***Inner Happiness (Rally Day)

Colossians 1:1-2

COL-092***

Our subject is "Prayer for the Colossians," number 26 in Colossians 1:9-14.

**The Bible**

The Bible is not a mere human book filled with lifeless words on a page. The words of Scripture throb with a life which impacts on the mind of man. And for that reason, the Word of God is described as being living words. The words of man are dead in terms of illuminating the mind to spiritual things. The Bible is very clear in declaring to us that man, by his wisdom, knew not God. So, any words that the mind of man can produce are simply dead words when it comes to spiritual matters. A corpse does not speak to the living. The dead words of man cannot convey God's truth.

The words of the Bible are also the words of God the Holy Spirit. So, they are active, or powerful. Scripture ideas and words are powerful because they come from God. 2 Peter 1:21 tells us that the men who wrote the Bible were carried along by the Spirit of God.

2 Timothy 3:16 tells us that the men spoke as God gave them (breathed into them) the knowledge and the information.

So, the information came from God, and what is recorded came from the Spirit of God. And that's why the actual words on the page of the Bible are different than any words you read anyplace else. They have a life to them. They have a divine life. The words of God in the Bible are active, therefore, in transforming the mind from human viewpoint to divine viewpoint. The difference between the words with no inherent power and the words with the omnipotence of God, is what is set before us by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:4-5, when Paul says, "And my message (the Word of God) and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom (the word of man), but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not rest on the wisdom of men (dead words), but on the power of God (the living words of God)."

**The Bible is Living**

These two factors about the Word of God are brought together in that famous passage in Hebrews 4:12: "For the Word of God is living and active." The Word of God is living. The word "living" looks like this in the Greek Bible. It's the word "zao" (dzah'-o) Z A O. And this connotes an inherent life. There is an inherent life in the words that the Spirit of God places on the pages of Scripture. God's words interact with the living, and they're able to convey to the mind of the living something that only one living thing can speak to another living thing. It is able, because it is the living Word of God, to influence the living to a line of action.

There is a paraphrase of the Bible which is called The Living Bible. It should be called The Dead Bible, because it is not a translation of the original Greek and Hebrew. It is a paraphrase. It is a man who read the Scriptures and said, "Now, how would I say that in human words?" And it gets a little more kicky sometime when you put it in human words. And people should not be buying and reading The Living Bible as if they were reading the Word of God. And, in fact, I've had occasion where Christians have told me that they have read the living Bible as their Scripture, and they felt something really oddly missing. And then when I called their attention to the fact that it was not God's Word from one language to another, but God's Word from the language of Scripture to the opinions of a person (a paraphrase), they said, "That's the reason. I haven't been reading the Word of God." That is exactly right.

**The Bible is Active**

So, the Word of God is living. It is also, we're told, active. This is the word in Greek: "energes" (en-er-gace', E N E R G E S. And "energes" is where we get the word "energy" in English. It means "powerful" or "effectual." It connotes a power in action. The words of God are filled with His omnipotent power. So, it achieves results.

So, first of all, the Word of God is alive. It is a living thing speaking to us – the very Spirit of God. And then it has a power that bears an impact that hits you right between the eyes. Now, you may say "Yes," or you may say "No," or you may thumb your nose at it. And people who are negative to the Word of God – they don't even want to come in this auditorium. They want to get as far away from the Word of God as they can, because they have a big problem with the power of God that pounds away at the heart of man, alerting him to the sin that's there.

**Power**

The words of God are filled with His omnipotent power. God's Word of Bible doctrine has a powerful impact on human thinking, even when it's responded to with negative volition. It is the full knowledge of Scripture that is thus both living and active in the transforming of the mind from the delusions of human viewpoint to the reality of divine viewpoint.

This is why it is so wonderful for us to remind ourselves on rally day that the believer's mind can be transformed by doctrine into the mind of God. Some of you have become thrilled to the depths of your soul, as you should be, and you're catching on to what it means to have the mind of God which takes over the mind of man in you. To be able to live your life by thinking God's thoughts – that's an awesome, marvelous idea. To have the wisdom and the discernment of the mind of God – that is tremendous: the wisdom to apply the Word of God, the discernment to not do the things of the sin nature; and, to do the things that are victorious in the Christian life – not a defeat. It is great to be able to think right, so that you can act right. How wonderful! How sweet it is! That is the living. That is the active Word of God.

