

Hebrews

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Date: 01 January 1900

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[0 : 0 0] the word which I hope the Lord may help me to speak from this afternoon you'll find in the Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews chapter 13 verse 5 the Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews chapter 13 and the fifth verse let your conversation be without covetousness and be content with such things as ye have for he has said I will never leave thee nor for a sacrifice the first thing we must establish this afternoon to whom these words are spoken these words I believe are spoken to the Lord's own living family those who are quickened out of a death in sin to a life in righteousness those who can look back to that second birth and if you are amongst these people

I believe it will come out in your walk and conduct which I believe is in this word conversation this word does not just mean our speech but it means our walk and our conduct let your conversation and I believe we have many exhortations in the word of God concerning our walk and conduct and especially in the epistle report of the Ephesians as the apostles speak to the Lord's people and he says this be therefore followers of God as dear children and walk in love now this is part of our conversation our conduct friends to walk in love if you have been born again love will be your element love will be the atmosphere that you love to be in love covers a multitude of sins and one of the hymn writers said we do all things in vain unless we do all things in love our conversation our conduct will be walking in love and we shall show that love in action in kindness in meekness in long suffering the Lord Jesus was our great pattern in this it was love that brought him down from heaven to earth the love that was in his heart caused him to stoop from heaven what a wonderful word we have in the Philippians although he was equal with God he thought it not robbery to be equal with God he took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men that was love that caused the Lord Jesus to leave his heavenly abode and come to this earth and if you are following Christ you are walking in love as the apostle goes on to say does he not he says walk in love as Christ also loved us and has given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor yes we shall follow his example and we shall realize what the apostle meant here when he said for this know that no whoremonger nor unclean person nor covetous man that which is in the text covetousness no covetous man who is an idolater at any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God so friends shall we establish in the first place this afternoon whether we are among these characters to whom the text is written let your more conversation the apostle writes to special people

Peter calls them in his epistle peculiar people you are a peculiar people a holy nation you have been brought out of nature's darkness into his marvelous light can you look back then friends this afternoon to the day the if you cannot look back to the day the season in your life when you believe the Lord delivered you out of that darkness that you were in by nature and you can say this afternoon what we said in prayer one thing I know that whereas I was blind now I see I believe if you can look back to it the Lord has shown you first of all what you were as a beauty sinner before God this is what the Lord shows these people in the first place when they're born again he shows them what they are in his sight one of our hymn writers sums it up when he says this to see sin smarts but slightly to own the lip confession is easier still but out of the cuts deep beyond expression have you been brought to feel your sin has it been brought home to you a dead soul one who is in a lost condition never feels their weight the weight of sin we have been looking recently again into the pilgrim's progress and don't you see it plainly there and when

Christian set out from the city of destruction he had on his back a burden and that burden represents sin and that will be the experience of all these characters to whom this text is written they will have a burden upon their back what does the hymn writer say and this will be your language with my burden I begin Lord remove this load of sin that will be your language if you're one of these characters to whom this text is written you'll feel the burden of sin to such an extent at times you'll have to break out like Hezekiah did Hezekiah said this O Lord I am oppressed undertake for me and I believe the language of the poor publican will suit you well when he could not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven but he smote upon his breast saying

God be merciful to me a sinner these characters friends will never use the language of the Pharisee when he said I thank thee that I am not as other men are extortioners around you or even as this publican that the language of a self righteous soul but the language of these characters friends who the Lord has called by grace is God being merciful to me a sinner they feel the burden they feel the weight and they want to know pardon and forgiveness so to these characters friends this text is a grace for the Lord's own living family he's already said to them let brotherly love continue that love which he gives when he quickens the soul into life

[9 : 18] I believe we shall want it to continue through our life but to these people then he says let your conversation be without covetousness and this will be so friends this will be your desire and my desire if we have been quickened into divine life we should want to be brought away from covetousness one of the commandments was was it not they shall not come what is covetousness it is when we see something that is before us and we say in our heart I wish I had that that's covetousness oh what a wonderful thing it is to be brought away from that and to be as the text goes on to say to be content with such things as we have that's the desire of the

Lord's people but let us look at one or two examples in the word of God in relation to this covetousness let us look in the first place at Achan in the book of Joshua we read of a solemn case his name was Achan and he was left to this covetousness he saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish gown and two hundred shekels of silver and a wedge of gold and fifty shekels weight and he says to Joshua and I coveted them and took them ah friends what a solemn thing to be the subject of this covetousness but you will notice that throughout the word of God in those who were left to this covetousness what a solemn end they had what happened to

Achan when his sin was found out we read this that Joshua said to him why hast thou troubled us the Lord shall trouble thee this day and all Israel stoned him with stones and burned them with fire after they had stoned them the stones what a solemn thing to Achan who was the subject of this coverage isn't it and if you look at other cases in the word of God think for a moment friends of Elisha's servant Geazi eye when Naaman went to Elisha for that healing he was a leper and Elisha told him to go and bathe in Jordan seven times and in the end Naaman went and did that and we read how that

