

Delighting in the sufficiency of Christ (Quality: Very good)

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- [0 : 00] Now, with the help of God this evening, I would ask your attention to the third verse in the second chapter of Solomon's Song.
- Solomon's Song, chapter 2, and at verse 3. As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons.
- I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.
- The Song of Solomon is a very deep book in need of wisdom from on high.
- To read it to profit, especially in the public domain, to take a verse from this part of God's word.
- [1 : 00] And by way of text, as this subject has been upon my spirit for this evening, I venture once more in hope. That in answer to your prayers, in answer to my humble cries, the Lord will grant us entrance into the truth of it.
- I might say in the beginning that the average assessment in the world today of our being here together, subjecting ourselves, as it were, to the authority of the ministry, that it's a most unhappy and unattractive situation.
- Well, my friends, the things judged by the natural heart are far removed from the truth of the matter.
- And if the Lord gives us entrance into the spirit of the text here this evening, we shall not be clouded with a misery of hearing, listening, but rather we shall find somewhat of the truth of the matter, that real happiness is found in Christ and in the truth of his word, as in no other way under the sun.
- The very, the second part of the verse is really the basis of my meditation. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.
- [2 : 52] I want just to make a reference to the first part of the verse. As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons.
- The uniqueness of Christ as an apple tree among the trees of the wood. That's a very simile easily understood, isn't it?
- The trees of the wood. They're beautiful in their sense. They're useful in the ordering of God's decrees.
- But there's something that the apple tree in the midst of the wood bears an attraction, a satisfaction, something that the fruit brings home to us as those who find enjoyment in and benefit in the fruit that the apple tree produces.
- As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. Jesus Christ is the apple tree.
- [4 : 15] And my friends, the fruits of Christ crucified especially bring a peculiar and very particular emphasis upon the greatness and glory of God in ever sending forth his only begotten Son into this sin-ruined world to bring forth salvation for sinners.

As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. And it's a wonderful thing if we have a sufficient knowledge of the truth to see that there's none so good as Jesus Christ.

None so promising. None more possessed, as it were, of things suitable for us and needful to us as God has provided in the Lord Jesus Christ.

As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. The chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely one.

My friends, there's no way to heaven but by and through Jesus Christ. There's no promise in the world to come apart from the truth as it is in Jesus and the work that he has accomplished in the behalf of the salvation of sinners such as we.

[6 : 05] I say nobody's in heaven who's not a Christian. Nobody's in heaven who's not a Christian because Christ is the way to God.

Christ is the way to bliss. In this way the fathers trod down from Adam's day to this. The one way Christ says of himself, I am the door.

And there's no other entrance but through that door into paradise. And my friends, how wonderful it is that there is such a door, that there is such a provision, that the Lord Jesus Christ willingly conformed and undertook his work to salvation and left heaven.

Just think what he left to come down to this world. Think what exposure to various experiences in his manhood, which were absolutely strange to him in the personal nature of them, in his eternal Godhead with his Father.

But as the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. The best friend, the best friend that you and I can ever have is the Lord Jesus Christ.

[7 : 41] And if he has, through his grace made us to know him as our friend and our beloved, we have every reason to rejoice with praises and thanksgivings, not only in store for heaven in the hereafter, but there is a foundation being laid now, I trust, in Christian experience, whereby it is our desire to crown him Lord of all.

When I was the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow.

Now there's a wonderful expression, significant to an exercise, naturally and spiritually, as we may apply our thoughts to sitting down under a shadow.

You know in the hot climate what a relief can be obtained by sitting in the shadow of some article that the, I think it's the 35th chapter in Isaiah's prophecy, speaks of the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

The shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Christ, as it were, so providing for us, relief, so providing for us a situation which is suitable to our peace and comfort even in this weary land of earth.

[9 : 37] Do you sometimes feel weary with life? How wonderful it is when the Lord manifests his will and way that this is our way to God.

We are in school, so to speak, learning those things which will assist us in honouring and praising the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to a never-ending eternity.

We're being instructed in righteousness that we may crown him Lord of all to a never-ending eternity.

Now, I sat down under his shadow. It speaks, doesn't it, not only of an exhausted condition, it speaks of a restful condition, a place of rest.

I sat down under his shadow. His shadow protected me from things which were threatening and in that shadow I could rest.

[11 : 00] I could feel hope and promise rising up in my heart relative to the spiritual requirements of life in this world and in the world to come.