So, let us as believers, first of all, at Berean Memorial church, dedicate this rally day to seeking a deeper possession of the mind of Christ. If you stay with us meeting after meeting today, you'll be amazed how much of that mind you will have accumulated before you walk out the door after that evening service. I guarantee it.

Divine power of living the full knowledge of Bible doctrine is what we have been reading in Colossians 1:11: "Strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience joyously." We have been told that we are called upon as believers to walk in a manner which is worthy of Jesus Christ, as Christ is one's Lord, and which pleases Him. This results in our becoming strong with special power from God. It is a power of great potential force compatible with the glorious, explosive might of God's perfect character – His omnipotence. And that's what we've read about. We're strengthened with all potential power according to His glorious power in action.

**Steadfastness**

The purpose of the divine empowerment of the Christian is to attain two qualities in daily living. Be sure that you understand and are focused on this. When the explosive power of God works through the living and active Word of God, the first quality that will be developed is steadfastness. And we looked at that in great detail last time. It means the endurance to carry the burden of the angelic warfare – the perseverance in your particular mission.

**Patience**

The second quality is patience – holding out in the angelic conflict, waiting upon God to bring victory. There is no giving up. How well do you do on that? How well are you on steadfastness – enduring under the burdens of the angelic warfare; under the demands; the tiredness; the rejection; the indifference; and, the contempt? How good are you in that perseverance of doing your job for the Lord? How well are you doing with your patience – your holding out in the angelic conflict instead of folding; cracking up; and, giving up, and waiting upon God to give the victory? How patient are you? That's not easy to do.

Well, I had an example experience of this last week – this business of being steadfast under the burden, and this business of being patient for the solution and the victory. It had to do with a note that Bonnie McSwain gave me earlier in the week, in which she told me that we would need $3,200 Monday (tomorrow morning) to pay teachers' salaries. My efforts last week to secure the cash flow of funds (short terms) were not successful as rally day approached. For my points of contact, I received a "No – can't help." So, I now faced the need to make a decision as to the mind of God for a course of action, and to do it with battle courage.

First of all, I clearly had to endure, under the pressure of this demand, to meet people who have served God, and have served us, and who now deserve, as the Scriptures tell us: the document principle that the workman is worthy of his hire. His salary should be brought to him, and the needs of his life are to be met by that salary. Well I had clearly to have to endure under the pressure of this demand, and I had to await now patiently for God to act. People had said "No" to me. Now that my resources were at an end, I had to fall back on the doctrine of faith rest.

So, I prayed for the $3,200 to be provided, and I asked the Lord that he would give it to me before rally day, so that I would not have this burden to carry on rally day. This was in the form of a prayer which in Scripture is called (you may remember this) the "deesis" prayer, D E E S I S. The "deesis" prayer is the prayer that you utter in desperation conditions. You're at the end of the line. There's no place to go. And it is not just the ordinary word for prayer here. This is the prayer when a lot is hanging in the balance, and the situation (the battle in the angelic conflict) has now become desperate.

So, it was very clearly, on my part, a "deesis" prayer. And it was that when I put it in a prayer meeting request Wednesday night, I didn't want this on my hands today, because rally day is a high demand day for me. On this day, people always expect me to perform flawlessly, as I usually do – more flawlessly than they themselves perform. But they demand that I be able to do that. And this was going to be a burden for me.

Well, the Lord said that He understood what I meant, and He mentioned a couple of you that were particularly that kind, who expected more of me than you do of yourselves. And I agreed with Him that He was certainly right about you.

So, the Lord said that He would handle the problem, and faith rest kicked in. I had tried. Now I waited with no personal resources, and no expectations – nothing to fall back on. So, in comes the mail last week, and I opened the letter. There was a check made out to Berean Christian Academy for $2,000 from a person who is not a person of means, and for whom this is an enormous gift. But this person, obviously, the Spirit of God had moved to take this action. And this person did not quench the Holy Spirit by saying "No." This person may not even know how to carry on after this great thing was done, because there are not that many resources in reserve in that particular life. But here was an act of God of $2,000. I suddenly found myself in the Holy of Holies, watching the hand of the Most High God. You can imagine what I felt like as I opened that letter, and saw that act of divine grace.

