

# Hebrews 13:5-7 Commentary

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**Hebrews 13:5** Make sure that your [character](#) is [free](#) from the [love](#) of [money](#), being [content](#) with what you [have](#); for He [Himself](#) has [said](#), "I WILL [NEVER \\* DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER \\* FORSAKE YOU](#)," ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**Greek:** [Aphilarguros o tropos; arkoumenoi](#) (PPPMPN) [tois parousin;](#) (PAPNPD) [autos gar eireken,](#) (3SRAl) [Ou me se ano](#) (1SAAS) [oud' ou me se egkatalipo;](#) (1SAAS)

**Amplified:** Let your character or moral disposition be free from love of money [including greed, avarice, lust, and craving for earthly possessions] and be satisfied with your present [circumstances and with what you have]; for He [God] Himself has said, I will not in any way fail you nor give you up nor leave you without support. [I will] not, [I will] not, [I will] not in any degree leave you helpless nor forsake nor let [you] down (relax My hold on you)! [Assuredly not!] ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**Barclay:** Let your way of life be free from the love of money. Be content with what you have for he has said: "I will never fail you and I will never forsake you"; ([Westminster Press](#))

**NLT:** Don't love money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, "I will never fail you. I will never abandon you." ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** Keep your lives free from the lust for money: be content with what you have. God has said: 'I will never leave you nor forsake you'. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** Let your manner of life be without love of money, being satisfied with your present circumstances. For He himself has said, and the statement is on record, I will not, I will not cease to sustain and uphold you.

**Young's Literal:** Without covetousness the behaviour, being content with the things present, for He hath said, 'No, I will not leave, no, nor forsake thee

**MAKE SURE THAT YOUR CHARACTER IS FREE FROM LOVE OF MONEY:**  
**Aphilarguros o tropos:**

- Character - Exodus 20:17; Joshua 7:21; Psalms 10:3-[note](#); Ps 119:36-[note](#); Jeremiah

6:13; Ezekiel 33:31; Mark 7:22; Luke 8:14; 12:15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21; 16:13,14; Romans 1:29-note; 1Corinthians 5:11; 6:10; Ephesians 5:3-note, Ep 5:5-note; Colossians 3:5-note; 1Timothy 3:3; 6:9,10; 2Peter 2:3-note, 2Pe 3:14-note; Jude 1:11

- [Hebrews 13 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Hebrews 13:5-6 Cultivating Contentment](#) - Steven Cole
- [Hebrews 13:5-6 The Principles of Contentment](#) - John MacArthur

## LET YOUR TRUE CHARACTER SHOW

Reputation is what others think you are.

Character is what God knows you are!

**Character** (5158) (**tropos** from **trope** = a turning from **trépo** = turn or guide towards a thing, turn one's self, direct one's attention to a thing, be occupied with it) originally referred to a turn or direction. In this context it speaks of the manner in which something is done or one's manner of life, with focus upon customary acts. **Vine** adds that in Heb 13:5 tropos "denotes either a disposition or a behavior, a manner of life."

Most of uses in the Septuagint are with the idea of **just as** in the phrase (*hon tropon*) (Ge 26:29, Ex 2:14, Ex 16:34, Ex 39:29, 31, 40:15, etc - over 170 occurrences of "*hon tropon*" in Lxx out of a total of 178 hits of tropos in the Lxx) *Hon tropon* occurs in NT in Mt 23:37, Lk 13:34, Acts 1:11, Acts 7:28, Acts 15:11, Acts 27:25, 2Ti 3:8)

**Tropos** is used in polytropos in Heb 1:1 "in many ways."

**Thayer** - (1) manner, way, fashion; hon tropon = as, even as, like as (see note on Septuagint below) (2) manner of life (Heb 13:5)

**BDAG** summarized - 1. the manner in which something is done = manner, way, kind, guise (latter in a secular sentence "appear in the guise of a slave") 2. the way in which a person behaves or lives = ways, customs, kind of life (Heb 13:5).

**Friberg** - strictly turn, direction; (1) manner, way, fashion; (kata medena tropon) = by no means, in no way (2Th 2.3); (in panti tropho) = in every way, by all means (2Th 3.16); (katho on tropon) = in the same way as (Acts 15.11); (hon tropon) = in the manner in which, just as (Mt 23.37); (2) as customary behavior way of life, character (Heb 13.5)

**KJV Dictionary** of **tropos** - Meaning: 1) a manner, way, fashion 1a) as, even as, like as 2) manner of life, character, deportment

**Zodhiates** on **tropos** - A turning, turn in direction, hence, a general manner, way, mode.

(I) Generally in adv. constructions:

(A) Acc. with *katá* (2596), according to, meaning in the manner of, as even as (Acts 15:11; 27:25, "in every way"; Rom. 3:2, "much every way"; 2 Thess. 2:3; Sept.: Num. 18:7).

(B) Acc. as an adv. *hón trópon* (*hón*, acc. relative pron. of *hós* [3739], in which, with

τρόπον) in which manner, as, even as (Matt. 23:37; Luke 13:34; Acts 1:11; 7:28; 2 Tim. 3:8; Jude 1:7 τόν hómoion τρόπον [hómoios {3664}, similar], "in the like manner"; Sept.: Gen. 26:29; Obad. 1:16).

(C) Dat. pantí trópō (pantí [dat. of pás {3956}], every, with trópō), in every way (Phil. 1:18). With en pantí trópō (en [1722], in, as; pantí [3956], every), in every way (2 Thess. 3:16).

**(II) Figuratively a turn of mind and life, disposition, manner, mode of thinking or feeling, acting** (Heb. 13:5). ([Complete Word Study Dictionary- New Testament - Dr. Spiros Zodhiates- excellent resource for Greek word studies!](#))

**Tropos** - 13 uses in the NT - Usage: character(1), circumstance(1), exactly\*(1), just\*(1), respect(1), same way(1), way(5).

Matthew 23:37 "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the **way** () a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.

Luke 13:34 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, **just** as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it!

Acts 1:11 They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the **same way** (in like fashion) as you have watched Him go into heaven."

Acts 7:28 'YOU DO NOT MEAN TO KILL ME **AS** YOU KILLED THE EGYPTIAN YESTERDAY, DO YOU?'

Acts 15:11 "But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same **way** as they also are."

Acts 27:25 "Therefore, keep up your courage, men, for I believe God that it will turn out **exactly** as I have been told.

Romans 3:2 Great in every **respect**. First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God.

Philippians 1:18 What then? Only that in every **way**, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice,

2 Thessalonians 2:3 Let no one in any **way** deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,

2 Thessalonians 3:16 Now may the Lord of peace Himself continually

grant you peace in every **circumstance**. The Lord be with you all!

2 Timothy 3:8 **Just** as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men of depraved mind, rejected in regard to the faith.

Hebrews 13:5 Make sure that your **character** is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,"

Jude 1:7 **just** as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

**Tropos** - 178v in the Septuagint -

Ge 26:29; Ex 2:14; 13:11; 14:13; 16:34; 39:29, 31, 43; 40:15, 21, 23, 25; Lev 4:10, 20f, 31, 35; 7:38; 8:4, 9, 17, 31; 9:10, 21; 10:5, 15, 18; 16:15; 18:28; Num 1:19; 3:16, 42, 51; 4:49; 14:17, 28; 15:14; 18:7; 23:2; 26:4; 31:47; 32:27; 34:13; 36:10; Deut 1:21; 2:1, 12, 22; 4:33; 5:12, 16, 32; 6:16; 11:25; 12:21; 13:17; 15:6; 19:8, 19; 20:17; 23:23; 24:8; 27:3; 28:9, 63; 29:13; 32:50; Josh 1:3, 17; 5:4; 8:2, 6, 27; 10:1, 28, 30, 32, 35, 37, 39f; 11:9, 12, 15, 20; 13:6; 14:2, 5, 10, 12; 21:8; 22:4; 23:15; Jdg 2:22; 6:27; 8:8; 11:36; 15:10f; 1 Sam 25:33; 2 Sam 10:2; 16:23; 17:3; 24:19; Esth 8:12; Job 4:8, 19; 29:25; Ps 42:1; Pr 9:11; 23:7; 24:29; Isa 5:24; 7:2; 9:3; 10:10f; 13:19; 14:19, 24; 17:5, 9; 20:3; 24:13; 25:10f; 29:8; 31:4; 33:4; 38:19; 51:13; 52:14; 62:5; 65:8; 66:22; Lam 1:22; Ezek 10:10; 12:11; 15:6; 16:48, 57; 18:4; 20:32, 36; 22:22; 23:18, 44; 24:18, 22; 25:8; 40:23; 42:3, 7; 45:6; 46:12; 48:11; Dan 1:14; 2:40f, 45; Hos 9:13; Amos 2:13; 3:12; 5:14, 19; 9:9; Obad 1:15f; Jonah 1:14; Mic 3:3; 5:8; Zech 4:1; 7:13; 8:13f; 10:6; 11:13; Mal 3:17

In the Septuagint **tropos** means "custom" in Nu 18:7 (Lxx = "according to the whole **manner** of the altar") so that the sons of Aaron were to minister according to the custom of the altar. In 1Sa 25:33 it refers to the conduct (NAS - discernment) Abigail demonstrated. More often **tropos** functions with the relative pronoun (*hon*) and is used to translate several Hebrew words and phrases that describe comparison, especially phrases like "ka'asher" (as, just as), as for example in Ex 2:14 ("Are you intending to kill me, **AS** you killed the Egyptian?") Joshua 10:1 describes how Joshua destroyed Ai JUST AS he destroyed Jericho.

