

Worship in All Circumstances: Contentment

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[0 : 0 0] Good morning. That's pretty good. Welcome if you're here for the first time.

My name's Chris. I help oversee the community groups here. And I'm on the staff team here. If you notice in the summer, there's a lot of in and out coming and going.

I know some of you are going to be going away. Some of you are coming back. We're called Watermark Community Church. One of the things we want to be about is community. Even in the midst of the summer where things are transitioning in and out, I encourage you, even after the service, don't just kind of run away.

Spend time getting to know people. There's coffee downstairs. There's great opportunities just to be able to connect with people. Don't make the summer like a time where you kind of spiritually take your foot off the accelerator.

Let it be a time where we actually kind of move even deeper into God in this season. So we're in this season as a church of looking at the Psalms and looking at how the Psalms take us through all the seasons of life.

[1 : 1 0] Winter, spring, summer, autumn. And that's very much a metaphor for our lives. That our lives pass through different seasons and go through different realities of life.

We've looked at happiness. We've looked at unhappiness. We've looked at discouragement and depression. And today we're going to look at envy and contentment and doubt.

There's a song in Watermark, which we may even sing later, which is called, Christ is enough for me. Christ is enough for me. Everything I have is in you.

Now, I don't know if you ever look at the song lyrics. I really encourage you to actually look at the lyrics and what you're saying. Don't just sing them. But look at what they're saying. Because when I read the words to that song, it's saying what the Psalmist in Psalm 73 says.

He says, Whom have I in heaven but you? And what do I desire on earth but you, God? If I have Jesus, then I am content no matter what.

[2 : 2 0] That's what he's saying. But I don't know if you've thought about that. Because I thought about that and I thought, is that true of me? Is that true of me?

I want it to be true. Deep inside of me, I want to say, yeah, Jesus, you're everything to me. But actually, a relative of mine is getting married.

I think, in about two weeks. She hasn't booked the venue yet. It's in France.

She hasn't actually chosen the exact date yet. And we, me and my wife, we can't organize anything. We want to book our holiday in advance.

But we can't do anything. And it's driving me nuts. And Christ is enough for me. But I would like to say, yes, Christ is enough for me and a little bit of organization.

[3 : 1 6] Because that would help me. And I don't know about you, but maybe you have lots of Christ and, you know, Christ and my kids' education is enough for me.

Christ and my grades is enough for me. Christ and lots of likes on Facebook is enough for me. Whatever the fill in the blank is at that point. And if God were to take away that and part, take away the plans, the dreams, whatever I have for myself, you know, strip me of health, my job, my holiday.

Is Jesus enough for me? Can I be content if I never go on that holiday? That's a real question. And I'm wrestling with that at the moment.

So this is a sermon for myself. Okay. But as we think about it, you even think about that question, sometimes we can look at kind of people who are like the spiritual greats and say, those people are the people who can say that.

There's a guy called C.T. Studd. I don't know if you've heard of him. Unfortunate name. But in the 19th century, he was an English guy, son of a wealthy businessman. And he was an international sportsman.

[4 : 31] He played cricket for England. He was one of the most promising sports stars of the time. He graduated from Cambridge. He had a potential political career ahead of him. And then at one point, he said he heard God speak to him.

And God told him, I want you to be a missionary in China and then in India and then in Africa. And he gave away an inheritance of about 30 million Hong Kong dollars.

He endured hardship and sickness. And when people asked him, how can you do that? He said, if Jesus Christ is God and he died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for him.

Because Jesus is enough for him. But I look at that. And we can look at that. And we can look at the psalmist prayer. And you say, yeah, if you're a Christian, yeah, I want that.

But I have a lot of ands in my life. And sometimes it doesn't feel real. I just wonder, that's maybe just unrealistic for me to ever live like. I'm just an ordinary Christian.

[5 : 36] Well, if that's how you think, well, this psalm has actually got some hope for you. So have your bulletin open, please. We want to just, the Bible is important.

I want you to just look along, check at what I'm saying that's in here. It's not just me making this up. But let's go in. I want to talk about two main things. First thing, I'm slipping.

I'm slipping. Second thing, I'm regaining my balance. I'm slipping, I'm regaining my balance. So I'm slipping. The psalmist, whose name is Asaph, starts out with a bold declaration of faith.

He says, surely, truly, God is good to Israel and to those who are pure in heart. Now, this guy, Asaph, who wrote this, he is one of King David's key music leaders.