I reached for another envelope, and it was a letter from a friend across the country, but who knows us, and has been associated with us, and who has our tapes, and who loves the work of the Lord. There is probably not a person here (maybe a couple or a few people) would even know this person. And I opened this envelope, and there, from this man and his wife, is a check for $500. Now, the subtotal here has come to $2,500 – these two to put together.

Now, we're still short of the $3,200 for tomorrow morning, but I'm beginning to be impressed. I'm now in reverential awe of God because here was another person. This man and his wife obviously had the Spirit of God move them to do something, and they did not say "No." They did not quench the Holy Spirit. So, in one awesome mailing, God's mind was fulfilling the promise – that mind that it was so much fun to operate under: the thinking as to what to do, and following what that thought brought one to; and, where people had turned down, God was out gung-ho for us.

The next day, I was on the Berean Christian Academy parking lot when a car suddenly pulled in, and I recognized one of our good friends from one of the suburbs. She hopped out of her car, and came quickly over to me, and she said that she only wanted to take a moment of time. She said, "I don't know if there's a need here at the academy, but God has impressed me to give you this gift." And she handed me a folded check. And I told her, "I'm amazed, because indeed there is a need, and two dramatic divine provisions have already taken place to cover a substantial part of that need." And here was a lady who obviously, again, had been moved by God the Spirit, and she did not say "No." She did not quench the spirit. So, I thanked her, and she said to me, "Well, here's my check. God told me to get my butt right over here with it." I think that was a paraphrase, probably, of what the Lord said to her. But that was the idea. She was deeply under a deep impression from God. I mean I could see when that car zipped in there for a moment. And I wondered, "Who's this?" And then that door opened, and she came trotting over to me. I mean she was moving it. And something had obviously propelled her: "I want you to get on with it. I want you to do it." And she did not say "no."

So, we hugged, and she hopped in her car, and off she went to her business. I opened the check, and it was for $500. Now, we were down to $200 for tomorrow morning: $200 short. This was particularly distressing to me, because I'm the last one that gets paid in the academy, and my salary is $200. So, everybody was being taken care of except me. So, I went on back in to open the mail, and there was a school payment from one of our parents. When I opened it, it was from these parents getting caught up, and there was $270 in it.

Now, the mind of God guiding the actions of me and other people and coordinating of time, there was $3,270. Salaries are on hand to be met tomorrow, and $70 left over for a pizza party celebration, which we will hold for all the teachers. Obviously, am I humbled, or what, by this kind of a demonstration? Is the transforming power of the words of God in doctrine giving the mind of God really an experience, or what? Is there a wondrous power that comes from learning doctrine in the Berean Church services, or what? Is there a wondrous power in learning that word? Are those living and active words on that page that are being dealt with, and that are transformational? Are the Bereans who choose to absent themselves on and off from Berean Sunday morning and evening services of instruction – are they out of the mind of God, or not? And can they claim that their absence is the will of God? That's a madness. You cannot claim that. That is not true. That is an excuse that is a serious problem of people who live at the end of this age of grace. The intensified stage of the angelic conflict will rip you up as never before.

One of our ladies, many months ago, said, "I had a dream. Satan stood before me." He said, "I'm going to shatter Berean Church, and you will not be able to minister. It startled her. I'm not a dream believer. It was too much pepperoni that night, or something of that sort. But I thought it was an odd message. And another man recently said, "Boy, I've just been itching. And I've been reluctant to get up and tell this congregation that they better wake up, because they're under the gun of Satan, because here is the Word, and the Word, and the Word, and he cannot tolerate an illuminating light when American society has abandoned the Bible, and the God of the Bible, so that corruption is rewarded, and corruption is put into power."

Is it better, really, to live your life and to rear your children to live by their own minds instead of by the mind of Christ? I don't think so. And yet, we tolerate it. We tolerate that absence from where the transfer of the living and active words on this page are conveyed to the mind. It's not done in every church. It's rarely done in churches. What comes through is a lot of psychology, inspiration, challenges, and promotional, public relation stuff. But it is not the active; the living; and, powerful Word of God off the pages of Scripture into your mind.