**Free from the love of money** - Literally "Without covetousness the behaviour"

**Free from the love of money** ([866](#)) (**aphilarguros** from **a** = negates + **philarguros** = avaricious [cp **philarguria**] from **phílos** = friend or loving + **árguros** = silver, money) is literally "free from affection for silver". Notice the target that "love of money" takes aim at! Our character! Loving money as a dear friend must be avoided for it becomes a substitute

for faith in God's loving watchcare and produces a false sense of trust in an unreliable supply, for as Solomon reminds us in Pr 23:5-note "wealth certainly makes itself wings." (cp Eccl 5:10, Lk 12:15, Ps 62:10-note, Job 31:24,25, 28, Mt 6:8-note)

**Aphilarguros** is to be one of the character traits of prospective elders - 1 Timothy 3:3 not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, uncontentious, **free from the love of money**.

**Spurgeon** - Covetousness is classed with the very filthiest of vices of the flesh. Let the Christian dread it. God is not selfish; God is love. God does not hoard; He gives liberally (James 1:5). He does not refuse the poor; He delights in mercy. He spreads abroad in the midst of His creatures the good things that belong to Him, and He bids them freely gather what He freely gives; even this way He would have us distribute generously and disperse freely without covetousness.

**The law of getting and wanting** - The more you get the more you want. Focus on material things, and you getting will never catch up with your wanting! This is nothing short of greed which is no small sin. Greed has kept many out of the kingdom, and causes the loss of joy in many believers. Mark it down that when you trust in money you are demonstrating a distrust in God. Love of money displeases God and separates us from Him.

Luke 16:13 "No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." 14 Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, were listening to all these things, and they were scoffing at Him.

Study the following Scriptural examples of "love of money" and what it "cost of loving money" -- Achan (Joshua 7:1, 5, 25). Gehazi, Elisha's servant (2Ki 5:15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27), Judas (Mt 26:14,15). Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:12, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10).

Wealth has its disadvantages. It is difficult to have it and not trust in it. Material possessions tend to focus one's thoughts and interests on this world alone. It can enslave so that one becomes possessed by possessions, comforts, and recreations. The writer of Hebrews would exhort "Lay aside these temporal, worldly encumbrances." Jesus said, "the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful." (Mk 4:19). Do not even entertain the tiniest thought of church leadership if you are a lover of money. (1Ti 3:2-3).

The psalmist writes...

Psalm 10:3 For the wicked boasts of his heart's desire, and the greedy man curses and spurns the LORD.

**Spurgeon** comments: The evidence is very full and conclusive upon the matter of pride, and no jury could hesitate to give a verdict against

the prisoner at the bar. Let us, however, hear the witnesses one by one. The first testifies that he is a boaster.

For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire. He is a very silly boaster, for he glories in a mere desire: a very brazen faced boaster, for that desire is villainy; and a most abandoned sinner, to boast of that which is his shame. Bragging sinners are the worst and most contemptible of men, especially when their filthy desires, -- too filthy to be carried into act, -- become the theme of their boastings. When Mr. Hate Good and Mr. Heady are joined in partnership, they drive a brisk trade in the devil's wares. This one proof is enough to condemn the prisoner at the bar. Take him away, jailor! But stay, another witness desires to be sworn and heard. This time, the impudence of the proud rebel is even more apparent; for he blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth. This is insolence, which is pride unmasked. He is haughty enough to differ from the Judge of all the earth, and bless the men whom God hath cursed. So did the sinful generation in the days of Malachi, who called the proud happy, and set up those that worked wickedness (Malachi 3:15). These base pretenders would dispute with their Maker; they would --

"Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,  
Rejudge his justice, be the god of God."

How often have we heard the wicked man speaking in terms of honour of the covetous, the grinder of the poor, and the sharp dealer! Our old proverb hath it, --

"I wot well how the world wags;  
He is most loved that hath most bags."

Pride meets covetousness, and compliments it as wise, thrifty, and prudent. We say it with sorrow, there are many professors of religion who esteem a rich man, and flatter him, even though they know that he has fattened himself upon the flesh and blood of the poor. The only sinners who are received as respectable are covetous men. If a man is a fornicator, or a drunkard, we put him out of the church; but who ever read of church discipline against that idolatrous wretch, -- the covetous man? Let us tremble, lest we be found to be partakers of this atrocious sin of pride, "blessing the covetous, whom Jehovah abhorreth." .

**BEING CONTENT WITH WHAT YOU HAVE: arkoumenoi (PPPMPN) tois parousin (PAPNPD):**

- Exodus 2:21; Matthew 6:25-note, Mt 6:34-note; Luke 3:14; Philippians 4:11,12; 1Timothy 6:6, 7, 8

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### See related resource: **Christian Contentment**

**Paul** wrote to Timothy about contentment "**But** (contrast = Always stop, look and listen - Ask what is being contrasted? See 1Ti 6:5) godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by contentment. 7 For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. 8 And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. (**1Ti 6:6-note, 1Ti 6:7-note, 1Ti 6:8-note**)

**Being content** ([714](#)) (**arkeo [word study]**) in the active voice meant to be enough, to be sufficient, to be adequate (eg, see God's supply of grace to Paul in his weakness - 2Co 12:9). In this passage **arkeo** is in the passive voice which conveys the meaning to be satisfied with or contented with something. The **present tense** calls for this to be one's continual attitude. **Does this describe you beloved?** If not, ponder Paul's testimony...

Not that I speak from want; for **I have learned** to be (present tense = continually) **content** (**autarkes** from **autos** = reflexive pronoun = self + **arkeo** = be sufficient, suffice) in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance **I have learned the secret** of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. **I can do (MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY) all things** through Him who strengthens (**THE SPIRIT'S ENABLING POWER**) me. (Php 4:11, 12-see note Php 4:13-note)

**Comment: Be (eimi)** means to exist and in the present context describes Paul's existing in a state of contentment. The verb is in the **present tense** which speaks of his experience as a continuous one and the **indicative mood** signifies that this was a real event, not a figment of his imagination. Contentment is not a hypothetical postulate available to just a few but is the practical potential available to every person in Christ. Paul was totally independent of man because he was totally dependent upon Christ. He knew that the chief end of man is not to have his needs met, but to glorify God and enjoy Him forever and because of that, he was satisfied with whatever God graciously granted him.

**Arkeo** - 8 times in the NT - Mt 25:9; Lk 3:14; Jn 6:7; 14:8; 2Co. 12:9; 1Ti 6:8; He 13:5; 3Jn 1:10. There are 7 uses in the Septuagint (Lxx)- Ex 12:4; Nu 11:22; Jos. 17:16; 1Ki 8:27; 2Chr 6:18; Pr 30:15, 16.

**Wuest** writes that "The word "content" is the translation of **arkeo** "to be possessed of unflinching strength, to be strong, to suffice, to be enough," finally, "to be satisfied, contented." The underlying thought is that one should be satisfied with that which meets

our need, and not desire a superfluity. The cognate noun of this verb is compounded with the personal pronoun “self” in Philippians 4:11 to mean “self-sufficient.” This latter word was used by the Stoics to express the favorite doctrine of the sect, that man should be sufficient to himself for all things, able by the power of his will to resist the shock of circumstance. Paul was self-sufficient because he was Christ-dependent. The word “content,” therefore, in our Hebrew passage means more than “satisfied.” It refers to the ability of the Christian dependent upon the Holy Spirit, to be independent of outward circumstances. ([Hebrews - Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament](#))

**Spurgeon** - There is a laudable pursuit of gain, without which business would not be properly carried on. But there is a line, scarcely as broad as a razor’s edge, between diligence in business and greediness for gain. We can so easily pass from the one into the other that we may hardly be aware of it ourselves. When a man is increasing his investments, when he is extending his agencies, when he is enlarging his warehouse, when he is employing a larger number of persons than before, or even when he is bemoaning the depression of his trade, and his heart is aching because he has to do only half as much business as before, covetousness may insinuate itself into his conversation. It is a snake that can enter at the smallest hole. It lurks in the grass where it is long, but it glides also where the pasture is bare. It may come in either in prosperity or in adversity, and it is needful to whisper in the ear of each believer, whether going up or down in the world, “Your lifestyle—your daily conduct—must be free from the love of money.”.....There is a fortune for you, that is a pension to fall back upon. You may very well be content to leave your temporal concerns in the hands of God, for he hath said, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” Why, if you believe that one promise of God, he will be better to you than ten thousand friends who promise to provide for you! The Provider in heaven is better than any provider on earth. A beautiful motto is that of the old house of Chester, “God’s providence is my inheritance.

**Warren Wiersbe** - The word **content** actually means “contained.” It is a description of the man whose resources are within him so that he does not have to depend on substitutes without. ([Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor](#))

**Asaph** expounds on the **ultimate source of contentment** asking and answering the question we would all do well to ask ourselves...

Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And besides Thee, I desire nothing on earth. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. (Ps 73:25, 26- [see Spurgeon's exposition](#))

**Spurgeon comments: Whom have I in heaven but Thee?** Thus, then, he turns away from the glitter which fascinated him to the true gold which was his real treasure. He felt that his God was better to him than all the wealth, health, honour, and peace, which he had so much envied in the worldling; yea, He was not only better than all on earth, but more excellent than all in heaven. He bade all things else go, that



he might be filled with his God.

How small is the number of those who keep their affections fixed on God alone! (cp Col 3:1-note, Col 3:2-note) We see how superstition joins to him many others as rivals for our affections. While the Papists admit in word that all things depend upon God, they are, nevertheless, constantly seeking to obtain help from this and the other quarter independent of him. John Calvin.

