

Being content and courageous in performing God's will (Quality: Good, incomplete)

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- [0 : 00] Chapter 13, verses 5 and 6. Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have.
- For ye have said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, so that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.
- Truly, we live in a materialistic age, when money and wealth and worldly goods have become so important, here the Apostle, having finished the doctrinal part of his message to the Hebrews, brings in some of the, what used to be called the practical part of religion.
- And if it's good for us at times, that we draw forth from the word of God, those things which will be helpful for us, that we might live in this world, according to the word of God.
- That we might live our life, according to that which is right in his sight. Now we are to be in the world, and we have to live in this world, as amongst men.
- [1 : 51] But the Christian, is not to be of the world. This was especially true, for the Hebrew church. For the most part, they have been brought, out of Judaism.
- They have been brought up, from their youth, in that Old Testament order of things. In the tradition, of their fathers.
- But now they have, put on a new faith. They have come to trust, in the Lord, Jesus Christ. And they must, lead a very different life.
- And no doubt, they were susceptible, to the taunts of men. It was true, of all the Christian churches, as they were for.
- They had much difficulty, in walking in the world, in that new order of things. They were called on, to be different.
- [2 : 59] And because of this, they were not received, of their friends, of their family. They were cut off, from society.
- They had to live, according, to that doctrine, which had been revealed, unto them, by the Spirit of God. Now as we look, around us, today, we see, the world, perhaps we live, in a day, as never has been before, when such an emphasis, has been placed, on material things.
- If we, look around us, we don't have to look, very far, to see, the heart of man, that it is, that he might, have more, and more, of what he can get, in this world.
- and, his lust, for worldly things, seemingly, has never satisfied. We can look, at a wealthy man, and, he wants more.
- There was, a particular case, recently, in the, stock market, in London, where, a young person, earning, a hundred thousand pounds, a year, for most of us, a principal son, and yet, on the side, he was, cheating his own company, for once, for four.
- [4 : 41] Now, this surprised me, when I heard of it. But really, it shouldn't surprise us. The heart, is deceitful, above all things, and, desperately wicked.

Who can know it? Our hearts, are, ever toward evil. And we want, everything, that we can lay, our hands upon.

Naturally speaking, when we have, a new car. It's not long, before, we're dissatisfied, with, certain, things about it.

We want a faster car, a more powerful car, a more luxurious car. We see, our neighbours, that they have, a certain thing.

And immediately, we inquire, about this thing. As to its purpose, what it can do, to how it can help. And very soon, we are finding, that, we too, want one.

[5 : 51] Now here, is the principle, of the world. It is, that they might, gain more and more. That they might, build bigger, and yet, bigger barns, to store, their wealth.

Never satisfied. Ever, looking, for more. now, the apostle, is bringing, before, the mind, of these Hebrews.

And we know, that, no scripture, is of any, private interpretation. What is spoken, in days old, is, relevant, to us today.

let, your conversation, be, without, covetousness. And be content, with such, things as she has.

This word, conversation, here, has a much, wider application, than generally, we think of it. It means, in this portion, let your whole, life's, witness, be, without, covetousness.

[7 : 08] We are not there, as, those who, follow the Lord, Jesus Christ, to covet, what, other men have.

We are to be, satisfied, with our love. with what the Lord, has provided, for us. Whether we be rich, or, whether we be poor.

Whether we be weak, or, whether we be strong. You know, it is a most, greed of sin, against God, when we are, discontent.

And it is, the spirit, found, within the heart, of so many, that they are, discontent, with their love, with their standing, in life.

And, sadly, we have to say, that these, things, enter, into our, own churches, and amongst, our, own people.

[8 : 16] I pray, God, that he will, give it, into your heart, to suffer, a word, of exhortation. Some things, are not, easy for us, to receive.

But, may the word, of God, speak, into our heart. May we, have a, mere conscience, in these matters. I speak, I speak freely, as one, not knowing, any of you, to a large degree, and therefore, do not know, how it is, with you.