I sat there. This morning we were considering the sheep being in a restless and lonely condition, rushing about and calling with no evident source of deliverance.

well my friends there is such a thing as the rest of faith. There is such a thing as sheltering beneath the shadow of the almighty.

There is such a thing as God providing for weary pilgrims a resting place. And you know I do think this without well I feel I'm qualified scripturally and in every way I hope and trust personally finding endorsement in the experiences of some of the Lord's people here with us this evening that there is no real rest like a faith's appreciation of the love of God that has taken in complete care the needs of his people in this present time state as well as to eternity in the face of all that life means to us that still God is our refuge and our strength and the very present help in our times of trouble the psalmist goes on therefore will not we fear though the earth be removed and though the mountains be cast into the depths of the sea whatever we can use that broad expression whatever if the Lord is our

God and we have a sweet sense of his presence to be with us it's a place to rest isn't it it's a place to rest he has endured the awful consequence of the sins of his people he has brought in a salvation that's pure and forever he has undertaken the redemption of the sins of his people in every thought in every word and every deed and that my friends he has so perfected salvation that the children of God favoured with a revelation an application of the truth as it is in Jesus have nothing else to do but to rest in his love

[14 : 20] I sat down under his shadow with great delight with great delight we're talking about happiness great delight there's no place as happy as the portion of a believer under the influence of the Holy Spirit assured that the Lord Jesus is their saviour that God is their father and the Holy Spirit is their teacher alright the world boasts of its happiness and striving all the time by a thousand means to satisfy the desire for happiness and satisfaction they never can find it they never can find it because out of

Christ almighty power to do nothing but devour they'll be disappointed in the ultimate however happy they may be for a while it is but a fleeting experience of the imitation of true happiness because real happiness is to be found under the shadow of the almighty what a wonderful thing it is that Christ is set before us as the perfect saviour the perfect saviour the prince of peace there's nothing shall I say that stands in opposition to our eternal deliverance but what Christ has conquered Christ has brought the venom of

Satan into an insufficient attempt to kill one of the Lord's people because the Lord Jesus Christ has gained the victory he led captivity captive he's received gifts for men even for the rebellious also that the Lord God might dwell among you can't tell me in the alternatives to the gospel anything that comes near to the peace and prospect of gospel grace and truth I sat under his shadow with great delight nothing empty nothing vain nothing that will miscarry it's trusting in the

Lord casting all your care upon him realising his all sufficiency to do what he promises to do to everyone that trusts in him for their soul salvation trust ye in the Lord forever for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength now I want to be clear that it is the Holy Spirit ministry taking of the things of Jesus that will bring us into the experience of great delight great delight you know the happiness of this world there's always something that mars isn't there's always a deficiency in some particular they seem sometimes to be carried away with the spirit of delight in their interest or in their activities of sport or whatever but my friends there's always something but the delight that is to be known by the Holy

Spirit's grace and power in the soul the full assurance of faith in the all sufficiency of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ having accomplished that the end for which he came into the world to bring salvation for sinners I say that is a delight which in the full comprehension of it is the portion of true believers if I asked you the question what has been the happiest moment or what have been the happiest moments of your experience of life till now I wonder what you'd be answering I hope there might be a majority response enjoying the honey of gospel grace and truth as it is in

[20 : 13] Jesus Christ the sweetness of the gospel the sweetness of a good hope through grace the sweetness of the knowledge that your sins though many are all forgiving you that there is indeed set before you the hour and article of death but the Lord has taken the sting out of death and he's overcome the power of the grave and the Lord's people are destined to an eternity in the completeness of salvation of salvation for Jesus sake in glory perfect happiness forever whatever you may have a foretaste of here and however the memory of it delights your soul in reflective remembrance I say to you that foretaste will be totally eclipsed in the experience of heaven when the

Lord calls you from time into eternity a portion of the gospel and my friends in the knowledge that the Lord brings to us through his word I sat down under his shadow I don't need anything but the gospel and the promises of God's holy word all those things that are yea and amen in Christ what do I need beside what do I need in regard to the future I perhaps quoted already a verse that's very common in my thinking as I meditate upon the finished work of Christ and the purpose of God through him to bring his people into eternal joy and rejoicing in his immediate presence forever forever what a friend we have in

Jesus what a friend we have in Jesus I sat down under his shadow with great delight there's nothing that is threatening or deficiency a deficiency in the ultimate and certain accomplishment of the promises of God which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus you say ah but if ah but if ah but if I was only different my friends the Lord promises salvation to sinners as they are as they are you say oh but if I only hadn't got that sin of my youth to think of that awful fall that I made at some point along life's way when ah I brought ah an awful blot on my ah character my friends