It pleased David, and it pleases all the saints, more that God is their salvation, whether temporal or eternal, than that he saves them. The saints look more at God than at all that is God's. They say, *Non tua, sed te; we desire not thine, but Thee*, or nothing of thine like Thee. **Whom have I in heaven but Thee?** saith David. What are saints? what are angels, to a soul without God? It is true of things as well as of persons. What have we in heaven but God? What's joy without God? What's glory without God? What's all the furniture and riches, all the delicacies, yea, all the diadems of heaven, without the God of heaven? If God should say to the saints, Here is heaven, take it amongst you, but I will withdraw myself, how would they weep over heaven itself, and make it a Baca, a valley of tears indeed. Heaven is not heaven unless we enjoy God. It is the presence of God which makes heaven: glory is but our nearest being unto God. As Mephibosheth replied, when David told him, "I have said, thou and Ziba divide the land:" "Let him take all, if he will," saith Mephibosheth, I do not so much regard the land as I regard thy presence; "Let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace to his own house," where I may enjoy him. So if God should say to the saints, Take heaven amongst you, and withdraw Himself, they would even say, Nay, let the world take heaven, if they will, if we may not have Thee in heaven, heaven will but be an earth, or rather but a hell to us. That which saints rejoice in, is that they may be in the presence of God, that they may sit at His table, and eat bread with Him; that is, that they may be near Him continually, which was Mephibosheth's privilege with David. That's the thing

which they desire and which their souls thirst after; that's the wine they would drink. "My soul," says David (Psalms 42:2-[note](#)), "thirsts for God, for the living God; when" (I think the time is very long, when) "shall I come and appear before God?" Joseph Caryl.

Heaven and earth ransacked to find a joy equal to the Lord himself. Let the preacher take up various joys and show the inferiority.

**And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.** No longer should his wishes ramble, no other object should tempt them to stray; henceforth, the Ever living One should be his all in all.

**My flesh and my heart faileth.** They had failed him already, and he had almost fallen; they would fail him in the hour of death, and, if he relied upon them, they would fail him at once.

**But God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.** His God would not fail him, either as protection or a joy. His heart would be kept up by divine love, and filled eternally with divine glory. After having been driven far out to sea, Asaph casts anchor in the old port. We shall do well to follow his example. There is nothing desirable save God; let us, then, desire only him. All other things must pass away; let our hearts abide in him, who alone abideth for ever.

God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. The Hebrew carrieth it, but God is the rock of my heart, i.e., a sure, strong, and immovable foundation to build upon. Though the winds may blow, and the waves beat, when the storm of death cometh, yet I need not fear that the house of my heart will fall, for it is built on a sure foundation: God is the rock of my heart. The strongest child that God hath is not able to stand alone; like the hop or ivy, he must have somewhat to support him, or he is presently on the ground. Of all seasons, the Christian hath most need of succour at his dying hour; then he must take his leave of all his comforts on earth, and then he shall be sure of the sharpest conflicts from hell, and therefore, it is impossible he should hold out without extraordinary help from heaven. But the psalmist had armour of proof ready, wherewith to encounter his last enemy. As weak and fearful a child as he was, he durst venture a walk in the dark entry of death, having his Father by the hand: "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will

fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me," Psalm 23:4-[note](#). Though at the troubles of my life, and my trial at death, my heart is ready to fail me, yet I have a strong cordial which will cheer me in my saddest condition: God is the strength of my heart.

And my portion. It is a metaphor taken from the ancient custom among the Jews, of dividing inheritances, whereby every one had his allotted portion; as if he had said, God is not only my rock to defend me from those tempests which assault me, and, thereby, my freedom from evil; but he is also my portion, to supply my necessities, and to give me the fruition of all good. Others, indeed, have their parts on this side the land of promise, but the author of all portions is the matter of my portion. My portion doth not lie in the rubbish and lumber, as theirs doth whose portion is in this life, be they never so large; but my portion containeth him whom the heavens, and heaven of heavens, can never contain. God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever; not for a year, or an age, or a million of ages, but for eternity. Though others' portions, like roses, the fuller they blow, the sooner they shed; they are worsted often by their pride, and wasted through their prodigality, so that at last they come to want -- and surely death always rends their persons and portions asunder; yet my portion will be ever full, without diminution. Without alteration, this God will be my God for ever and ever, my guide and aid unto death; nay, death, which dissolves so many bonds, and unties such close knots, shall never part me and my portion, but give me a perfect and everlasting possession of it. George Swinnock.

**Dwight Pentecost** wisely explains that...

Air and water are two entirely different elements or spheres, and it is impossible to have a vessel filled with air and water at the same time. One that is filled with air must have the air displaced in order to be filled with water. Similarly, if a man's life is given over to the pursuit of material things, that life cannot then be filled with Jesus Christ. Until that love for material things is displaced, that life cannot and will not be filled with Jesus Christ. When a man gives himself to the pursuit of all that is involved in this world and makes its position and its material

things his goal and his standard and the center of his life, he will not find the satisfaction that comes from making Jesus Christ the center of his life. To be content is the opposite of to be covetous, to be greedy, to be worldly, to be materialistic... The reason material things can never make a man content is that a man is never able to get enough of them to satisfy him... Someone once asked John D. Rockefeller how much money is enough. He thought a moment and said, "Just a little more than one has." The world's wealthiest man has yet to say, "I have enough to be satisfied." ([Pentecost, J. D. The Joy of Living: A Study of Philipians. Kregel Publications](#))

**Jesus** warned

**Beware** (present imperative = Command to continually "Watch out") and **be on your guard** (**phulasso** also in the present imperative) against every form of greed (**pleonexia**- from **pleión** = more + **écho** = have -- means literally to have more and describes a strong desire to acquire more and more material possessions, especially that which is forbidden); for (See **term of explanation**) not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions. (Luke 12:15)

**Comment:** Jesus in effect gives a double warning! He knows that greed is subtle and sinister. Life is not one's possessions, and he who dies with the most toys does not win, contrary to a modern bumper sticker saying! Paul says Christ is our **life**. (Col 3:4-note). True life is a Person, not possessions! We can never accumulate enough "things" if "things" to satisfy our inner God given need. Only Jesus can give genuine satisfaction and contentment.

**Being satisfied with...**Why? because of His "faithful Word" which the writer goes on to quote. The truth is that when you come to the point in a particular circumstance or relationship where you realize that all you have left is Jesus, then you come to experientially know that Jesus is all you need. (cp 2Co 12:9,10)

**What you have** ([3918](#)) (**pareimi**) means to be present and here is used to describe that which is present and at one's disposal (one's possessions). The literal idea is the things which are at present around one, especially one's circumstances.

**Pareimi** - 24 uses in the NT - Matt. 26:50; Lk. 13:1; Jn. 7:6; 11:28; Acts 10:21, 33; 12:20; 17:6; 24:19; 1 Co. 5:3; 2 Co. 10:2, 11; 11:9; 13:2, 10; Gal. 4:18, 20; Col. 1:6; Heb. 12:11; 13:5; 2 Pet. 1:9, 12; Rev. 17:8

The basis for such contentment is God's promise of His presence and His power, of His ability to supply the necessities of life (Mt 6:25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34-see notes). It refers to the ability of the Christian dependent upon the Spirit of Christ, to be independent of outward circumstances.

**Discontentment -**

**One of man's greatest sins**  
**Contentment -**  
**One of God's greatest blessings**

## **Cultivating Contentment**

### **Steven Cole**

A Jewish man in Hungary went to his rabbi and complained, "Life is unbearable. There are nine of us living in one room. What can I do?" The rabbi answered, "Take your goat into the room with you." The man was incredulous, but the rabbi insisted, "Do as I say and come back in a week."

A week later the man returned looking more distraught than before. "We can't stand it," he told the rabbi. "The goat is filthy." The rabbi said, "Go home and let the goat out, and come back in a week." A week later the man returned, radiant, exclaiming, "Life is beautiful. We enjoy every minute of it now that there's no goat- only the nine of us." (Reader's Digest [12/81].) Contentment is more a matter of our perspective than of our circumstances, isn't it!

But even among God's people, true contentment is not common. The Puritan Jeremiah Burroughs captured this fact by titling his book, [\*\*The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment\*\*](#). The philosopher, Immanuel Kant, saw this when he observed, "Give a man everything he wants, and at that moment, everything will not be everything" (cited by Richard Swenson, Margin [NavPress], p. 190).

Though rare, contentment is not just nice for believers. The participle implies a command: "**Be[ing] content with what you have.**" To grumble about our circumstances is to challenge the love and goodness of our heavenly Father. To be discontented implies that He has not provided us with what we need. Discontent was the sin of Israel in the wilderness. God had just miraculously delivered them from slavery in Egypt and He was miraculously meeting their needs, yet they grumbled about their hardships and threatened to return to Egypt.

The exhortation of our text may stem from what the author said in He 10:34-note, where he reminded them that in the former days (He 10:32-note), "you...accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one." But now they needed endurance (He 10:36-note). Perhaps after

their property had been unlawfully seized, anxiety had set in. Some of them now were focused on regaining their possessions, no matter what it required. But, pursuing material things can easily cross the line into loving them. And the love of money or things (He 13:5) is opposed to the love of the brethren (He 13:1-note). So the author calls them to contentment and shows them how to cultivate this rare, but essential, Christian jewel.

**Contentment is cultivated by pulling the weeds of greed and by building your life on God and His promises.**

### **1. Contentment must be cultivated.**

Like a beautiful garden, contentment does not grow without deliberate aim and effort. The apostle Paul wrote from prison (Phil. 4:11-note), “I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.” If Paul had to learn contentment, then so do we.

What is Christian contentment? Jeremy Burroughs defines it as

“that sweet, inward, quiet, gracious frame of spirit, which freely submits to and delights in God’s wise and fatherly disposal in every condition” (in Swenson, p. 200).

