure who has friends."**

When you have true friends you are truly rich and you are not a failure.

Psalm 19

Introduction: James M. Gray, D.D. (1851-1935), First President of Moody Bible Institute, wrote the following: "God's revelation in the world and in the Word. We have a contrast between these two in this psalm. In verses one to six there is the general revelation of the heavens, "wordless but extending their sphere over the whole earth," which then specializes to the sun as the chief figure of it all. But in verses 7-14, the law is celebrated, whose function is to warn again sin, and by conformity to which only can our thought and conduct become acceptable to God."

Observe the literary beauty as well as the spiritual teaching in the description of the law — six names, six epithets and six effects. The clearer our apprehension of the law, so the psalm teaches, the clearer our view of sin, and the more evident that grace only can cleanse and keep us from it."

1) The Authority of Scripture

"The law of the Lord is perfect" (19:7). The psalmist used no less than six titles to emphasize the authority of Holy Scripture. Like a condensed version of Psalm 119, these words express the extensive and diverse authority of the Word of God.

1. **Law** tells of the Divine instruction relative to character and conduct.
2. **Testimony** tells of the Divine witness to what God is, and what we should be.
3. **Statute** tells of Divine directions designed to secure obedience or check disobedience.

4. Commandment tells of the Divine decrees, authoritative and imperious.
5. Fear tells of the settled habit of the soul which is informed by the Law.
6. Judgments tell of the judicial decisions and sentences of Jehovah

These words express the awesome span of scriptural authority! How we need to recapture the reverence and respect that David showed for the Word of God!

2) The Inerrancy of Scripture

“The law of the Lord is perfect” (19:7). Once again David selected six words, this time to describe the inerrancy of Scripture. He spoke of the law as being

1. “perfect” (19:7)—without flaw or defect;
2. “sure” (19:7)—reliable and worthy of absolute trust;
3. “right” (19:8)—presenting the road to man’s true destiny;
4. “pure” (19:8)—shining like the sun in a clear sky and highlighting duty;
5. “clean” (19:9)—without corruption; and
6. “true” (19:9)—inerrant and faithful.

Let's pray that God gives us a similar concept of the inerrancy and infallibility of His precious Word!

3) The Validity of Scripture

“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul” (19:7). Once more the psalmist described six effects that the Word of God has in the experience of the believer.

1. It restores the soul (19:7);
2. It makes wise the simple (19:7);
3. It rejoices the heart (19:8);
4. It enlightens the eye (19:8);
5. It endures forever (19:9);
6. It is righteous altogether (19:9).

Because of the validity of Holy Scripture David exclaimed: “More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward” (19:10-11).

In other words, the Holy Scriptures are to be loved, learned and lived; and in the obeying of God’s Word there is great reward. Our ultimate contentment is our increasing knowledge of God, as the Holy Spirit leads us into *all truth* as revealed in the Scriptures.

The Victory Psalm Series

TEXT: Psalm 9

Introduction: This psalm is a psalm of victory. Not only does the passage bear this out but the title even suggests celebration. Although scholars have never been able to settle on the meaning of the word “*Muthlabben*” it is generally accepted that the word has something to do with the death of a champion or a son. Dr. F. B. Meyer said that in this psalm the text clearly links it with the death of God's divine Son, and records His victory over death and the grave. So we see that these verses have a deeper significance than the original thought in David's mind. While it is true that this psalm was his song of victory it is just as true that it may be our song of victory.

I. The Spirit of Victory

“I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart...When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence” (9:1-3). Four times over, in the brief span of two verses, the psalmist says, “I *will* praise thee... I *will* show forth all thy marvelous works. I *will be* glad and rejoice in thee: I *will* sing praise to thy name” (9:1-2). Here the spirit of victory:

1) Is Expressed in Yieldedness

“I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart” (9:1)..

2) Is Expressed in Openness

“I will show forth all thy marvelous works” (9:1).

3) Is Expressed in Cheerfulness

“I will be glad and rejoice in thee” (Ps. 9:2).

4) Is Expressed in Thankfulness

“I will sing praise to thy name, O thou Most High” (9:2).

II. The Story of Victory

For thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging right. Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever. O thou enemy, destructions are come (Psalms 9:4-6)

Just as we had four "I wills in the first two verses, so we have four "Thou hast" in the stanzas now before us. David was reciting how God deals with the enemy of our souls.

1) God Rebukes the Enemy

"Thou hast rebuked the heathen [or the nations]" (9:5).

2) God Destroys the Enemy

"Thou hast destroyed the wicked (9:5).

3) God Forgets the Enemy

"Thou hast put out their name for ever and ever" (Ps. 9:5).

III. The Secret of Victory

"But **the Lord** shall endure for ever:.. he hath prepared his throne for judgment...Put them in fear, **O Lord**..." (9:7, 20).

1) The God of Righteousness

"And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness (9:8).

2) The God of Refuge

"The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, has not forsaken them that seek thee" (9:9-10).

3) The God of Remembrance

"Sing praises to the Lord, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings. When he maketh inquisition

for blood, he remembereth them: he forgetteth not the cry of the humble” (Ps. 9:11-12).

4) The God of Redemption

“Have mercy upon me, O Lord; consider my trouble which I suffer of them that hate me, thou that liftest me up from the gates of death: that I may show forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation” (9:13-14).

5) The God of Recompense

“The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken. The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth....Put them in fear, O Lord: that the nations may know themselves to be but men” (Ps. 9:15-20).

Conclusion: This psalm of victory for David was summed up in one word—God. To him, victory was not just an emotional experience, or a theological idea, or even “the ground of his being”; for David, victory was the personification of the God of righteousness, refuge, remembrance, redemption and recompense. Can you sing this song?

In the time of the Covenanters, unbelievable atrocities were committed against men and women, and even boys and girls, stood for the faith. At the height of these troubles a group of children were ordered to be shot. A little girl of eight looked into the face of one of the soldiers and asked, “Will you let me take my brother’s hand and die that way? What about saying a prayer before you die?” jeered the soldier. “If you please, Sir,” said the little girl, “my brother and I cannot pray, but we can sing ‘The Lord’s my Shepherd.’ My mother taught it to us before she went away.” The children stood up, and from their lips came the quivering strains, “The Lord’s my Shepherd, I’ll not want.” As they sang, man after man turned away, the tears running down their cheeks until no one was left.

Deliverance had come through the singing of a Psalm.