He was there. He was a songwriter. He was an expert cymbal player. You know, he would have been on the drums here this morning. And he's a good Jew. He's been well taught by his family, by his pastor, by his friends, that God is good and he blesses people who follow him.

[6 : 45] He knows it. He knows it. He's done the Sunday school. He knows it. But then, verse 2, he says, He's saying, He's saying, God was at the top of the escalator and I started sliding down towards the bottom.

And what was the great banana skin that caused him to nearly lose his godly balance? Well, it's verse 3. Envy.

Now, in a competitive society like Hong Kong, I'm sure none of us have a problem with envy.

That's a joke. Hong Kong breeds envy. And we repackage it as something like ambition.

But actually, there is a very different ambition, which is usually a selfish ambition. But envy is wanting someone else's talents, someone else's life, someone else's possessions, someone else's opportunities for yourself.

[8 : 06] And envy, at root, says, God's not really good. It doubts God's goodness. It says, God, you're not really giving me what's good in life.

If you were really good, you'd give me those opportunities, not these opportunities. You'd give me his life, not my life. That's what envy says. It's like what Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, you know, they've got thousands of trees to choose from.

And what do they do? They fix their eyes on the one tree that they can't have. But that's the one they want.

And the lie comes in and says, if God is not giving it to you, then maybe God's not really good to you. He's holding something back from you.

And you begin to doubt. And that's what's going on in this psalm. Asaph sees the prosperity. And that word prosperity is actually the word shalom, which means not just financial prosperity.

[9 : 11] It means every part of life seems complete and whole and well-being for them. And he says he sees the prosperity of the arrogant, and he starts comparing his life with their life.

And, you know, envy always starts when you see, and then you start comparing. Because his life is hard. It's tough. But then he sees their life, and it's amazing.

You know, he looks at the guys all around him, and look at verse 4. There's no pangs in their death. They don't get arthritis or back pain or asthma. They're fit and healthy. Even when they get into retirement, they kind of glide easily into death.

They don't kind of crawl there in pain. Their body is fat and sleek. Now, that doesn't sound something to be jealous of, you know. I don't know many people, you know, I'm like, man, your obesity is really making me jealous, you know.

Yeah, I'm not sure I can trust God if I look at your beer belly. You know, that's not what goes in. But actually, that's not what's in a culture where there's poverty and malnutrition. Fatness is the symbol of health and wealth and vitality.

[10 : 19] These guys are successful. They're not in trouble as others are. Everything seems easy for them. And they're even popular. Verse 10.

Therefore, his people turn back to them and find no fault. Everyone else thinks they're great and are following their advice, too. And they're getting rich. These are the guys.

They're only 30. They're already buying their second house on the peak. And the worst thing about it, if that's not bad enough, is they're not the good guys.

It'd be easier to accept if they're like nice people, but they're not. They're arrogant. They're self-reliant. They cut everyone else down who doesn't do things as well as they do.

They're ruthless at getting their own way. And everybody else seems to celebrate their success and look up to them. And you're stupid if you do it any other way.

[11 : 15] And isn't this so often our experience in Hong Kong? I mean, think about it. Maybe you've tried to be ethical at work. You've been really hardworking.

You've got out of your way to work overtime, even for your boss when you didn't have to just to get him out of a hole. You've tried to honor God in the way that you're working. And yet, there's a guy in the office. And he's a two-faced so-and-so.

Lies to get himself out of trouble. Blames his mistakes on everybody else. Cuts corners with his work. Totally thinks he's the best thing since sliced bread and tells everybody about it. He's a complete jerk.

And promotion time comes around. And you think, I've given myself this company. I should get this promotion. Who gets it?

Demonic Damon in the corner. And you think, it's not fair. Or maybe you're single. And you've been trying to lead a God-honoring life.

[12 : 14] You've actually stopped having relationships with certain people. You've not wanted to settle for anything less than someone who loves Christ in your life. But you're still single.

And yet, the person who's just been going around with everybody, a promiscuous lifestyle, they come in and they announce their engagement. And it's the engagement to the cutest person you know.

And you're like, outwardly, you say, oh, congratulations. I'm so happy for you. And inwardly, you're like, I want to take that ring. I want to throw it in the South China Sea.

And you with it. It's not fair. And that little thought comes in. What's the point in trying to honor God?

Trying to be ethical. Trying to be pure. Verse 13. He says, all in vain have I kept my heart clean and washed my hands in innocence.

[13 : 18] Why don't I just lie a little bit if that's what it takes to get ahead? I can cut a few corners, make myself look good because it pays off, even with a few lies. Because it often does.