Now, you need to appreciate that, and to realize the dangers and the hazards that we pay when we are not here, sitting in this room, when the doors of this place are open for instruction. It is a very serious matter, and it will have consequences upon you; and, worst of all, upon your children. Do not play loose with the mind of God. That is the mind that should possess you every moment of the day. And it is a great honor that it can do that.

So, I've learned what it is to call, and to look to people, for some help. All of these people who brought these checks are my very dear and close friends. And I know that, in part, they're doing that because the need is there, and they don't like seeing me twisting in the wind under the adverse conditions of the angelic warfare without the logistics to fight back. When you appeal to people, you will often be refused. Satan will actually maneuver in such a way that people who want to help are being frustrated and undermined with that ability to be able to carry on. That's the most amazing thing. And as with Job 1:21, we finally get to the place where: "The Lord has given and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." And we know how things work, and Who is our source of strength. We walk in the Holy of Holies because this is the church age. We're not standing outside. We're not waiting for some priest to make it in for us. We are there at that throne of grace on our own right, and on our own merits, because the merits that we have are the merits of Christ.

So, your request to help the people will often be refused, and you'll be left to manage it on your own. So, I must confess that, after this experience, it's going to be a very cold day in the bad place before I'll be inclined to ask anybody for some specific help within the Berean ministries. My talking is going to be to God. Glory to His name for God's people who stand by to help. They are our friends. And they will be honored forever.

**Inner Happiness**

The qualities of steadfastness and patience, furthermore, we are told by the apostle, are to be exercised with great joy. That great joy that he is referring to, at the end of Colossians 1:11: "steadfastness; patience; joyously," is referring to that marvelous quality of inner happiness. . . This is the source of inner happiness. God designed us to live with the perfect stable condition of happiness. This is indicated to us in John 15:11: "These things I have spoken to you that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full." It isn't that God's sometimes joy may be in us. He is always happy. He is never unhappy. And it is not that sometimes we have His joy operating in us. We always are to have His joy operating in us. That is what happens when you have the mind of Christ, and you're sending up "deesis," intensified, desperate-condition prayers. Yet, while there's a turmoil around you, there's a millennium of joy in the heart. And God has designed the believer to live in that kind of a stable condition of happiness. Human viewpoint, unfortunately, says that happiness is something that we do; something that we seek; something that we have; or, something that we create. But people are still not happy when they reach those goals. Divine viewpoint says that happiness is an inner matter which the soul finds through the Word of God and the Spirit of God.

The Bible words for "happiness" are twofold. It's expressed by the word "joy," or by the word "gladness." Happiness is usually associated with some happening. That's what the word "happiness" comes from. And it's related to a person or to some event. And it's defined as an emotion which springs from that happening. So, that's why the world does not have much happiness. That's why anybody, young or old alike, who goes through life with happiness that is structured upon something that they have, or some person they're related to, or some circumstance they're in, they're going to lose it. They're going to become unhappy. That is not a basis of happiness. That is short-term satanic delusions.

The Bible's use of the words "joy" and "gladness" indicate that happiness means a stability – a stabilized mental attitude, which is not dependent upon a person; a thing; or, an event. Happiness, furthermore, in Galatians 5:22, is clearly described as part of the fruit of the Spirit. That's where you get it. There's no happiness for a Christian outside the inner circle of temporal fellowship. A fellowship which is based upon the Word of God is the only kind of real happiness.

1 John 1:3-4: "What we have seen and heard, we proclaim to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us. And indeed our fellowship was with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write so that our joy may be made complete." You have joy when you have the Word of God because when you have the Word of God, you have the mind of God. And when you have the mind of God, Who is always happy, you will be happy. And you won't do these stupid things like staying away from church services; being slovenly in your Christian duty responsibilities; or, being absorbed on the material level, never giving God a thought. That is why people are taken to heaven at an early date, or at some point in time. Finely they become so useless to God on this earth, because rarely do they ever think of their lives in terms of: "Here it is – a new day. What is God wanting me to do? I have to earn a living. That gives me the logistical means to do the job. Now I'm going to do the job. You're just sitting around, vegetating all day long, and there is no prayer life. There is no growing in the Word of God. There is no following the mind of God. It's not going to be very much of a fun life, because you'll get way off course.