John Owen wrote,

“... contentment is a gracious frame or disposition of mind, quiet and composed; without, [1.] Complaining ... at God’s providential disposals of our outward concerns; [2.] All envy at the more prosperous conditions of others; [3.] Fears and anxious cares about future supplies; and, [4.] Desires and designs of those things which a more plentiful condition than what we are in would supply us [with]” (An Exposition of Hebrews [The National Foundation for Christian Education], pp. 411-412).

To develop and maintain contentment, we must realize that...

#### **A. The world constantly seeks to make us feel discontented.**

All advertising, whether on TV, billboards, or in catalogs, is designed to make you think, “I need this product to be happy!” A PBS television program stated that the average American sees over a million commercials by age 20 (Randy Alcorn, *The Treasure Principle* [Multnomah Publishers], p. 50). I don’t know how they came up with that number, but it averages out to 137 per day, if you start at birth! Even a fraction of that many commercials has got to affect us! So we have to fight the influence of the world, or its swift current will sweep us downstream.

Before we go farther, we should address the question that our text

raises, “Is it wrong to seek to better our circumstances through hard work and a better income?” The opposite question would be, “Should we be unconcerned about material things and our financial condition?” Should we just drift through life without ambition, living from hand to mouth?

As with many biblical principles, there is a balance that we must maintain by holding seemingly opposite truths in tension. On the one hand, the Bible condemns laziness and calls us to work hard to provide for our family’s and our own needs (Pr 10:4, 5; 24:30, 31, 32, 33, 34). Paul strongly states (1Ti 5:8): “But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” He reminded the Thessalonians of his own example of hard work to provide for his needs (2Th 3:7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12). He commanded them (2Th 3:10), “if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either.”

The Bible also commends wealth as a sign of God’s blessing (Ps 112:3-[note](#); Pr 10:22). It commands us to manage the money and possessions that God has entrusted to us carefully and to have the foresight and discipline to provide for anticipated future needs (Pr 6:6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11; 13:22; 15:6; 21:5, 20; 27:23, 24, 25, 26, 27).

On the other hand, the Bible warns us about the dangers of wealth (Pr 11:4, 28; 30:8, 9). Jesus shocked the disciples when He said, “Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven” (Mt. 19:23). Paul warned (1Ti 6:9-note, 1Ti 6:10-note),

“But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money 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 griefs.”

As you hold these truths in tension, your motive for seeking more money is crucial. To seek to meet legitimate personal or family needs so that you don’t become a burden to the church or society is proper. To want more money so that you can give more is good (2Co 9:8; Eph. 4:28-note).

But if you drift into trusting wealth rather than the Lord for present or future security, you’re off course (Pr 11:28; Jer. 17:5, 6). If you’re storing up treasures on earth, rather than in heaven, you’ll lose it all (Mt. 6:19-34-note). If you live in abundance, but don’t help the poor, you’re committing the sin of the people of Sodom (Ezek 16:49). If you’re seeking contentment in money or things, rather than in God Himself, you will come up empty (1Ti 6:5, 1Ti 6, 7, 8-note, 1Ti 6:9-note, 1Ti 6:10-note). So, be careful so that you’re not deceived.

## **B. Contentment does not grow without cultivation and maintenance.**

You may be content in the Lord today, but tomorrow you could be tempted toward greed or envy. Contentment and greed are attitudes that start in your mind. To cultivate contentment, you've got to guard your thought life and constantly work at developing a biblical view of life, of material possessions, and of eternity. You have to avoid comparing yourself with others, recognizing that God is sovereign and that He has different purposes for different people. Perhaps He knows that if He entrusted more money to you, you would stop trusting Him and be spiritually ruined.

So to cultivate and maintain contentment, you must daily bow before God's sovereignty, trust Him to provide for all of your needs, and keep an eternal perspective. The beloved Psalm 23 is a picture of a contented sheep, enjoying the provision of the Good Shepherd. Meditate on it until it becomes your perspective.

But our text recognizes that the garden of contentment does not grow weed-free. Therefore,

### **2. Contentment is cultivated by constantly pulling the weeds of greed.**

"Make sure that your character [or, way of life] is free from the love of money." This is not the only place where greed is listed in the same context as sexual immorality (Ro 1:26-note, Ro 1:27-note, Ro 1:29-note; 1Co 5:10, 11; Ep 4:19-note; Ep 5:3-note, Ep 5:5-note; Col 3:5-note; 1Th 4:3-note, 1Th 4:4, 5-note, 1Th 4:6-note; 2Pe 2:14-note). The Bible presents greed as a terrible sin, equal to idolatry (Ep 5:5; Col 3:5). It ruined Balaam (2Pe 2:15-note), Achan (Jos 7:1, 20, 21), Elisha's servant, Gehazi (2Ki 5:20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27), the rich young ruler (Mt. 19:16-22), Judas Iscariot (John 12:6), Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10), and Felix (Acts 24:26).

Jesus mentions "worries and riches and the pleasures of this life" as the thorns that choke out the word from bearing fruit (Luke 8:14). He warned, "Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions" (Luke 12:15). He went on to tell the parable of the rich fool who planned to build bigger barns to hold his wealth, but died that night. He concluded, "So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God" (Luke 12:21).

So greed or the love of money is a dangerous weed that keeps popping up in each of our lives. You can pull it one day, and it comes back the next. You will not enjoy God's contentment unless you keep weeding.



Here are four ways to keep it from taking over:

**A. To pull the weeds of greed, acknowledge God's ownership of all that you have.**

Psalm 24:1-[note](#) declares, "The earth is the Lord's, and all it contains." Paul asks rhetorically (1Co 6:19-note, 1Cor 6:20-note), "Or do you not know ... that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price..." Jesus frequently used parables in which God is the owner and we are His managers or stewards (Mt 25:14-30). As such, the owner entrusts us with resources that we are to use to make a profit for His purposes. The owner lets us draw a reasonable salary, but to squander the owner's assets on frivolous things for our own use is to be an irresponsible manager. If we do that, we're forgetting that we don't own the store. We just work there, managing it for the owner. Someday He is going to check the books to see if we made a profit for His interests.

To pull out the weeds of greed and to get God's perspective on money and possessions, yield it all to Him because He rightfully owns it. You need to manage it and take care of it for Him, but if He takes it away, that's His business. I know that it's painful to suffer a financial loss or to have property stolen. But it's less painful if you can say, "Lord, they stole Your property!"

**B. To pull the weeds of greed, put your treasure where you want your heart to be.**

Jesus plainly taught, "for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Mt 6:21-note). You've experienced this principle. Perhaps you invested in a stock, such as AT&T. You pick up the paper and read that some communication giant has just bought out AT&T. Do you go, "Ho hum," and turn the page? No, you read that article carefully to learn whether your AT&T stock is going up or down. You may read the Wall Street Journal to get their take on things, and maybe call your broker. Why? Because your heart followed your treasure into AT&T.

If you want your heart in the things of God, invest your treasure there. If you support a missionary in China and you read about a government crackdown on Christianity in China, you'll have that missionary and country on your heart in prayer. You'll contact him to find out what's going on. Your heart is there because you invested your treasure there.

**C. To pull the weeds of greed, live in light of eternity.**

Greed is always shortsighted, focused on this life only. Put a man on his deathbed, and offer him a billion dollars. Apart from leaving it to his heirs, the money would be worthless to him. Death isn't a pretty good

chance-it's a certainty! And you leave it all behind. Two people were discussing the recent death of a wealthy man. One asked, "How much did he leave?" The other answered, "All of it!" You never see a hearse pulling a U-Haul!

You can't take it with you, but you can send it ahead to the Bank of Heaven. Both Jesus and Paul talked about laying up treasures in heaven (Mt 6:19-note; 1Ti 6:17, 18, 19). Jesus told the parable about the unrighteous steward (Luke 16:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8), who knew that he was going to get fired. So he quickly used what he had to make friends for himself for the future. Jesus applied it (Luke 16:9), "And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the wealth of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they will receive you into the eternal dwellings." He did not say, "if it fails," but, "when it fails." Money will fail us at death. Jesus is telling us to use unrighteous money now to make friends for eternity. Use your money that undoubtedly will fail to invest in something that certainly will succeed, namely, bringing people to heaven.

**D. To pull the weeds of greed, make it your aim to give more, not to accumulate more.**

Giving is God's antidote for the poison of greed. But when we get more money, we're all tempted to spend or keep it for our-selves. God may be sending you more to help you get some things to make life more comfortable. As a loving Father, He does not deny His children good things. But He may be sending you more so that you can channel it to further His purposes. If you assume that it's all to spend on yourself, you may be misusing it.

As I've often taught, tithing (giving 10 percent) is not God's standard for New Testament giving. It may be a convenient low amount to start with, but the New Testament standard is, as God has prospered you (1Co 16:2). Remember, He owns it all, not just ten percent! In the context of an appeal for giving, Paul wrote, "And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every new joy" (2Cor. 9:8). No, he didn't say that! He said, "for every good deed"! When God gives you an abundance, if your needs are met, prayerfully consider giving the surplus to the Lord's work.

George Muller, who depended on God's people for his support, lived simply and gave away the rest. For many years, he almost, if not completely, supported the entire staff of 33 missionaries with the China Inland Mission (Roger Steer, *George Muller: Delighted in God* [Harold Shaw Publishers], p. 224)! In a typical year, 1874, he lived on eight percent of his income, and gave away 92 percent (A. T. Pierson, *George*

Muller of Bristol [Revell], pp. 183, 338). Muller could have been a wealthy man, living lavishly. He chose instead to live simply and lay up treasures in heaven. Giving is God's way to pull the weeds of greed.

Contentment must be cultivated, and it comes by constantly pulling the weeds of greed. But what's the motivation for this?

### **3. Contentment comes by building your life on God and His promises.**

"For He Himself has said, 'I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,' so that we confidently say, 'The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What will man do to me?'"