And Asaph is really honest here. Many of us, including myself, are not as honest as he is about this issue. Because we kind of hope it's not true if you're a Christian. You know, and we can even play this little game where underneath, we kind of make ourselves feel better by saying, well, but they're not really happy.

You know, really underneath, they're miserable and lonely. And then you go and ask them and say, you must be miserable. And they say, no, I'm really happy. And you say, but you don't have Jesus.

How can you be happy? And they're like, but I am. And then you say, but when you're lying on your bed at night, that little voice comes to you, doesn't it, and says, oh, maybe my life is empty and meaningless.

And they say, no, I just turn on Netflix and it's great. And they look at you and they say, but you're a Christian.

[14 : 31] And you look like you're missing out on all the fun. And you're saying, no, no, no, I have a deep joy. It's so deep that it's like a submarine that hasn't surfaced for years.

And deep inside you, there's that voice which is like, but I'd like Jesus and just a little bit of what you've got.

Right? Anyone tracking with me? That's envy. And envy says, God's not really good to you.

Look at what he's keeping from you. Because if he was really good, he'd have made your life so much easier, so much better. And those doubts just start coming in and you start slipping.

Why do we do that? One of the reasons we do that is because, like Asaph, we believe sometimes a version of Christianity, which he's been told, which is actually superficial.

[15 : 35] And the tragedy is actually preached in many churches today. Here's how one guy, the pastor of the biggest church in America, says this.

He says, right now, something is looking for you. Something already has your name on it. As long as you're doing your best to honor God and you have a heart to help others, an explosive blessing will find its way into your hands.

We know that God's plan always leads to peace, health, and prosperity in every area of your life. That's what Joel Osteen says. It's the biggest church in America.

And he'll quote the Bible to show it. He says, if you follow God, he'll bless you with a materially prosperous life now. But the problem with that idea, Asaph believed it, that the problem with that idea is the timing's wrong.

God does promise physical blessing, but Jesus says, your treasures are stored in heaven, not on earth. There is a promise of physical blessing, but it's for a new creation.

[16 : 41] And it's not guaranteed now. Now, God does bless us. Many of us, we know God does bless us physically with things now. But the point is not to make you comfortable here.

The point is to make and point you to the goodness of God so that you trust him and find your treasure in him because you know that he really is good.

And the testimony of faithful Christians throughout generations shows that Joel Osteen's view of Christianity is so far wrong.

Take this guy Rashid. He's a Pakistani man who, after converting to Christianity, he was disowned by his whole family. Here's what he says. Some might conclude that my life is pitiable.

After all, every evening after I finish my shift, I go home to an empty flat, one not filled with the gleeful shouts of a six-year-old child. When I go to bed at night, there is no one beside me to say I love you.

[17 : 41] I expect never to hear from my parents on my birthday or on any other day for that matter. The only noise in my home comes from a television set that I do not watch very often. But to pity me would be to miss the joy I have experienced.

I believe things are better now than they were before I was a Christian. My heart might be quiet, but I'm not lonely. My family may have forsaken me, but I'm not abandoned.

I have Christ, and that is enough. Indeed, it's more than enough. In my eyes, I've been blessed beyond measure, far greater than I deserve, and more than I could have hoped.

Osteen would say, Rashid, physical blessing is coming. Rashid would say, I'm already blessed with the greatest blessing of knowing Christ. Everything else is bonus.

Now, which version is more Christ-exalting, God-honoring? That's why Asaph has believed that, and he's starting to slip.

[18 : 47] And when doubts come, they test the superficiality of your faith. Because when that meets the reality of the world, when the spoon-fed kind of childish faith that we think that, okay, if I just put enough coins in the God slot, then he gives me enough blessings in return, that is childish faith.

And you can't just live off what everyone else has told you. When doubts begin to come into your life, it's like a diving board. You either walk away slowly because you can't see how the water can be good, or you plunge deeper than ever into the beauty of God, and you begin to really know his goodness.

He's slipping, Asaph. And just as an aside for kind of the flip side, that if you're thinking, okay, yeah, I hate those arrogant, successful people too, be careful.

Because, you know, when we're successful, can't we be exactly the same? You know, when things are down, we often run to God. When things are good, don't we become kind of subtly, you know, we don't say it out loud, but kind of self-reliant.

You know, I can do this. I'm pretty good. You know, it was down to my cleverness, my hard work that I got that job, that I got that opportunity. Because when your success is going up, all too often your prayer life is going down.