**Money**

People say that money does not bring happiness. That is not true, because money does bring happiness, provided that you apply the proper doctrinal principles. Then it brings you great happiness. And the trouble is that the doctrinal principle goes exactly against the human viewpoint concept about money. When people get happiness with money, what do they think of? They think of getting all that they can, and canning all that they get – building it, and keeping it, and hanging on, and piling it up. Get all you can, and can all you get. That's what brings unhappiness.

Now, here's the principle to get it and not be unhappy. Acts 20:35: "In everything," the apostle says, "I showed you that, by working hard in this manner, you must help the weak, and remember the words of the Lord Jesus that He Himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" Do you know how money brings you happiness? You get it, and then you give it out into the Lord's work, and into anything that deserves your tender mercies and concern that the Spirit of God leads you to reach out there and assist. Government tries to do this, and it's a total failure. It creates nothing but problems. It's not God's way. Money, and the accumulation of great resources, is not going to make you unhappy, unless you do the very thing you shouldn't do with it – to keep it. And that's how the world does it. The world thinks about getting money in order to keep it.

God says, "Okay. I'll strip you of it. Now how do you feel? Now how are you going to operate?" It is not unusual for Christians to discover that they have accumulated sums of money, and indeed they do have a burden, and a leading of the Spirit of God to make a provision as I've illustrated to you this morning. And they say "Yes," and then they discover something strange. God turns around and multiplies it back: "Whoa, wait a minute. I meant to give this to you." He says, "Fine. Now I'm giving it back to you." You say, "Okay, I'll give it again." He says, "Okay. I'll give it back to you again." And all of a sudden, you learn the joy and the thrill of realizing that you have your money; you're giving it to God; it's coming back to you again on this earth; and, it's been stored as treasures in heaven. Now, that's a good deal. But it's only going to take a Christian of spiritual super grace mentality to be able to do that.

Notice 1 Timothy 6:10: "For it’s the love of money that is a root of all sorts of evil. And some, by longing for it, have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang." This is the love of money. It is what you want to grasp to your bosom, and not release. That's the problem. It's not having the money. If you want to be happy with money, you'll get to enjoy it, because God's going to keep replenishing, but you give it as the Spirit of God leads you.

Notice just a little above there in 1 Timothy 6:6-9: "The godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by contentment. For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content." Oh yeah? Well, what about the swimming pool? I can't be content without a swimming pool: "If we have food and clothing, with these which shall be content." It will enrich your eternity, because the money you're getting, you are creating happiness for yourself by giving. And that happiness is partly here, but mostly it will be in heaven. What a tremendous biblical principle!

Our friend Jack Smith called me, our former Kentucky Prison Guard. In the course of our conversation, he said, "I've come to the conclusion that I agree with you that there's a peculiarity within the Christian community of the believers. They're all going to heaven. But somehow, among them, there's not only the call to the election of eternal life, but there is a call to the election of a few (some), who like Peter, James, and John, will be on the inner circle with the Lord. They will be right there where they are close to the Lord. They know him. They absorb His word. Their mind is His mind. They are focused upon serving out their mission in life for which they were born. And the Word of God becomes their lifeline. They can't wait to get to the church service."

But he says, "Others are forever going to just float around. They're good Christian people, and they're going to heaven. And they're in; and, they're out. But they're always going to be in a far outer orbit from the Lord. They're not going to be in that intense, thrilling, Holy of Holies that Peter, James, and John were in, right next to the son of God." Consider yourself part of the inner circle that you were here this morning – that nothing stood in your way.

One of our members, I understand, was washing her hair this morning. The electricity went out. Now she's wet-headed. What should she do? Stay home? No. She put her head out the door of the car, and rode here. We call that air dry. No, I don't know what she did. But a proper action was taken – whatever it took. And consider yourself chosen of God to have been here this morning. And the things that we have talked about, and the things that we have pointed out from the Word of God, your mind can go flying to all kinds of people and say, "I cannot believe that that person is not sitting here right now. What a blessing. What a boom. What a tremendous thing this would be for this person. What an enlightenment! What an impact on their eternity! And what are they doing? Who knows what? However, some people are always going to turn their nose up at the Word of God, and they're going to absent themselves. And we must pity them, and we must hope that better times will come.