The first quote is not found in this exact form in the Old Testament, but there are many similar quotes (Dt. 31:6, 8; Jos 1:5; 1Chr 28:20; Isa. 41:10, 11, 12, 13). Perhaps the author was lumping them together in summary form. The second quote is from Psalm 118:6-[note](#). These verses could easily be expanded into another sermon, but note briefly:

#### **A. Contentment comes through building your life on God Himself, not on something you want Him to give you.**

If you are "using" God to give you what you want, you will never be content, because things can never satisfy our hearts. You get what you thought would make you happy, but the glitter quickly wears off, and you go searching for something else. Only God can satisfy our hearts. Israel in the wilderness craved intensely for meat. God sent them meat, but with it they got leanness of soul (Ps. 106:15-[note](#), NASB, margin). Rachel told Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die" (Ge 30:1). God gave her children, but she did die at the birth of the second son.

By way of contrast, in Psalm 73, the psalmist was envious of the prosperity of the wicked until he considered things in light of eternity. He realized that God would judge the wicked, but that he would go to heaven. Then he exclaimed (Ps 73:25-[note](#), Ps 73:26-[note](#)),

Whom have I in heaven, but You? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

Yes! Build your life on God Him-self and your soul will be satisfied. David was in a barren desert, with enemies seeking his life. But because he sought God, he wrote,

My soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth offers praises with joyful lips. (Ps. 63:5-[note](#)).

#### **B. Contentment comes through building your life on God's certain promises.**

**“He Himself has promised!”** These promises are not the words of fickle men, who may mean well, but who often fail. These are the promises of the living God, Who spoke the universe into existence, Who never fails! The author mentions two promises:

**(1) Build your life on God’s promise never to desert or forsake you.**

Our English translations do not bring out the Greek, which has five negatives for emphasis. Perhaps the best English rendering is the hymn, “How Firm a Foundation”:

The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,  
I will not, I will not, desert to his foes;  
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,  
I’ll never, no never, no never forsake!

God hammers home the assurance that there are no circumstances, ever or anywhere, in which He abandons His children. Even when His saints go through horrible persecution or tortuous deaths, He is there with them and uses the trial to take them to be with Him in heaven for all eternity. The reality of that comforting truth enables us to be content in all circumstances. Our money, our health, or our loved ones may all be taken, but God Himself re-mains! Having God is all that we need for contentment!

**(2) Build your life on God’s promise to be your helper.**

The Hebrews were facing persecution, which is scary. But the author quotes Psalm 118:6 to make the point, if God is your helper, what can man do to you? In fear, you may say, “Man can take all my earthly possessions! Man can torture me or kill me or my family!” True, but no one can take the Lord or His riches in heaven from you, and that’s what matters. As Martin Luther put it (“A Mighty Fortress is Our God”),

The body they may kill:  
God’s truth abideth still.  
His kingdom is forever.

**Conclusion:**

Henry Kissinger observed,

“To Americans usually tragedy is wanting something very badly and not getting it. Many people have had to learn in their private lives, and nations have had to learn in their historical experience, that perhaps the worst form of tragedy is wanting something badly, getting it, and finding it empty” (cited by Swenson, p. 196).

So, where do you begin to cultivate contentment that will never

disappoint? You have to start in the right place. A. W. Tozer had it right when he said,

The man who has God for his treasure has all things in One ( [Online Book - AW Tozer - The Pursuit of God - Introduction](#) ).

A Puritan sat down to his meal and found that he had only a little bread and some water. His response was to exclaim, “What? All this and Jesus Christ, too!”

George Muller used to say that the first business of every day is to be truly at rest and happy in God (Pierson, pp. 257, 315). Start there! And make sure to spend some time each day pulling the weeds of greed.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. How can a believer know when “enough is enough” with regard to our level of affluence?
2. Should Christians have investments, savings and retirement accounts? If so, how do we know how much?
3. How can a Christian determine whether to take a job promotion that requires a move and more of his time?
4. Where is the line between seeking God for something you want Him to give you, and seeking God for Himself? ([Hebrews 13:5-6 Cultivating Contentment - See Archive of all of his sermons which function like a verse by verse commentary - highly recommended](#))

Jesus shares your worries and cares  
You'll never be left all alone,  
For He stands beside you to comfort and guide you,  
He always looks out for His own.  
—Brandt

**If you know Jesus,  
you'll never walk alone.**

**FOR HE HIMSELF HAS SAID I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU: autos gar eireken (3SRAI) ou me se ano oud ou me se egkatalipo (1SAAS):**

- Genesis 28:15; Deuteronomy 31:6,8; Joshua 1:5; 1Samuel 12:22; 1Chronicles 28:20; Psalms 37:25-[note](#), Ps 37:28-[note](#); Isaiah 41:10,17
- [Hebrews 13 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Hebrews 13:5-6 Cultivating Contentment](#) - Steven Cole
- [Hebrews 13:5-6 The Principles of Contentment](#) - John MacArthur

It is notable that there are 5 separate Greek words (ou me... oud ou me) that convey a negative sense. God wants to make it very clear that this is an irrefutable, eternal promise to all of His children. Amen!

**For (gar)** is always important to identify because it often introduces an explanation (see **term of explanation**). In the present context it introduces the reason why the child of God can and should obey the preceding admonitions.

**Spurgeon** - "**He has said**" is not only useful to chase away doubts, fears, difficulties, and devils, but it also yields nourishment to all our graces. Here you have nourishment for that which is good and poison for that which is evil. Search, then, the Scriptures, for so shall you grow healthy, strong, and vigorous in the divine life. But when did God originally say this? Well, you cannot find the exact words in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, but He did say the same in effect to Jacob at Bethel (Gen 28:15), and to Joshua before he went to the invasion of Canaan (Deut 31:8); David said it in the Lord's name to Solomon (1 Chr 28:20), and Isaiah said the same to the whole people of God (Isa 41:10). Whatever God says to one saint He says, virtually, to all saints who have like faith. This renders the Bible such a rich storehouse of comfort to us. No Scripture is of private interpretation, but all Scripture is given for our personal appropriation. No promise is hedged about as the exclusive property of the one man who received it. If the Lord gave a promise to Jacob, it was not meant to be restricted to Jacob, but to belong to all those who, like Jacob, can wrestle in prayer; and if God spoke, as He did, a promise to Joshua, it was not intended to be for Joshua only, but for all who were in similar circumstances to his. All Scripture promises have a message to all believers; and if you believe in Jesus, what God has said to other believers of old He says this day to you.....You have a grand reserve, therefore. What you have in possession is only a little spending money to use on the road to heaven, but "he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." You may confidently fall back upon the providence of God in all times of straitness and need.....These words are remarkably forcible in the original. You probably have heard that in the Greek there are no less than five negatives. We cannot well translate them into English except in such language as that of the verse we were singing just now:

The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,  
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;  
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,  
I'll never, no never, no never forsake.

**Has said** - Mark it down that the phrase "has said" is intensive and adds emphasis to the fact that the following promise was spoken by the Lord Himself! Furthermore, the verb **said** is in the **perfect tense** which means that God's statement has been made at some point in time in the past and has not been retracted or reversed but is still in effect. His Word is a faithful (trustworthy) Word (Titus 1:9-note).

I like **Wuest's** rendering "For He himself has said, and the statement is on record, I will not, I will not cease to sustain and uphold you." ([Hebrews - Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament](#))

The context of Dt 31:6,8 (cp Jos 1:5) is a promise by the Lord to all Israel first & then specifically to Joshua as he prepared to lead the Israelites across the Jordan and into the promised land (of "rest" Jos 1:13). The writer exhorts his Jewish readers with this well-known OT promise, the promise of God's presence going with before them and with them. Jesus has made the same promise for us to claim as well (Mt 28:20). And He has also entered in as a Forerunner for us into the very presence of God, our Source of eternal Rest (Heb 6:19,20-note).

IF you really believe this promise, if you believe it is true, and your heart is satisfied with the God Who promises to be there for you and help you, THEN you will not crave money, you will keep your marriage vows, you care for prisoners, welcome strangers and love each other.

Faith in the promises of God is the power to live a radical, normal Christian life.

**Never** - This is a **double negative** - Never, ever is the idea. He could not state this point any stronger! In the Greek, the promise is very emphatic

I will never, never, never leave thee.

A friend is he who always knows  
When the cold wind of trouble blows,  
Who comes in dark and stormy night  
With friendship's glowing lamp alight.  
—Mason

**A true friend stays true to the end.  
Jesus is our truest Friend to the end.  
(Mt 28:20)**

**Desert** (447) (**aniemi**) has a range of meanings (see below) including to send back, to relax, to loosen, not to uphold, to let sink but in this verse in Hebrews refers to the fact that God will not abandon us. He is not going to leave us, fail to uphold us or let us sink!

**Aniemi** is used in [Acts 16:26; 27:40] meaning to loosen and in [Eph 6:9- note] meaning to give up or forbear. Aniemi is used somewhat in this last sense here in Hebrews, so that one might translate this phrase -- "I will in no way let you go." "I will not relax my hold on you." This is God's good medicine for our anxious doubting souls (Mt 6:25-note, Mt 6:30-note, Mt 6:32-note) This promise is of His presence the Old Testament promise he quotes one which assures His power! This Truth should be cause for contentment regardless of our circumstances!

Play **Matt Redman's** song "[You Never Let Go](#)"

**Related Resource:**

- [Will the Holy Spirit ever leave a believer?](#)

**Forsake** (1459) (**egkataleipo** from **en** = in + **kataleipo** = forsake, desert <> **kata** = intensifies or strengthens the next word + **leipo** = leave behind, idea of forsaking) means to abandon, desert, or leave in straits. It speaks of **forsaking** someone in a state of defeat or helplessness, even in midst of hostile circumstances. Paul uses this verb to describe the way Demas left him in a lurch, utterly forsaking him, letting him down and bring disappointment to the great apostle who sat in a prison cell!