But, here, the word of God, clearly, sets before, that need, for contentment, that we, sin not, against God, that we, bring not, the church of Christ, into, disrepute.

Now, I know, that it is, natural, with each, one of us, to want more. But, the love of money, is, the root, of all evil.

And, the love of, earthly things, takes, our hearts, and minds, away, from those, real treasures, which are, in heaven above.

[9 : 48] Where your treasure is, there, will your heart, be also. We can put it, around the opposite way, where your heart is, there, will your treasure, be also.

Or, how subtle, is, the devil. And, he will, give a craving, for those, things, which are not, convenient, nor helpful, toward us.

Let, your conversation, we can so easily, look to others. We can say, well, they have these things, and they, want these things.

And, they, are Christian. let, your conversation, let, the whole, tenor, of your life, be, without, covetousness.

Now, there, are, things, that we can, cover. We are, exhorted, in God's word, to, cover, earnestly, the best, things.

[10 : 53] the, apostle here, is speaking, of those, natural things, those, earthly things. We are, to be content.

Oh, what a, favor it is, if we are content, with what the Lord, has given unto us. And, remember, if we are, the Lord's people, the Lord, has promised, to provide, our every need.

My every need, he richly, will supply. Then, let us not be like, the children of Israel, in the wilderness, who, murmured against God, and, who were, cut off, for their sin, of unbelief.

Let us, let us not be, like those, who have sought, their portion, in this life, that they may be, held up, in esteem.

That they might, be promoted, to the highest degree. that they may, bear, influence, upon man. Now, we must speak rightly.

[12 : 19] It is not a sin, to get on, in this life. It is a sin, to be floated, in business. To sit back, and expect, everything, to be given, into our hands.

We, are to be, as light, in the darkness, of this world. We are, to show, unto others, that we serve, the King of Kings.

And because, of this, we must do, everything, that we do do, for the best, of our ability. Whether, it be, in the home, whether, it be, at the workplace.

Wherever, we meet, with man. we must, show forth, a good example. But what is, the intention, of our heart?

Do we take, promotion, for promotion's sake? Do we do it, that we might have, more, worldly goods? That we might, have a better, lifestyle?

[13 : 30] That we might, have, more possession? Be content, with such, things, as ye have. I know, one, young lady, who lives, in the, a, small, council house, whose family, is poor, does not have, great possession, lives, day by day, upon, her meager, earning, has to provide, not only for herself, but, for her relations, also.

Speaking to her, one day, she said, I, love my house. She said, it may not be much, but to me, it is home.

And I love, to be at home, with my, relations, round about me. Now here, is a spirit, of contentment. Satisfied, in that love, which, God, has given her.

And if we believe, on the name, of the Lord, then we will believe, that we are, in that place, that God, has appointed for us. Because, as Christians, we pray, that the Lord, would direct us, in all our ways, that we, be content.

Now the apostle, had to come there, he had to, learn what it was, to have, the contentment. He had to learn, through the experiences, of life, what it was, to depend, upon the Lord, that in everything, he might, be content.

[15 : 32] I have learned, in all things, therewith, to be content. The Lord, will, lay upon us, such, trials, and, necessities, that we be content, with our love, that we be satisfied, in that, portion, that we have.

For it is, a great mercy, and a great favor, that to be brought there. The Lord, Jesus Christ, showed that example, whilst here, upon earth.

The, church of Philippine, had supplied, the needs of the apostle, had sent him a gift, and he, was, thankful for it.

That I rejoice, in the Lord, greatly, that now, at the last, your care of me, hath flourished again. Wherein, ye were also careful, but ye, lacked opportunity.

Not that I speak, in respect of one. For I have learned, in whatsoever state, I am, therewith, to be content.

[16 : 56] I know, I know, how, to be abased. I know, how to abound. Everywhere, and, in all things, I am, instructed, both to be poor, and, to be hungry.