David did that didn't he he brought a blot on his character but read the Psalms of David when favoured with the assurance of the spirit in respect of his personal salvation and he sees forgiveness he sees pardon he enters into the experience of a peace of God that passes all understanding I sat down under his shadow his shadow the shadow of his Godhead that he knew one with the father all that was needful in the Godhead to receive without qualification personal qualification sinners from all their sins and all their transgressions whatsoever washed in the precious blood and clothed in the meritorious righteousness of the

Lord Jesus Christ God can look with reconciliation and approbation upon his people though they consider themselves to be totally unworthy worthy of his favour I sat down I sat down under his shadow with great delight what is there to be sorry about what is there to be morbid about what is there to be downcast about nothing in regard to the person and work of Jesus Christ there's everything to delight in where we come to the experience of being downcast and heavy laden in spirit is this when we consider ourselves oh wretched man that

[26 : 16] I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death and the apostle rises to the place of delight he says I thank God through Jesus Christ my Lord it seems as though from the depressing convictions of his own sins and shortcomings he's brought to see in Jesus a complete deliverance by a perfect deliverer and he says I thank God through Jesus Christ my Lord I sat down under his shadow with great delight yes great delight riches that are beyond all the riches of this world the pleasures that are awaiting the redeemed people in glory of which from time to time they're given given just a foretaste while they're here in the wilderness

I say the world knows nothing about the high enjoyment of faith as it centers in the perfection of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ now I sat down under his shadow with great delight the shadow of the Lord is not only associating with the redemption of his people and the final deliverance from the condemnation of their own transgressions but the gospel comprehends the experience which God allocates to each individual as led and guided through this wilderness of earth and my friends the gospel speaks of deliverance from all our enemies all our enemies the totality of victory the apostle

Paul has it and he says thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ who is it he that can harm you if ye be followers of that which is God the Lord Jesus Christ hearing the prayers and calls of his people for help in their times of threatening distresses difficulties temptations bereavements and whatever else may constitute as it were the strength of the opposition the Lord reigns and the Lord promises to be with his people I will never leave thee nor forsake thee I will be with thee in all places whithersoever thou goest the strongest difficulty and trial that may present itself before them is under the sovereign control of him who promises for we know that all things work together for good to them that love

God and are the call according to his purpose is anything permitted of God ultimately to as it were overcome us no my friends to try us to make us know how we need the Lord and how we need all that he is and has to be our sovereign guide our sovereign keeper our sovereign protector and our sovereign deliverer but the Lord promises to be such to his people and we know from the testimony of scripture that active have been the enmities presented to not a few of the people of God you think of Daniel when he was cast into the lion's death but the

Lord could shut the lion's mouth that they didn't hurt him we would say well just an unthinkable reaction when we consider the nature of a lion but the Lord's restraint was such that they didn't act according to the nature that they carried a miracle of divine intervention prevented them doing what creation's power and purpose initially seems to embody in them my friends this is a typical situation isn't it when we think of the bitternesses and enmities that arise against the people of God commit thy way unto the Lord trust also in him he will bring it to pass not a single shaft can hit until the

[32 : 11] God of lost things fit sit down wait on the Lord exercise your heart as God gives you a gracious ability to consider the relative issues and you'll realize your enemies your enemies are conquered foes they're limited in what God will allow them to do they're limited in the success of their threatening purposes I sat down under his shadow I sat down you may say in the present if I may just intervene with them for a few moments on a topic that's very very present with us you may feel at the moment that the recession and the threatening financial adversity of the future is a mountain you don't know what you're going to do you don't know how you're going to meet the requirements of housing family and the other commitments associated with your particular calling you don't know you don't know whether you're going to be secure in your place of employment the

Lord God omnipotent reign the Lord is in charge men may threaten but their liberty to execute their purposes is subject to the will and wisdom of the Most High I sat down under his shadow all is under his control the general situation developing which seems to cast a common cloud over the whole body of nations things is not developing in a way that is taking God by surprise it's developing in a way that

God before determined before determined and I do feel this with respect to it if I may just suggest this to your mind it's God's judgment upon the world but he can bring good out of it he will fulfill his promises to his people in the midst of it and it's a great resting place when we think of the absolute dominion of divine sovereignty that the hearts of all men are in his hand he turns them whithersoever he will they're not there to execute their own pleasure they're there to serve the Lord God whoever they might be I've gone so far in my own experience to say that