**Wuest** writes that **forsake** "is a compound of three Greek words, **eg** meaning "in," **kata** meaning "down," and **leipo** meaning "to leave." **Leipo** has the idea of forsaking one, **kata** suggests rejection, defeat, helplessness, and **eg** refers to some place or circumstance in which a person may find himself helpless, forsaken. The meaning of the word is that of forsaking someone in a state of defeat or helplessness in the midst of hostile circumstances. The word in its totality means "to abandon, desert, leave in straits, leave helpless, leave destitute, leave in the lurch, let one down." There are three negatives before this word, making the promise one of triple assurance. It is, "I will not, I will not, I will not let thee down, leave thee in the lurch, leave thee destitute, leave thee in straits and helpless, abandon thee." All of which means that our God will come to our rescue when we find ourselves in difficult circumstances. ([Hebrews - Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament](#)) (Amen! Praise be to His Holy Name!)

**Spurgeon** - It would hardly be possible in English to give the full weight of the Greek. We might render it, "He himself has said, I will never, never desert you, and I will never, never, never abandon you." Though that would be not a literal, but rather a free rendering, yet, since there are five negatives in the Greek, we do not know how to give their force in any other way. Two negatives nullify each other in our language. In the Greek, they intensify the meaning following one after another, as I suppose David's five stones out of the brook would have done if the first had not been enough to make the giant reel. It means that in no one single instance will the Lord leave you, nor in any one particular will He leave you, nor for any reason will He leave you. If you have cast yourself upon His infinite power and grace, He will carry you to the end. Not only will He not desert you altogether, but He will not leave you even for a little while. He may seem for a small moment to hide His face from you, but He will still love you and still supply your needs.

**Egkataleipo** - 10 uses in NT - Matt. 27:46; Mk. 15:34; Acts 2:27, 31; Rom. 9:29; 2 Co. 4:9; 2 Tim. 4:10, 16; Heb. 10:25; 13:5

**Poole** writes that this verb speaks of "a desertion, as leaves destitute in deep trouble or distress, when they should be helping. (Matthew Poole's Commentary)

The promise to never leave was made to Joshua when he succeeded Moses : [Dt 1:7-8, Jos 1:5,9] and is fulfilled in Jesus [Mt 28:20, Acts 18:9, 10 1Ch 28:20]

The two quotations, one from Dt 31:6 and the other from Ps 118:6, reveal that the answer to any kind of fear, including the fear of poverty, is found in the commitment of God to ever be with us. There are many warnings in Scripture against loving money. Jesus said it was impossible to serve both God and money, and Paul had written young Timothy in 1Ti



6:9.

Though credit cards were unknown in the first century, they often constitute a trap today that results in financial ruin and destruction. The point of danger is the love of money which cancels out the sense of God's love and promised supply, and launches the believer into worldly schemes for financial security that belie all trust in God. This is not to set aside the recognition that God can and often does supply methods of financial support using banks, insurance, securities and other means. But all these must be seen as coming from his hand. It is always spiritually dangerous to grow financially discontent. Remember Paul's words in 1Ti 6:10.

**Remember** -- When it's just you and God, that's enough.

When we are weak and in despair,  
Our mighty God is near;  
He'll give us strength and joy and hope,  
And calm our inner fear.  
—Sper

**With God behind you and His arms beneath you,  
you can face whatever is before you.**

**C. H. Spurgeon** said "I've been in a lot of testimony meetings, and I've heard a lot of people share how they've sinned, and I've had people come to me and make confession of sin. But in all my life I've never had one person confess the sin of covetousness to me.

**Spurgeon** adds that "It is not possible to satisfy the greedy. If God gave them one whole world to themselves they would cry for another; and if it were possible for them to possess heaven as they now are, they would feel themselves in hell, because others were in heaven too, for their greed is such that they must have everything or else they have nothing.

**Spurgeon** - Let your conversation be without that covetousness that shows itself in envy. If the Lord has given you one talent, use it, but do not waste your time in finding fault with him who has five talents. If your Master makes you a woodcutter, throw your strength into your felling and cleaving. Do not throw the axe at your fellow servant. If He makes you a drawer of water, do not empty your buckets on your neighbor, but do your own service well, and bring what you have done and lay it at your Master's feet. This will be thankworthy; this will be Christlike. You will then be obeying the injunction, "Your lifestyle must be free from the love of money" (Heb 13:5).

And covetousness may show itself in another way, namely, by perpetually craving and desiring that which we do not have. The old moralists used to say that the man who wanted to be truly rich would be better off curtailing his appetites than increasing his fortune. Some men seem as if they can never fix their thoughts on what they have, but they are always in the other tense and mood, thinking of what they could, would, or should have. Some years ago they told us a little more would content them, and a great deal

more has been added to their stores, but still they want a little more now. Let your conversation be without covetousness in that respect, and be content with such things as you have.

In many, this anxiety for acquisition betrays itself in fretful fears about the future, and I must in all honesty grant that this form of the vice sometimes has the appearance of being the most excusable of the whole. "What shall I do," we are apt to say, "in case I should be laid off, and a precarious income should suddenly come to an end? It is not for myself alone. It is for my wife and numerous family that I am chiefly concerned—how could they be provided for?" Many a man lies awake at night desiring to increase his income, not because he is ambitious to be rich, but because he is haunted with the fear of being poor. Gifted, perhaps, for the present with competency, he is still scared with dire forebodings—"What will become of my family if I die?" or "Should such and such source of income be dried up, and it is very precarious, what then will become of my household? What then?" Many are not content with such things as they have because the dread of a distant season of trial is constantly harassing them. They cannot be happy in the present sunshine because perhaps a storm is brewing out of sight. They cannot lie down in peace because they want to lay up against a rainy day. For them, their table is bountifully spread in vain unless they have a store in hand against every contingency that may happen.

Do you notice how precious is that promise that provides for all possible casualties that may befall you? "He himself has said, 'I will never desert you, and I will never abandon you' " (Heb 13:5). ([1440. A Vile Weed And A Fair Flower - Answers in Genesis](#))

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**WHO HOLDS THE ROPE?** Some years ago I read an account that went something like this:

A group of scientists and botanists were exploring remote regions of the Alps in search of new species of flowers. One day they noticed through binoculars a flower of such rarity and beauty that its value to science was incalculable. But it lay deep in a ravine with cliffs on both sides. To get the flower someone had to be lowered over the cliff on a rope.

A curious young boy was watching nearby, and the scientists told him they would pay him well if he would agree to be lowered over the cliff to retrieve the flower below.

The boy took one long look down the steep, dizzy depths and said, "I'll be back in a minute." A short time later he returned, followed by a gray-haired man. Approaching the botanist, the boy said, "I'll go over that cliff and get that flower for you if this man holds the rope. He's my dad."

Oh, that God might give us the faith of that boy! Have you learned to trust the Lord like that, my friend? If anyone else holds the rope, I dare not go. But since Jesus is holding me fast, I can never doubt. Are you willing to say, "If my Father holds the rope, I shall not fear"?— by M. R. De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

He holds my hand, this wonderful Savior,

And He is mine;  
So why should I fear when I know He's so near,  
And I know that His hand holds mine?  
—Smith © 1941 Singspiration, Inc.

**Fear fades  
when we trust our Father.**

---

**FOR THE SAKE OF HIS NAME** - The ancient Israelites gathered at Gilgal for the coronation of Saul as their first king (1 Sam. 11:15). The Lord was not pleased that His people had asked for a king, yet on this occasion Samuel uttered these words: “The Lord will not forsake His people, for His great name’s sake, because it has pleased the Lord to make you His people” (12:22).

We too are God’s “own special people” if we have trusted Jesus as Savior (1 Peter 2:9). He will not forsake us even though He knows we will fail Him. He knows what we are like—sinful, weak, and frail. He knew it before He called us and drew us to Himself. The certainty of our salvation rests not in ourselves but on the character of God (1 John 5:20). He will keep us to the end.

This does not give us an excuse to continue in sin. Paul said, “Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?” (Rom. 6:2). Our choices do reflect on God’s reputation, our witness in the world, and our fellowship with Him. But God will never reject His people, those who are truly His. The Lord cannot and will not forsake His own (Heb. 13:5).

We can rest assured. What God saves, He keeps—for the sake of His great name!— by David H. Roper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

“Able to keep!” how sure is the word!  
He is my Keeper, Savior, and Lord.  
“Never shall perish,” one of His sheep,  
Glory to God! He is able to keep.  
—Anon.

**Lives rooted in God’s unchanging grace  
can never be uprooted.**

---

**FOR THE BIRDS** - The bird feeder attached to my office window is just beyond the reach of the squirrels. But one squirrel has made it his mission to get the seeds meant for the birds. Having seen his tiny neighbors nibbling noisily from the abundant supply, the squirrel is fixated on enjoying the same pleasure. He has tried coming at the feeder from every direction but without success. He clawed his way up the wooden window casing to

within inches of the feeder but slid down the slippery glass. He climbed the thin branches of the forsythia bush. Then he reached so far that he fell to the ground.

The squirrel's tireless attempts to get what isn't meant to be his calls to mind a man and woman who reached for food that wasn't meant to be theirs. They too suffered a fall—a fall so severe that it hurt the whole human race. Because they were disobedient and helped themselves to food that God told them not to eat, He put them where they could no longer reach it. As a result of their disobedience, they and their descendants must now work hard to get what He originally had given as a gift—food (see Ge 2:1-3:14, 3:15).

May our desire to have what God has kept from us not keep us from enjoying what He has given to us (Heb. 13:5). — by Julie Ackerman Link ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

### **Thinking It Through**

What (or who) am I looking to for happiness?  
Is this wise? Or do I need to make some changes?  
How may I be content? (Heb. 13:5).