Both, to abound, and, to, suffer thee. And, in his exhortation, to, his son in the faith, Timothy, speaking, of, bringing nothing, into the world, and, certainly, not being able, to, carry anything, out of this world.

He says, and having food, and raiment, let us, be, therewith, content. my everything, he richly, will supply.

What do we stand, in need of? We may have, many things, that we would, like. Many things, that we, might look to, and think, that they will be, helpful for us.

But what do we stand, in need of? We are thankful, that we live, in this, modern day, when, many things, are, provided in society.

[18 : 24] And I suppose, in, one way, if we compare it, with, thirty or forty, years ago, there is no one, today, that is poor. Or, should we qualify that, and say, there is no one, that needs to be poor.

The Lord, has, promised, to his people, that he would, supply, everything for them. Everything, that they, stand in, need of, he will, give unto them.

Let your conversation, be, without covetousness. And be content, with such, things, as ye have. We read, of the widow, who put her might, into the treasury.

She was commended, of the Lord. Often feel, that, a great responsibility, is, laid especially, upon, those who are rich.

That they distribute, unto the poor. If the Lord, has, so prospered you, in your life, and you have won, that stands in need.

[20 : 05] Then it is, required of you, that you, supply, that need. A cup of, cold water, given in the name, of the Lord, shall in no wise, lose its reward.

We are to do, good unto all men, especially those, of the household, of faith. Now the apostle, draws us, to the reason, why, we should be content.

For, he has said, I will, never leave thee, nor, forsake thee. For, he, hath said, here, is, the word, of the Lord.

Here, is the promise, given, unto his people. And the promises, of God, are in him, yea, and forever, amen.

The promises of God, shall never fall to the ground, but they shall be accomplished. He, has spoken, and it shall be done.

[21 : 19] God, would not be gone, if his promises, could ever fail. this, word, is taken, from, Old Testament, scripture.

It was, especially, the word, given to Joshua. But also, we find it, in several, other places.

Not, exactly, word by word. You'll find, very often, that the apostles, speak, from, Old Testament, prophecy.

Not, exactly, with the words, but with the, purport of those words. And how, this, shows us, that the word, of God, is complete.

Now, I would just say this. For many, today, would separate, the Old Testament, from the New Testament. They would, show them as two, completely separate things.

- [22 : 26] Now, this was never the intention. All the books, of the Bible, make one book. Both Old Testament, and New Testament, are not divided.
- But they are, an assurance, one of the other. We find, Christ Jesus, written on every page.
- The Old Testament, speaks of the coming, of the Messiah. The New Testament, shows that coming forth.
- Though the two, in effect, are one. All the books, of the Bible, are divinely inspired, by the Holy Spirit, of God. And therefore, we should, take, of every part, of the Bible, and declare it, to be, the word of God.
- Thus, saith, the Lord. And so here, we find, in this place, for he hath said, and he said, unto Jacob, you remember, when he went to, that place afterwards, that was named Bethel.
- [23 : 57] And the Lord, appeared unto him, and blessed him there. And he said these words, And behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee, in all places, whither thou goest, and will bring thee, again, into this land.
- For, I will not, leave thee, until I have done, that, which I have, spoken, to thee of.
- But if we turn, to the, first chapter, of the, book of Joshua, we will find there, the, charge, given unto Joshua, after the death, of Moses.
- And remember, that, Moses had, for 40 years, brought forth, a rebellious people, through, the wilderness journey.
- A man, after God's, own heart. A man, appointed of God, and sent forth, to be that great, leader of the people.
- [25 : 11] A man, that saw God, face to face, and had, direct communion, with him. Moses had died, and now, this young man, Joshua, was, left alone.
- And he, it was, that should bring forth, the children of Israel, into the promised land. Now, how could he do it?
- Where, was that might? It was given him, of the Lord. And that promise, was given to him, more, than one occasion.
- It was given, to him by Moses, before he died. And here, in this first chapter, of Joshua, it is, given to him again.
- Be strong, and of a good courage, for unto this people, shalt thou divide, or in inheritance, the land, which I swear, unto their fathers, to give them.
- [26 : 17] Only, be thou strong, and very courageous, that thou mayest observe, to do all, according to all the law, which Moses, my servant, commanded thee, turn not from it, to the right hand, or to the left, that thou mayest prosper, whitherso, ever thou goest.
- And then in verse 9, he says, Have not I commanded thee, be strong, and of a good courage, be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed, for, the Lord thy God, is with thee, whithersoever, thou goest.
- And again, towards the, end of the chapter, we find the people, of Israel, again speaking, unto their new commander, in the same words, only be strong, and of a good courage, for the Lord thy God, is with thee.
- For, he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. We have, in the prophecy of Isaiah, a similar word, of exaltation, and of encouragement, for the people.
- In chapter 41, Fear thou not, for I am with thee. Be not dismayed, for I am thy God.
- [28 : 06] I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee, with the right hand, of my righteousness.