Elisha wouldn't take any reward but then Geazi his servant he ran after Naaman and he told a lot of his concern he said that some had come to his servant and they needed those changes of raiment our friends have solemn to be thus covered and what was the punishment for Geazi we read that Elisha found him out and he said that the leprosy of Naaman would cleave to him and his seed forever and we read this he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow what an end to covetous Nezren so an end and don't we have one case in the

New Testament for this covetousness think of Judas Ascariot wasn't he covetous you read in one place he had the bang and how what was put therein and how that he went to the high priests and they gave him those pieces of silver and from that time he sought opportunity to betray the Lord Jesus but what was the end of that covetousness what a solemn end it was we read this concerning Judas do we not he went out and hanged himself covetousness wo friends what a mercy to be brought away from this let your conversation be without courage isn't it oh it's a sad thing if we're left to it as

[14 : 44] Judas was and then we have in the act friends another solemn instance of it when those two kept back part of the prize namely Ananias and Sapphira they sold a possession if you remember and kept that part of the prize and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles feet now that was covetousness they kept the other part for themselves but what was the end of that as solemn it was we read that when Peter spoke to him and said thou hast not lied unto men but unto God Ananias here in these words thou am and gave up the ghost and great fear came on all them that heard these things and the same happened to his wife that is the end of covetousness so what a needful exhortation to the Lord's people let your conversation be within covetousness we have one exhortation to it and it's this this is quite different the apostle says in one place covet earnestly the best gifts covet earnestly the best gifts I believe if we're the Lord's people we should covet those gifts of love and of joy of faith and hope those graces of the spirit they're the only things that we should covet let your conversation be without covetousness and be content with such things as you have how far we are removed from this text in the nation today how many there are around us covetous they are certainly not content with the things that they have they're always craving for more and yet more and how true it is by nature the more we have the more we want but the text says be content with such things as he has what did

Paul say to Timothy his son Timothy when he wrote an epistle to him what a solemn word we have in relation to this subject in the first epistle to Timothy Paul says to him godliness with contentment is great have you got this friends has the Lord granted you this godliness with contentment which is great to be brought to repentance to be brought to fear the Lord and to have this contentment with the Lord whatever it may be Paul he said we brought nothing into this world now this is something friends we ought to think about more we brought nothing into this world nothing when we were born into this world we came with nothing and

Job realised this as we were speaking of him this morning he said didn't he naked came I out of my mother's womb and naked shall I return then the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away blessed be the name of the Lord we brought nothing into this world and another truth is this friend it is certain we can carry nothing in when we go we should go with nothing but what a mercy friend if we've been brought to feel this that we have a soul a soul that will live on in eternity to come have you been brought to consider the words of the Lord Jesus what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul for what shall a man give in exchange for his soul

I believe if you're brought to this godliness with contentment friends you'll realize the value of the soul you'll realize that the value of the soul is worth more than all the world without we brought nothing into this world and it is certain we can carry nothing out and so Paul says having food and raiment let us be there with content I believe if the Lord has given us these gift strings of food and raiment we should be content these are the two main things that we need for our body and didn't the Lord Jesus speak about these two things in that sermon on the mount he speaks to the people of these very things what does he say in that sixth chapter of

[20 : 42] Matthew wonderful to consider what the Lord Jesus has spoken concerning these things he speaks of how he will provide for his people both food and rain what does he say you cannot serve God and men that's what many are seeking to do today friends and if left to it we should do it serve God and men but Christ says he cannot serve God and men no man can serve two masters either he will hate the one and love the other or else he will hold to the one despise the other and then he speaks of these two necessities for their life he says take no thought for your life what you shall eat or what you should drink nor yet for your body what you should put on now this is what the child of

God is brought to realize friends that life is more than meat and a body than mate yes the Lord God alone can give life and the Lord God alone can quicken a soul into life how important then it is to have spiritual life is not the life more than meat and the body than man and then he speaks of the fowls of the air and how that he provides for them and this should be an encouragement to us behold the fowls of the air for they sow not neither do they reap nor gather into barns yet your heavenly father feed it them are ye not much better than they and then he goes on to speak of clothing these two things that the apostle mentions that we should be content with and after speaking of those things friends this is what the lord jesus comes down to we should come to more and more I believe seek ye first the kingdom of god and his righteousness and all these things to be added unto you is that a desire to seek first the kingdom of god to put the things of god first we were speaking recently of that word joy that we were speaking of this morning and we spoke of it in this way if we know what real joy is friends we should put jesus first others second and a sound last is that your desire to put jesus first in everything put the house of god first put the word of god first and put the lord himself first seek ye first the kingdom of god and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you yet i believe friends if we're enabled by grace to put the things of god first everything else will be added everything that we need here below this food and light but now see what the apostle says about those on the wrong side friends those that are covetous what does the apostle say of them they that will be rich he says fall into temptation and a snare and there are many of these temptations friends around us in the present day i've often been glad sometimes that the lord has kept me from this for riches for we have the same nature friends we still have that old nature that goes after the things of the world and how true it is if we're not kept we should fall into these very same temptations they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drain men in destruction and perdition what a solemn thing to be left to that to seek the things of this world and at last be drowned in destruction and perdition for the apostle says hear plain the love of