Hitler served the purpose of God in my experience taking me to places I never would have gone to had the Lord not permitted the war to interfere with my youthful years and took me to places in the world where the Lord had determined to communicate to my soul a blessing you know you look back you are a terrible terrible thing to be uprooted out of home environment and taken into the forces when we were 18 and seemed as it were hardly qualified to face the pressures of life as they flowed in with threatening power but my friends in it all and over the whole universe the church of God is subject to the power and purpose of

God fulfilling his will executing his decrees bringing to an issue circumstances which were never foreseen by them and yet all foreknown to the Lord all shall come and last and end as shall please our heavenly friend I sat down under his shadow with great delight oh if you try and as it were manage your own affairs if you lean on an arm of flesh if you begin to as it were realize the powers that be and hope that they will bring us a better day tomorrow than appears to be developing today my friends that won't bring you satisfaction and peace ultimately because things won't work their way it will work

[38 : 01] God's way it will work God's way and if it works God's way it's going to work for the affirmation of his word and promise in the experiences to his people and there is such a thing I sat down under his shadow with great delight the exercise of faith is so comprehensive that the very hairs of our head are all numbered that nothing can happen but by the permissive will of God what a security what a resting place my times are in thy hand for now I sat down under his shadow with great delight and his fruit was sweet to my taste nothing bitter nothing bitter nothing in real

Christian experience concerning the Lord Jesus Christ that has any semblance of bitterness if God before us who then can be against us if God is on our side who can gain the mastery over us if God is providing for us as he promises to do are we ever going to perish for want of supply God is faithful God is so true that when the prophet Elijah comes to the widow woman and she's at the end of everything just little meal in the bottom of the barrel when I've made cakes for me and my son that will be the end the prophet as it were adds to a problem in one sense but illuminates the truth in another sense he says make me a little cake first make me a little cake first when you've made mine well then with what's left make for you and your son for the barrel of meal shall not waste neither shall the cruise of oil fail until the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth my friends if the

Lord is as it were furnishing our barrel of meal it will be a sufficient supply to feed us to the end of our need the end of life's journey well now I must draw to the amen I sat down under his shadow with great delight and his fruit was sweet to my taste what is essential a turn of mind in that direction oh no no no no no no no your mind is not resolute enough to hold on to the principle you need God to give you faith to give me faith and maintain the faith that he gives because that faith will be tried that faith will come into situations indicate that the promise the situation is here and we don't know what they're going to do not too late not too late

God never is before his time and he never is behind he waits to be gracious so it's very clear to the subject that the deliverance was the intervention of God himself I sat down under his shadow with great delight all for that living faith to believe in the Lord with all our hearts mountains flow down threatening difficulties as it were like snow in the sun they just vanish don't they my friends rest in the Lord wait patiently for him in his own time and in his own way he can resolve all the difficulties he can make every crooked thing straight and every rough place play I sat down under his shadow with great delight and his fruit was sweet to my taste and I tell you if the

Lord has given you an experience of the conquest of faith over every other consideration and you felt to the pleasure the sacred happiness of trusting in the Lord every time your mind by the remembrance is taken back to it it will be sweet in the remembrance of it it will be sweet in the remembrance of it you'll never tarnish by the progression of time thou shalt remember all the way the Lord God thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness and my friends what a miracle was the feeding of the children of Israel as they went through the desert of Simeon oh what a wonderful thing that such a host of people were watered and sustained by miracle in conditions which appeared absolutely antagonistic to the fulfillment of the divine will revealed now in a sense that's where that's the ground upon which we're walking that's the way in which we're progressing through this wilderness of earth death but if this God is our

[44 : 40] God we've got nothing to fear we've got nothing to fear fear not little flock for it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom the kingdom but where is the kingdom well heaven heaven and my friends if the Lord sees us through the wilderness and safe into glory oh what a rest forever what a rest forever the resting experiences of faith as they fix and established in the person and work of Christ revealed in holy scripture will be but a foretaste of the rest that remains for the people of God and we can say thus the sweetness of the streams what must the fountain be where saints above receive their joys immediately from thee

I hope the principle that I've tried to establish this evening has been understood by you and I hope it might be coveted by you to know the Lord to know him by faith given from on high and you'll be one of the most happy people that's ever been on the face of the earth amen Amen.