And so we have, throughout the word of God, these wonderful, confirmations, of his promise, toward his people.

For, he, hath said, that whatever, God, hath said, it is incumbent, upon man, to consider, for the Lord, does not speak, as man, using words, of lightness, but what he speaks, is of, great, and of, vital importance, unto, his, living family.

For, he hath said, the word of the Lord, is declared, unto you, he, that hath, ears to hear, let him hear, let him hear, what the Lord, shall say unto him, and be assured, that these promises, given unto the, Old Testament saints, given unto this, new church, of the Hebrews, is given unto, all God's people, throughout the whole, length of time, from the beginning, to the end of the world.

And what, God has spoken, shall, never pass away. We have that, wonderful declaration, I have magnified, my word, above, all my name.

[30 : 03] The word of the Lord, standeth sure. The word of the Lord, shall not pass away. Heaven and earth, shall pass away, but my word, shall not pass away.

And let us hearken, unto the word of the Lord. This is not what, man has said. It is not, even what the apostle said.

This is not the word, that I say before you, this morning. It is, what the Lord has said. For, he has said, the Lord God Almighty, I will, never leave thee, nor, forsake thee.

I will never, leave thee, nor, forsake thee. And to give, the importance, that is due, unto these words.

The interpretation, into our, English tongue, I'm given to understand, is nowhere near, as emphatic, as, in the original.

[31 : 22] the words, may, well have read. I, will never, know, never leave thee, nor, ever forsake thee.

These words, are spoken unto us, as a wonderful promise. Now look, at two words, spoken here.

I, Almighty God, the great, Jehovah, the eternal, I am. Say unto the people, he says to Moses, that, I am, have sent thee.

I, will. It is, the will of the Lord. It is, his declaration. Now look at this.

Here is the difference. We have, I, and we have, thee. I, will never leave, thee.

[32 : 31] I, will never forsake, thee. O thee, condescension, of our God. What is man, that thou art, mindful of him?

Or the son of man, that thou, visitest him? The God, almighty God, in heaven above, the maker, and creator, of all the ends, of the earth, should look upon, puny man.

I, thee, the love of Christ, is rich, and free, fixed, on his own, eternally.

I, the almighty God, thee, sinful, despicable man, the promise is, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

Oh, the wonderful, love of God, toward, poor, sinful man. Love, so amazing, so, divine.

[33 : 44] Have you known, this, love of Christ? Has it been, shed abroad, in your hearts, by the Holy Spirit? Do you know, what it is?

To lay hold, upon Christ, by faith? Oh yes, we have, many doubts. How the Lord, had to speak, more than one occasion, to his disciples.

Oh, ye of little faith. Oh, my unbelieving heart, do you have to mourn, over your sin, and, over your unbelief?