money is the root of all evil and it still is friends not money itself but the love of it a covetous method which was some coveted after they have heard from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows I believe we could say this friend that many of the rich men on the earth have known these sorrows and yet those that the Lord has blessed and that have been born again may not have had much in this world for it's true isn't it what he said in another place God has chosen the poor of this world writtenly and heirs of the kingdom yes pierced themselves through many sorrows but when he comes to speak to Timothy himself he says thou are men of

God flee these things yes friends we should flee these things around flee away from the world the things of it leave the world to seek for sure leave it to return no more but he tells him what to follow after follow after righteousness godliness faith love patience weakness what a mercy then to have this contentment in our text godliness with contentment is his great and the apostle himself was brought to this in his own experience he was servant of god and he'd known much persecution and distress he'd known cold and nakedness and what did he come to in his own experience this is what he said in another place he says

I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content what a wonderful thing that he brought I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content this is a blessed place to live if we could to be content with such things as he has I was thinking only yesterday I believe it was that word that Paul mentioned in the Acts when he speaks to the people he speaks about the place of our habitation being fixed and that's a wonderful thing to realise that the place where we live is fixed by God and if we realise that more that we are in the very place the Lord placed us

[29 : 10] I believe that will bring about this contentedness be content with such things as he has be content to be where the Lord has placed you friends be content to be doing those things that the Lord has brought you into be content with such things as he has oh what a mercy to know this blessed spirit of content but then what does the text go on to say why do the Lord people know this contentedness because the Lord himself has given them a greatest promise and this is a wonderful promise friend for each one of us here this afternoon for he has said oh when the Lord speaks there is power within when where the word of a king is there is power and he has said

I will never leave them nor forsake them what a mercy this is friends although some of our fellow creatures and perhaps our friends that we have known may have left us for so often friends we prove that to be true in the hymn they are sometimes hot and sometimes cold but Jesus is the same and that's why this word says I will never leave them nor forsake them he's the same yesterday today and forever I will never leave them our friends if you know this promise for yourself I believe you'll respond to it like Ruth did if you know this for yourself that the Lord is with you and that he'll never leave you you won't want to leave him you won't want to leave his cross you won't want to leave his people you'll be like

Ruth who said treat me not to leave or to cease from following thy people shall be my people and thy God my God what a mercy to be like Ruth I I wish I wish there was more like Ruth today don't you that cleave to the things of God the word of God and the house of God there's so many who are driven hither and nither and we long for those who are like the apostle Paul himself who said this he said none of these things move me neither came I my life dear unto myself that's the sort we want friend those that cleave to the things of God cling to the word of God to the house of God and there's another wonderful word in one of the epistles and this is what

Paul says again be steadfast unmovable always abounding in the work of the Lord for as much as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord our friends may we be more like Ruth and have that love and feel that cleaving to the people of God and to the few that are left I feel friends the Lord Jesus knew exactly the state of things today when he gave that promise he knew because he said this when the son of man cometh shall he find faith on the earth and so when he spoke that promise he knew how many would be gathered but he said where two were three are gathered together in my home but what a mercy to cleave to them and to know that this God that has spoken this wonderful promise is our God

I will never leave thee nor forsake thee we have seen this word in another part of scripture recently this last part of it nor forsake thee in the prophecy by Isaiah he speaks the same word and it's a wonderful word to me where he speaks about bringing the blind by a way that they knew not and leading them in calls that they have not known what does the Lord Jesus say to these people the same people I believe to whom the apostle writes in this text before us this afternoon he says I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not I will lead them in paths that they have not known

[34 : 41] I will make darkness light before them and crooked things straight is that what you want you want the Lord to make darkness light before you I believe that's what our friend needs that loves to come into this sanctuary I believe although he may be in the darkness now the Lord will make that darkness light before him and he will make crooked things straight there are many crooked things friends today crooked things in the church crooked things in the family sometimes crooked things in the business but the Lord is able to make this and this is what he says these things will I do unto them and not forsake them not forsake them there may be many friends forsake them may even be sometimes those nearest and dearest are a source of trouble but God says himself

I will never leave nor forsake them and the next verse goes on so wonderfully to say so that we may boldly say the Lord is my helper I will not fear what man to do unto me may we know more of this experience then and may we know this promise to be ours the Lord bring these words home to us in these days in which are not his calm let your conversation be without covetousness and be content with such things as he has for he has said I will never leave thee nor forsake thee have you