[20 : 16] Have you noticed that? It's so easy to think that it was all down to me. And I don't really need God now. Yeah, I'll come to church, but I don't really need him.

But everything we have is gift. Your talents, many of your talents are shaped by your genes and are shaped by the opportunities you've been given. If you were born in a remote village in Angola with a disability, your life would probably be very different now.

Everything we have is grace. And in every community, it doesn't matter whether it's in Hong Kong, whether it's in your sports club, whether it's in the playground at school, whether it's in the church, those at the top are proud, those at the bottom are envious, and God is calling us to something better as a church.

Asaph slipping. But now, second, I'm regaining my balance. Have a look at verse 16.

With me. He says, but when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task.

[21 : 28] He's tried to understand it. He's read all the apologetics books. He's read all the things, and it's not getting him anywhere until he enters into the sanctuary of God. The sanctuary of God is the tent of meeting, which later became the temple.

It was a symbol of where God's presence dwelt. And that's the place where the Jews would go up to worship God. So he's going up. He goes to worship God, as his habit was.

Like many of you, you come every Sunday. His habit. But suddenly, as he enters into worship, he suddenly sees life from a different perspective. He gets God's perspective, and he realizes he hadn't seen the full picture.

Because someone said, life is more like a cube than a square. A cube has many sides to it. Many different facets.

If you just look at one angle, all you do is see a square, a 2D image. But you miss the depth. You miss the reality and the contours of life, which is so much more complex than just a 2D image.

[22 : 38] You know, it's like, you know, if you watch a magician doing the soaring, like soaring the lady in half, you know that? And you just see it from a frontal angle.

That's a very different perspective you get than if you can actually see all the way around. Right? You get a totally different understanding of what's going on. That's what Asaph is saying.

He's only been looking square in a 2D image of life. And in God's presence, he's beginning to start seeing 3D. And so what are the kind of sides that Asaph is seeing here?

Three sides that I like to think about. One, eternity resets the balance. Eternity.

When he goes into the sanctuary, then in verse 17, he discerns the end of those he envied. He says later, it's like life is like a dream.

[23 : 38] And for those who've trusted in themselves, the arrogant, the ones that we envy, who seem successful without God, they'll wake up to a nightmare.

He says, the short-term forecast may look sunny, but the long-term prospects are bleak. He says, there are two fixed days in your life when you're born and when you die. And over both of them, we don't have that much control, particularly over the first one.

And between those two dates, God is going to hold you accountable for how you've related to him in your life. Judgment that God will bring is like the great audit.

It sets an unfair world to rights. And Tim Keller says this, that the rich without God will be eternally poor.

Celebrities without God are on their way to being permanently ignored. It resets the balance. I don't know if you remember that.

[24 : 46] There was a Miss Universe contest about two years ago. Now, I don't normally watch Miss Universe, just... I could get in trouble here. But two years ago, I watched because it was on the news.

Okay? That's my get out class. It was on the news. And Miss Columbia got crowned the winner. Does anyone remember this? Yeah? Sorry?

Was it last December? Oh, wow. I know it was recently. You see, I'm getting old. I'm getting close to that final date of death and the... Is it only a few months ago?

Okay, it was a few months ago. That's why it's so fresh in my mind. And... But do you remember? Miss Columbia got crowned the winner until someone told the presenter that he'd misread the name on the card.

Remember that? And she hadn't won. And her joy instantly turned to sadness.

[25 : 49] She was stripped, like literally stripped of her success in front of everybody. Her crown was taken off and given to someone else. Remember that? That's what Asaph is saying here when you have eternity in perspective.

God has a card with the names of those who will enjoy his heaven in a renewed earth. And the only names on his card are the ones who will run and trust in Christ.

the temporary joy of Miss Columbia wasn't actually real. If only she knew the end result. If only she knew the end result.

Eternity changes all your envy in perspective. You see, when the game of life is over, everything goes back in the box. Your success, your money, relationships, but what do you have that outlasts the game?

If you're not a Christian or if you think that you're just a spiritual person who doesn't really know what I mean when I say you need to find treasure in Christ.

[26 : 53] If you don't get what that means, if you don't get what that means, do you actually think you're okay with God if you were to meet him right now?

Or have you even thought about that at all? Life is too short for us to ignore it. Life is like a countdown where the clock is ticking.

It's your name on the card. Because if it's not or if you're not sure, today is the day where God actually wants to say to you, you can get right with me because my son has died on a cross for you so your name can be engraved on that card and there won't be anyone misreading it.