One of the most terrible examples of not working with the mind of God was the great King David following a very serious sin in his life, which is described in Psalms 51. In that psalm, David describes how he, for a year, sinned against the Lord, and his salvation wasn't lost, as indicated by one place where he says, "Restoring to the joy of my salvation." He always had that, but he was so far out of fellowship. And yet he tried everything. Psalms 51:8 talks about the terrible misery of his soul that he was going through. And Psalms 32:1 made it very clear that he knew that there was no joy until sin was confessed.

So, finally in Psalm 51:12, he admitted that that was a terrible wrong thing. He shouldn't have done it. And he agreed with God, and he was restored to fellowship. Every new Christian comes into the Christian life with a certain amount of happiness because he has the filling of the Holy Spirit at that time. But like David, he loses it through sin. But like David, he was restored to his happiness – the joy of his salvation, once he admitted the sin. That's why temporal fellowship is so important. And isn't it amazing that this is a principle that, with the average church member in the biggest church in the town, with the biggest jumping jiving programs, if you asked the people about the principle of confession of known sins, they don't even know what you're talking about, let alone to have a verse like 1 John 1:9 come into their minds. They don't know a thing about it. And yet the whole Christian life is structured on that one verse. Without that one verse, you have zilch nothing for the rest of your life. Without that one verse, and functioning on that principle, the technique of confession of known sin, you'll have not a single shred of reward at the Judgment Seat of Christ. In you go – a poor pauper, and you spend your eternity remembering what might have been if only somebody had taught you.

I want you to come through this rally day with a new appreciation for the Word of God. It is living, and it is active, and you must understand that that means that the words on that page, when transferred by the pastor-teacher gift into the mentality of your soul, have an effect that will transform you. You don't feel too good?

Please remember what John said in one of his epistles. He said, in 3 John 1:2, "I pray for God that you may prosper physically as well as you do spiritually." There's a connection. He said, "You people have been going great guns spiritually. God's mind is your mind, and it's showing up in your body. A lot of physical ills (breakdowns that people have) are exactly because their minds are disoriented from the mind of God. Therefore, in come the physical breakdowns. That's not always true, and entirely true. In Job's case, it wasn't. The devil got a chance to hit him. And then Job demonstrated that he wasn't in it for the money. And he carried through. And when it was over, Job was back on his feet, and he was functional. And his three friends, the yo-yos that tried to tell him what was wrong and who were accusing him) – they were gone. Nobody's ever heard of them again.

However, David, in Psalm 51 – a Christian has to maintain his inner happiness by meeting certain conditions. David didn't, and he lost his happy happiness.

**Inner Happiness**

Inner happiness comes from meaning certain conditions, they are not automatic to salvation. Here they are:

1. **The Filling of the Spirit**

The habitual filling of the Holy Spirit (1 John 1:9). You have known sins confessed. Don't be careless about that.

1. **The Grace System of Perception**

The daily functioning under the grace system of perception – the intake of doctrine. It is critical to be in the church services. It is vital to be a reader of the Scriptures at home, and building on what you've learned.

1. **Full Knowledge Doctrine**

Your inner happiness is structured upon bringing out full knowledge doctrine toward God and toward man from your human spirit. You become a doer of the mind of God in the way you deal with people. Now that is a big sentence. You are a doer of the mind of God in how you deal with people. And you deal with people according to the moral code of God, and according to the purposes of the Word of God. Obviously, when you do not deal with people on that basis, you have a lot of misery, not happiness.

1. **A Spiritual Maturity Structure**

You must develop all the facets of your soul that are necessary for a strong spiritual maturity structure. That means that you must develop the grace orientation. You must develop the mastery of the details of life. Know how to handle material things. You must have a relaxed mental attitude, such that you have a rapport with God and man. You have the capacity for love, which only God can give you – the "agape" mental attitude love. Then you will have this inner happiness.

It's all the product and the provision of the Word of God. Philippians 4:4 makes it very clear that this is the will of God for us – happiness: "Rejoice in the Lord always. And again I say rejoice." This is an admonition, and it's an admonition that God expects you to perform. How can God admonish you with a near command-like structure that you will be happy? It is because He has given you the means to do it. Once you have His mind, then you'll have His happiness. It's as simple as that. It's doctrine in the mind. It's doctrine in your human spirit. It produces happiness. Grace has made a way for us to be happy apart from all the externals, but it's up to us to use it. You cannot find solid happiness in people; in circumstances; or, in things.