I believe, I believe, this is what, the apostle meant, when he said, the sin, which doth, so, easily beset us.

He does not there, speak of sins, in the plural. He speaks of one sin, and, to my mind, it comes, more and more strongly, what a sin, is unbelief.

[34 : 52] If we could believe, then all, would easy be, but we are, as it were, riddled, with unbelief.

But let us be clear, the promises, of God, do not stand, or fall, upon, what we think.

They do not stand, or fall, even upon, what we believe. God, is almighty. God's promises, to his people, can never, be taken away.

Did Jesus, once upon me shine? Then, Jesus is, forever mine. Whether we are, in the midst, of unbelief.

Whether our hearts, are, filled with unbelief. That promise, once given, can never fail. I will, never, no, never, leave thee, nor ever forsake thee.

[36 : 02] Or, to, lay hold, upon, the promises, of God. To know, that we are, not worthy, of the least, of, all his mercies.

We are, not worthy, of these promises, set before us, in scripture. We never, ever shall be, worthy, of anything, that the almighty, God, has to give.

But, despite this, he has given, these promises, to rebellious man. He has given them, as an encouragement, to his people.

Therefore, it is a great sin, to be discontent, with our lot. because, the promise, is to us, that he will, never, leave us, nor forsake us.

And, if God, will never leave us, then he must, surely provide for us. If God, be for us, who can be, against us, if God, supply our need, who can take, away our all?

[37 : 27] I will never leave thee, nor, forsake thee. Now, these things, should comfort our hearts.

These things, should strengthen, our faith. These things, should help us, on our way. That we might be, strengthened, with all might, in the inner man.

For the Lord, has promised, that he will, never leave us, nor forsake us. Now, at times, because of our, sinful hearts, we do leave him.

We do, forsake him. Because of the, hardness of our hearts, sometimes, we are, far off from him. This is our weakness, because of our, sinful condition.

But despite this, the promise, does, hold true, that he will, never leave us. He will, never forsake us.

[38 : 41] Think of David. His great sin, of adultery, and, of murder. Forsook, God.

Forsook, his commandments. Did something, worthy, of death. Did God, forsake him? Think of Jonah.

Commissioned, by God, to go, and preach, the gospel, unto that, heathen nation. And, Jonah, rebels, against God.

And he says, I will not go. I will go, unto the end, of the earth. Because of his sin, and because of his, rebellion, against God.

He was brought, to a day of adversity. In the, belly of hell. He cried, unto God. And God, heard him.

[39 : 45] Even in the belly of hell, God had not, forsaken him. He had not, left him, to his own devices. I know, that my, my redeemer, live him.

Job was brought, into a low place. Trial, upon trial, tribulation, upon tribulation, came upon him.

Was he forsaken, of God? In his thoughts, he may well, have imagined it. He could cry out, like, Jacob of old, all these things, are against me.

Yet, we read, the, end of the book of Job. That Job had, more, at the end of his life, than, at the beginning.

How is it with you? How are the Lord's, dealings, with you, at this time? Have you that, sense of his love?

[40 : 52] Have you that, union and communion, with the Lord? Are you enjoying, a sense of his presence?

A wonderful place to be. But it may be, that you too, feel to be, as far from God, as sheep could row.

it. Yet, the promise, still holds true. I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

Let me ask you, this question. Can you, honestly say, from the bottom, of your hearts, that God, has forsaken you? That God, has left you?

That he will be, merciful unto you, no more? You would not, be here today, if that was, the reasoning, of your heart. While there is life, there is hope.

[41 : 57] And we hope, in the mercy of God, in the promises, which he has, declared for his people. I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

Has God left you yet? Will he be gracious, unto you? No more? What causes God, to depart, from his people?

Is it not their sin, against him? As we were speaking, yesterday, a holy God, cannot in, any way, look upon sin.

What is the evidence, of our lives? Are we walking, in that right way? Are we walking, in the pathway, of life?