Godliness with contentment is great gain. —1 Timothy 6:6

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**FOR THIS I HAVE JESUS** - In an evangelistic meeting in Ireland, the speaker was explaining what it means to abide in Christ and to trust Him completely in every trial. Concluding his message, he repeated several times, "It means that in every circumstance you can keep on saying, 'For this I have Jesus.' "

The meeting was then opened for testimonies. One young woman said, "Just a few minutes ago I was handed this telegram. It reads, 'Mother is very ill; take train home immediately.' When I saw those words, I knew that tonight's message was meant just for me. My heart looked up and said, 'For this I have Jesus.' Instantly a peace and strength flooded my soul."

Three or four weeks later the evangelist received a letter from this woman. It read, "Thank you again for the message you gave that day. Life has become an uninterrupted psalm of victory, for I have come to realize that no matter what life brings, for this I have Jesus."

That believer in Christ had found in her Savior the One who would be with her "through fire and through water," and who would bring her "out to rich fulfillment" (Ps. 66:12).

If you are enduring a great trial of affliction, remember—for this you have Jesus! — by Henry G. Bosch ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

I've found a refuge from life's care in Jesus,  
I am hiding in His love divine;

He fully understands my soul's deep longing,  
And He whispers softly, "Thou art Mine."  
—Christiansen

**If every circumstance finds us abiding in Christ,  
we will find Christ abiding with us in every circumstance.**

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**WHERE WAS GOD?** - Was God sadistically absent? That's what Robert McClory, professor emeritus of journalism at the Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, asked after Hurricane Katrina devastated the New Orleans area of the US.

We may want to try to exonerate the Almighty for permitting disasters that rip apart vulnerable communities. But is God absent in such situations? No, McClory insists. Talking about the Katrina tragedy, he said that God was invisibly present "with the suffering and the dying. He was in the individuals, communities, churches, and schools that organized aid for the victims and took evacuees into their cities and homes. He was with the hundreds of thousands who showed compassion by prayer and financial assistance."

So it is in our own lives when a heartbreaking tragedy occurs, such as the death of someone we love. We have no completely satisfactory answer to life's painful problems. We do know, however, that the Lord is present with us, for He said He would never leave us (Heb. 13:5). Jesus' name "Immanuel" literally means "God with us" (Matt. 1:23).

Even though suffering baffles our minds, we can trust God to be near and to work out His purposes.— by Vernon C. Grounds ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

God's unseen presence comforts me,  
I know He's always near;  
And when life's storms besiege our soul,  
He says, "My child, I'm here."  
—D. De Haan

**The storms of our life prove the strength of our Anchor.**

---

**YOU'RE NOT ALONE** - If you're in a situation where you feel that you're the only one standing true to God, take heart! There's encouragement in the story of Elijah.

The prophet had experienced the Lord's protection and miraculous provision, and he had just won a great victory over those who had led God's people astray (1 Ki. 17-18). But then we find Elijah running for his life and sinking into despair, convinced that he was the only one of God's prophets who hadn't been destroyed by the enemy (1 Ki. 19). After having exhibited great courage, he suddenly was overcome with fear.

We may have a similar reaction. It may occur in the early stages of an unknown venture or after a great success. Suddenly we feel isolated, vulnerable, alone, afraid.

God came to Elijah in his darkest moment and gave the fearful prophet a word of encouragement. The Lord told him, "I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal" (1 Ki. 19:18).

Seven thousand! God has His people everywhere. In your job, neighborhood, dormitory, or barracks, you may feel that you're the only one standing for Christ. Take courage! Other believers are in the same situation. And most important, God will not leave you. You are not alone.— by David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Though all around me is darkness  
And earthly joys are flown,  
My Savior whispers His promise—  
Never to leave me alone.  
—Anon.

### **When we have nothing left but God, God is enough.**

---

**NEVER ALONE** - Robinson Crusoe, the chief character in a novel by Daniel Defoe, was shipwrecked and stranded on an uninhabited island. Life was hard, but he found hope and comfort when he turned to the Word of God.

Crusoe said, "One morning, being very sad, I opened the Bible upon these words, 'I will never, never leave thee, nor forsake thee.' Immediately it occurred that these words were to me; why else should they be directed in such a manner, just at the moment when I was mourning over my condition, as one forsaken of God and man?

"'Well then,' said I, 'if God does not forsake me, ... what matters it, though the world should all forsake me ... ?' From this moment I began to conclude in my mind that it was possible for me to be more happy in this forsaken, solitary condition than it was probable that I should ever have been in any other state in the world; and with this thought I was going to give thanks to God for bringing me to this place."

Have you been forsaken by a friend, a child, a spouse? God has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5). So you too can say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?" (He 13:6).— by David H. Roper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

When all around me is darkness  
And earthly joys have flown,  
My Savior whispers His promise

Never to leave me alone.

—Anon.

---

**Fear will leave us when we remember that God is always with us.**

---

**NEVER ALONE** - Have you ever been alone—really alone?

Many people can answer yes because they feel that way every day. I'm not referring to people who live in a remote cabin on a mountaintop far from civilization. I'm talking about those who feel alone in a crowded mall, or in a church full of people.

I'm referring to people who simply cannot find anyone to connect with. Perhaps they are new to a community. Maybe they have lost a spouse. It could be that they simply feel alone because they think of themselves as different, unusual, and left out of normal communication with others.

Have you ever been alone, really alone? If so, there's good news. If you have invited Christ into your life as Savior and Lord, you're never alone. You have His constant presence. Here is His promise: "I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). And from God the Father: "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5). Recognize with the psalmist that there's no place you can go where God is not with you (Psalm 139:7).

Sure, we all need flesh-and-blood companions, but let's not overlook the reality of the Lord's presence. We can depend on it. With Him by our side, we're never alone. — by Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

On life's pathway I am never lonely,  
My Lord is with me, my Lord divine;  
Ever present guide I trust Him only,  
No longer lonely, for He is mine.

—Harkness (c) Renewal 1950 Broadman Press

**God's presence with us  
is one of His presents to us.**

---

**PATIENCE IN PRISON** - Have you ever noticed that other people's forgetfulness can try your patience? As a college professor, I find my patience stretched when a student forgets to do an assignment that's clearly spelled out in the syllabus.

In the Old Testament story of Joseph, we see a far worse example of forgetfulness—and we can only imagine how he struggled to be patient as a result.

While in prison, Joseph interpreted a dream of the king's butler, which led to the man's release. Joseph told him, "Remember me when it is well with you, and please show kindness to me; make mention of me to Pharaoh, and get me out of this house" (Gen. 40:14). It would seem that after Joseph had helped the butler gain freedom, remembering him would have been high on his "to do" list. But it was 2 years before the butler spoke to Pharaoh about Joseph (41:9). Finally, Joseph was freed.

Imagine the impatience Joseph felt as he waited each day in that dungeon (Ge 40:15)—perhaps thinking his only chance at freedom had passed. Yet Joseph had a resource: He had God's presence (Ge 39:21), as do we (Heb. 13:5). When you're feeling impatient, lean on the God who is always with you. He'll turn your impatience into patient trust. — by Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Tune your anxious heart to patience,  
Walk by faith where sight is dim;  
Loving God, be calm and trustful  
And leave everything to Him.  
—Chambers

**Patience means awaiting God's time  
without doubting God's love.**

---

**A LITTLE CONCERN** - I know I'm not supposed to worry, but I'm a little concerned about something. Perhaps it's because of a new situation in our family. As I look around, I can't help but have a bit of anxiety. You see, my wife and I recently found out that we were going to be grandparents. This led me to think about the kind of world our grandchild will grow up in.

When he or she graduates from high school, it will be 2024. Will college cost \$100,000 a year by then? If there's any oil left, will gas cost \$25 a gallon? Will morals and ethics be outmoded? And will the church still be making an impact?

The future can be a scary place. The unknown can be overwhelming, especially when the known has so many struggles. That's why we need to trust in what God has promised.

No matter what situation our grandchildren will face, they can depend on God's promise of help—regardless of what trouble the world will be in. God said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Heb. 13:5). And Jesus said, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:20).

Those are great promises to depend on when we start to worry about the future, whether it's ours or the next generation's. — by Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))



Concern for future cares and problems  
Will only bring us pain and sorrow;  
The Lord has told us not to worry  
About the troubles of tomorrow.  
—Sper

**We may not know what the future holds,  
but we can trust the One who holds the future.**

---

**The King & the Contented Man:** A story received from ancient times tells of a king who was suffering from a certain malady and was advised by his wise men that he would be cured if the shirt of a contented man were brought to him to wear. The search began for a contented man, but none could be found. So emissaries were sent to the edge of the realm, and after a long search a man was found who was truly content. But he had no shirt! The consensus of enduring wisdom is that contentment comes from a Source other than things or possessions.

The soul that on Jesus hath lean'd for repose,  
I will not, I will not, desert to his foes;  
That soul, tho' all hell should endeavour to shake,  
I will never, no never, no never forsake!

---

**SOULS AND WALLETS** - The book of Hebrews strikes a strange note for men and women living with the values of the 21st century. "Let your conduct be without covetousness," the writer urged, and "be content with such things as you have" (Heb 13:5). He wasn't saying that having money is a sin, but it can be a problem. Our world has bought into the myth that riches and contentment go together, that they're almost the same thing. Yet, many wealthy people who boast large bank accounts are not content. They always want more, and they live in dread that they will lose what they have.

"Be content with such things as you have." Well, what do you have? Do you immediately think of what's in your savings account or stock portfolio? You are looking in the wrong place. The writer of Hebrews said that if you live with faith in the Lord of eternity, you have Him. He has promised, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Heb 13:5). You have Him, so you can say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?" (Heb 13:6).