But if you are a Christian, in 2 Corinthians 4 it says this. He says, Paul says, to paraphrase, the scratches of life we receive now are nothing compared to the eternal void of glory that is beyond all comparison.

When Jesus rose from the dead, he has inscribed your name on that card to receive a lasting crown which is better than Miss Columbia would ever get.

[28 : 13] It's one where you come into a restored creation with Christ. C.S. Lewis once said this. He says, there have been times where I wonder, I think we do not desire heaven but more often I find myself wondering whether in our heart of hearts we have desired anything else.

all the cravings for acceptance, for love, for prosperity, for health, for security all met completely in God in a new creation.

That's the promise for you and me as a Christian. And we won't be saying, well wow, now I see why I suffered all those bad things. We won't be saying that when we see Christ face to face.

We'll say, what bad things? Because the painful training for the Olympics is seen in a new light when the gold medal is hung around your neck.

And that prize for the Christians is Christ. Laura Story is a Christian singer-songwriter. She's successful.

[29 : 21] Everything seemed to be going well with her. And then her athlete husband got a brain tumor. Her life started collapsing. But then she wrote a song.

It's a famous song called Blessings. It goes like this. I'm not going to sing it to you, so you're okay. That's right. Some of you are getting worried. Because what if your blessings come through raindrops?

What if your healing comes through tears? What if a thousand sleepless nights are what it takes to know you're near? What if trials of this life are your mercies in disguise?

What if my greatest disappointments or the aching of this life is the revealing of a greater thirst this world can't satisfy? For the believer, the brief pain of this world, someone has said, is the closest you'll come to hell.

And for the unbeliever, the pleasures of this world are the closest you'll come to heaven. So are you seeing life in eternity 3D perspective today?

[30 : 28] That's the first side. The second side is how he sees his relationship with God, how he views God. Verse 21.

When my soul was embittered, when I was pricked in heart, I was brutish. We don't use that very often. It means I was stupid. That's what it means.

The Bible does call people stupid sometimes. He says, I was stupid and ignorant. I was like a beast towards you. He's saying, when I got to that point of comparison and resentment and envy with other people, when I got there and I started doubting in God's goodness, I was like an unthinking beast towards you, God.

Not a little kind of cute dog kind of animal. I was a complete unthinking, unfeeling slug towards you. He's saying, I wanted your stuff more than I wanted you, God.

And that's where the rub, I think, really hits me when I think about my envy. Because when I get those little doubts, I get disillusioned with God, or when you actually get to that point of being mad with God at something, it's always because I want something more than God.

[31 : 56] It's always because I want something more than God. Tim Keller again, he gives this example. He says, imagine you meet someone, you start falling in love with them, and you kind of agree to get married, and before you do, you tell them that you're going to come into a whole load of money.

You've got this huge trust fund that's going to come to you after marriage, and they say to you, okay, that's fine, but I'm not marrying you for your money. I just love you.

And so, you get to the wedding, just before the wedding, and you then tell your future spouse, actually, I'm really sorry, but I've just found out that actually my brother's going to inherit all of this stuff, and I'm not going to get any of it, and your fiancé turns around and calls off the wedding and says, sorry, it's over.

How would you feel? You'd be absolutely devastated, wouldn't you? You'd say, you never really loved me. You only loved me because you wanted my money.

Well, you were just using me to get what you wanted, and that's what Asaph has realized in God's presence. That's how he was treating God.

[33 : 19] He was a user, not a lover. He realizes, his envy realizes, it shows him that I was treating you, God, as just a tool to kind of get what I wanted for myself, and when you weren't giving it to me, then I was going to run away from you.

And envy reveals what the Bible calls idolatry. It's when you want something more than God. What does your envy reveal that you want more than God?

I've had to think about this myself, because the call for you when you see that in your heart is to run to God, repent, and confess as honestly as Asaph does. Run back to a God who loves us, and he doesn't use us like we try and use him.

That's the second side. He sees how he views God. The third side is he sees that God, that Christ is enough for him.

Whom, verse 25, whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength, literally the rock of my heart.

[34 : 37] And then verse 28 he says, for me it is good to be near God. One translation, I like this translation, it says, the nearness of God is my good.

The nearness of God is my good. You see, Asaph's gone from having this square shaped view of God's goodness, where it's just about getting the blessings, to seeing that God, when he promises blessing to us, he's promising above all himself to you.