Now, your happiness will also be reflected in your Christian service. And we're interested in that on rally day. How about the question of whether you're eager to serve the Lord? But then what happens under the pressure of the work? Here's the need. It's all in your hands to fulfill it. You're capable of doing it. You're capable of executing. Oh, but you don't want to do that. Do you have the mind of God, or do you have the mind of man in that? Has the sin nature contaminated the mind of what God is calling you to do?

So, you start complaining to people; you break down; and, you cry. You can't have things your way, so you run out, and go looking for a crutch. If you know God's Word, and you are filled with this active and powerful factor, then the Spirit of God will enable you to stand very calm, and stand very tall, and you'll watch God solve things. And inner happiness will carry you through all the way. It will not break down.

Nobody had more ground for understanding this than the apostle Paul did – to have the happiness to keep serving under the difficulties. 1 Thessalonians 2:2: "But after we had already suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel amid much opposition." They were not going to be Christians who were going to serve in opposition to their sin nature. You're not going to serve in the opposition to what you selfishly (self-centeredly) want to do, over against what the call of God is, and what the need of God's work is. It takes a person who has the mind of Christ to do that.

So, a Christian with a spiritual maturity structure in temporal fellowship, with inner happiness – that happiness is going to be there when things are tough. It's going to be there when things are prosperous and wonderful.

You and I, here at Berean Memorial Church, have a tremendous future as we approach a new church year, and as we approach the return of Jesus. God is bringing new people onto our team, and He will continue to do that – people with a zeal for the Word and for service. God is going to bring funds so that we are not dependent upon the whims of people or the threats of Satan. We will have freedom to do what this congregation is uniquely and magnificently capable of doing.

It is my firm objective (almost supreme in life now) to strip that tape room of every valuable bit of instruction that lies there silent. This living and active Word should not be up there. It should be out there to all those pastors, and all those people of God who keep writing us: "Have you got the next one in this series?" And we have to say, "No we don't." It takes money to have the freedom; to have the people; and, to have the means to do that. And before I reach a hundred, that is my purpose in life. Those shelves are going to be stripped. And I see already that God has set in motion two directions in which short-term and long-range funds are going to be made available as He carries through to do exactly that. You don't realize (most of you) what a potential great work of God you are about to witness.

We need a new level of integrity. And people without integrity are out of it. And God is not going to use them, and he's not going to leave them within our midst to contaminate his people. We're going to have the integrity of doctrine. We're going to have the integrity of admitting where we are, and what we are. And we are going to stand by, and say that God is everything.

We're going to have an awesome and a fearful awareness of the reality of God – a very awesome and a fearful awareness of the reality of God. We're not going to be confused by the world. We're not going to be sidetracked by the world. We're going to have our eyes on the Lord. We are a unique local church. Is it for you? Are you one of the chosen now to assault the summit, and take the high ground of victory for Christ, in an uncompromising protection and proclamation of the Word of God? Are you ready to make that kind of move so that your life is simply the Word, and the Word, and the Word?

It was for Jesus. When He came to the worst part of His life, hanging on that cross in all the agony. The Scriptures tell us that it's doctrine that he's mulling over in his mind. And it was carrying Him through that moment to the high ground of having provided salvation for all mankind.

We used to have an old sign. It said this: "Berean Memorial church is looking for a few good people. Maybe you can be one of us. The trained; the serving; and, the rewarded." "For the Word of God is living and active" (Hebrews 4:12). How about it?

Our Heavenly Father, we thank You for this time in the Word, and for the things that are before us this day. We praise You for the power of Your Word, and for the fact that it is such a marvelous quality and impact, because it is alive and powerful, that it almost seems magical to us. And we do pray that You will help us to break through the wall of stupidity that Satan would put upon us. And to realize that the words of Scripture on the page of the Bible are the words of God. Therefore, they're life-transforming. And therefore, they will give us the capacity to think like the very God who created us. That is Your purpose for us. And a church of believers who are dedicated to that objective, and who let nothing stand between them and the Word of God, and the fulfilling of their Christian service, will make a mark upon this world far and wide in the final days, and in the final years, when the Lord returns. May He find us going about His business as never before. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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