Because when we get physical blessings, our response should be gratitude and thanksgiving to God for his goodness. And Asaph has gone from seeing his greatest good as getting a healthy body, as getting a successful career, as God and something.

He's gone from that to seeing the nearness of God is my good. shift. You see the shift in perspective. And you know, the problem is if you're a Christian, you kind of know it.

You know, if I tell you, okay, what's the answer? What's the answer in church? Jesus. Right?

[35 : 53] But the thing is it's so cliché that we get to, we think, if you've been in church a little while, you know, okay, I know that. Now can you move on to something else that I'd really like to help which can help me with the and parts of my life?

Right? Can you inspire me so I can enjoy a good life? I kind of know the Jesus bit. That's the superficial faith that Asaph had.

But this psalm is saying everything that causes you to envy in others is a desire for what Christ alone can satisfy you and fully provide.

Think about it. Do you crave acceptance and love from others? Do you envy when other people are more popular than you and get more likes on Facebook than you?

Well, verse 23 he says, I am with you continually. How? Well, the psalmist only knew this in part, but we know this more fully, because Christ was Emmanuel, God with us, he came down to us, he was nailed on a cross with nine inch nails hammered through his hands for people like you and me who treated him as a beast, who were beasts towards him, who rejected him, and yet he still said, Father, forgive.

[37 : 19] And we so often live like that, and yet he still says, I died to bring you into relationship with me, not just to say, oh yeah, thank you for that, but here's all the other stuff I want, but no, to give you full acceptance and approval with the most powerful king of the whole universe.

Why do I need approval from those who care far less about me than I care about them and their opinion? It's true, isn't it? When Christ is enough for your need for acceptance.

Do you crave security and envy those who seem to be more financially secure, more job secure, more housing secure than you? Because he says, you hold my right hand.

Do you get that? You know, the kid who's walking along on a climbing frame, and they're tottering along, afraid they're going to fall, and they cling to anything for security, and then her father comes alongside her and grabs hold of her hand and says, I'm not letting you go.

We're going to walk through this together. How much difference does that make now to that child? Because her father is holding her right hand.

[38 : 37] He holds you more secure than any financial market can be secure, more than any house or accommodation can be secure, more than any job can give you security. If you're a Christian, you're the most secure person in this city, because he holds your right hand, and we forget it.

Is Christ enough for your security today? Do you crave success and envy those who seem more talented, more successful than you?

It says, God is your portion. Now, I don't know if you know what portion is. Your portion is what you're allotted when a father is about to die and he's going to distribute his inheritance to his sons or to his family.

You know, and your portion over there, you get ten million dollars. Your portion, that guy's portion, it's a house on the peak. That guy's portion, it's an amazing six pack.

That guy's portion, it's a holiday in France. Your portion is the God of the universe who owns all the other stuff anyway.

[39 : 53] Christ is enough for your success. And if he gives you the other stuff, it's because he is good and he wants to show you his love, but his love is not conditional on you getting good things or not in physical terms.

Christ is enough for your success. You can be incredible successful, you can be in the world's eyes totally unsuccessful, but he will receive you to glory and you will receive the crown.

Is Christ enough for you? If nothing else changes in your life right now, can you be content in a city that lacks contentment?

This church is called to be a people who are content in Christ. Let me finish with a quote. John Piper says this, you cannot show the preciousness of a person by being happy with his gifts.

Ingratitude will certainly show you that the giver is not loved, but gratitude for the gifts does not prove that the giver is precious.

[41 : 10] What proves that the giver is precious is the glad-hearted readiness to leave all his gifts to be with him. Do you hold what you have in open hands knowing that he is enough for you?

Let me pray. Father, as we think about what it means to, for you to be enough for us, Lord, I just pray you would show us what we're envying right now.

It's so easy, Lord, to focus on what, everything that we don't have, and to miss everything that we do have. Father, I pray that we would not take you for granted.

Forgive me where I do that so often. Thank you that you are enough for us, and Lord, when you say that, you're going to provide everything that we need.

I don't have to cling for security worried about whether you're going to provide or not, because you will. But I pray for those of us here who don't know you, who that idea that you can be somehow enough just seems crazy, I pray that you would show them how beautiful you are, that you would die for us, to bring us in a relationship with a holy God.

[43 : 08] I pray for those of us who are Christians. May we not treat you as just a cash machine to get what we want when we can.

I pray that you would really help us to run and chase after you, to know that you're enough for us, whatever's going on in our lives, in the craziness of the world at the moment.

Let us find our hope in you, our contentment in you. In your name. Amen.