If you have everything else but the Lord, you don't have much at all. If you have the Lord's presence and little else, you can be content. Better to have a satisfied soul than a thick wallet. — by Haddon W. Robinson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

O Lord, help us to be content  
With all that we possess,

And may we show our gratitude  
With heartfelt thankfulness.  
—Sper

### **Contentment is priceless.**

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**CONTENTED** - Early one dreary, rainy morning I sat in my study and looked out the window. I watched a fat robin pull three worms from the grass, swallow them, and then fly up to the telephone wire. There, just 10 feet from me, he began to sing. For a half-hour I sat and enjoyed the robin's rendition of "Praise the Lord!"

The robin did not complain about the color or size of the worms, but he was satisfied with what he found. He was content. He was delighted with what the heavenly Father had provided.

A young girl whose father was a chronic grumbler said to her mother, "I know what everybody in this family likes. Johnny likes hamburgers, Janie likes ice cream, Willie likes bananas, and Mommy likes chicken." The father, irked because he had not been included in the list, asked, "What about me? What do I like?" The innocent little one replied, "You like everything we haven't got."

Paul could say, "I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content" (Phil. 4:11). In Hebrews 13:5 we read, "Be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'" That's enough to satisfy anyone!— by M.R. De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

I would be quiet, Lord, and rest content,  
By grace I would not pine, nor would I fret;  
With You to guide and care, my joy be this:  
Not one small need of mine will You forget!  
—HGB

### **Thankfulness is the soil in which joy thrives.**

---

**GOD'S ANSWER TO LONELINESS** - Most of us have experienced loneliness in some form or another. I remember the deep sense of aloneness that swept over me during my first day in the military when I was exposed to almost constant cursing and foul language.

People with physical disabilities have said that their greatest pain is loneliness. It is also felt by parents who have been neglected by their children, by husbands or wives who have lost their mate, and by people from a minority group who have been excluded from social activities.

If we want to be followers of our Savior, we should be reaching out to the lonely all around

us. But we can't be with them all the time, nor can we fully know their pain. Our presence may help, but we are never enough. Only God can meet the needs of the lonely. And here is the good news. In Jesus He has revealed Himself as "Immanuel," which means, "God with us."

One day G. Campbell Morgan visited an elderly woman who lived alone. Before leaving, he read, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). "A great promise," he said. With a twinkle in her eye she retorted, "Dr. Morgan, that's not a promise. It's reality!" For her, Immanuel was the ultimate cure for loneliness. — by Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Though all around me is darkness  
And earthly joys have flown,  
My Savior whispers His promise—  
Never to leave me alone.  
—Anon.

**God said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." —Hebrews 13:5**

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**GOD'S ASTONISHING PROMISE** - The writer to the Hebrews quotes God as saying to His people, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5). How does that strike you? Is it just some pleasant piety that evokes a wide yawn?

This isn't like saying we have coffee with the President or a Supreme Court justice. Knowing people like that would say something significant about us. But to claim that God is with us every moment of every day, as close as our skin, in every turn of life, tear-stained or drenched in smiles—some would say that borders on insanity.

Yet throughout history men and women have staked their lives on that truth. Abraham, Moses, Rahab, Joshua, David, Esther, just to name a few. The promise was true for them, but how can we know it's true for us?

It is true for us because of Jesus. By His coming, He says, "I want to be with you; I gave Myself to you; I gave Myself for you. Do you really think I would ever forsake you?"

How do you respond to this astonishing promise? Say it's too good to be true. Say it sounds unbelievable. But don't ignore it. In your hurts, your fears, your struggles, your temptations, there is no more wonderful promise than this: "I will never leave you nor forsake you."— Haddon W. Robinson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Though all around is darkness,  
Earthly joys have flown;  
My Savior whispers His promise  
Never to leave me alone.

—Anon.

**No matter where you go,  
God goes with you.**

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## **F B Meyer - Our Daily Walk - OUR RESOURCES**

**SUCH THINGS as ye have, plus!** The Greek literally means that there is within us an undeveloped power only awaiting the call, and there will be enough. I may be speaking to people who wish that they had more money, or more brains, or more influence. They dream of the lives they would live, of the deeds they would do, if only they were better circumstanced. But God says No! You have present within the narrow confines of your own reach the qualities that the world is wanting. Use them, and be content with the things that you have. You have never explored the resources of your own soul.

**"Such things as ye have"**--Moses had only a rod, but a rod with God can open the Red Sea. David had only five pebbles, but these with God brought down Goliath. The woman had only a little pot of oil, but that pot of oil with God paid all her debts. The poor widow was scraping the bottom of the barrel, but with God the handful of meal kept her child, herself, and the prophet until the rain came. The boy had only five tiny loaves and two small fish, but with Jesus they were enough for five thousand men, beside women and children. Estimate what you have got, and then count God into the bargain! He never lets go your hand. He will never leave nor forsake those that trust in Him!

**Therefore be content!** The most glorious deeds that have blessed and enriched the world have not been done by wealthy men. Our Lord had none of this world's goods; the apostles had neither silver nor gold; Carey was only a poor cobbler; Bunyan a travelling tinker; Wesley left two silver spoons. It is not money, but human love and God that is needed. Therefore do not be covetous; do not hoard, but give! Be strong and content. With good courage say: "The Lord is my Helper; I will not fear"--for life or death, for sorrow or joy!

The soul that to Jesus has fled for repose,

He cannot, He will not, desert to its foes.

That soul, though all hell should endeavour to take,

He'll never, no never, no never forsake! AMEN.

**Hebrews 13:6 [so that we confidently say](#), "THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT WILL MAN DO TO ME ?" (NASB: Lockman)**

**Greek:** [hoste tharrountas](#) (PAPMPA) [hemas legein](#), (PAN) [Kurios emoi boethos](#), [\[kai\] ou phobethesomai](#); (1SFPI) [ti poiesei](#) (3SFAI) [moi](#)

[anthropos?](#)

**Amplified:** So we take comfort and are encouraged and confidently and boldly say, The Lord is my Helper; I will not be seized with alarm [I will not fear or dread or be terrified]. What can man do to me? ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**Barclay:** so that we can say with confidence: "The Lord is my helper: I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?" ([Westminster Press](#))

**NLT:** So we can say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me?" ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** We, therefore, can confidently say: 'The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?' ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** I will not, I will not, I will not let you down. So that, being of good courage, we are saying, The Lord is my helper. I will not fear. What shall man do to me?

**Young's Literal:** so that we do boldly say, 'The Lord is to me a helper, and I will not fear what man shall do to me.

**SO THAT WE CONFIDENTLY SAY THE LORD... MY HELPER: hoste tharrountas (PAPMPA) hemas legein (PAN) kurios emoi boethos:**

- He 4:16-note; He 10:19-note; Ephesians 3:12-note) (Genesis 15:1; Exodus 18:4; Deuteronomy 33:26,29; Ps 18:1,2-note; Ps 27:1-3,9-note; Ps 33:20-note; Ps 40:17-note; Psalms 54:4-note; Ps 63:7-note; Ps 94:17-note; Ps 115:9-11-note; Ps 118:7-9-note; Ps 124:8-note; Ps 146:3-note; Isaiah 41:10,14; Romans 8:31-note
- [Hebrews 13 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Hebrews 13:5-6 Cultivating Contentment](#) - Steven Cole
- [Hebrews 13:5-6 The Principles of Contentment](#) - John MacArthur

**So that** (hoste) is a **term of purpose or result** - the result is that based upon the truth that God will never leave or forsake us we can confidently make this statement. This truth gives us confidence and courage to proclaim what follows.

**Confidently** ([2292](#)) (**tharrheo** from **tharsos** = cheer, cheerful, courage - Ac 28:15) means to be of good cheer or to have confidence or certainty in a matter. In the present context the writer is saying we continually (present tense) being full of courage, can act boldly in speaking or claiming the OT promise that Jehovah is our Helper. **Are you confident of this wonderful truth beloved?**

**Tharreo** - 5 uses in the NT - 2Co. 5:6, 8; 7:16; 10:1, 2; Heb. 13:6

God has said he will never leave us nor forsake us. This should evoke the bold statement --

"The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"

**Say** - To whom do we **say** the following? Our confidence in God gives us the courage to say to people that He is our Helper. Don't read this too fast. Ponder the thought a moment -- that the Almighty One, the Living God, the infinite, transcendent, omnipotent, etc God, the very God of gods and Lord of lords is our personal Helper! **Do I really grasp the significance and practical import of this awesome truth?**

**Spurgeon** - This promise of the Lord is fitted to nerve us with courage, as well as to solace us with contentment. Chicken hearts and craven fears ill become the disciples of Christ. If God is our helper, why should we shrink or falter? Why should we droop or look dismayed? Why should we hold our peace or speak with bated breath? Are there any of you who are afraid to confess my Lord's name before men, to enlist in His service, to buckle on His armor, to avow yourselves His followers? Parley no longer, I ask you, with such ungracious fears.

The writer combines the Septuagint translations from 2 Psalms -- Ps 118:6 [Lxx: kurios emoi boethos ou phobethesomai (1SFPI) ti poiesei (3SFAI) moi anthropos] and Ps 56:11 [Lxx: ti poiesei (3SFAI) moi anthropos (what can man do to me)]

**Related Resource:** See study on **Jehovah Ezer: The LORD our Helper**

Genesis 15:1 After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; Your reward shall be very great."

Deuteronomy 33:26 "There is none like the God of Jeshurun (upright one" - a poetic or symbolic name for Israel describing her ideal character), Who rides the heavens to your help, And through the skies in His majesty.

Deuteronomy 33:29 "Blessed are you, O Israel; Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD, Who is the shield of your help, And the sword of your majesty! So your enemies shall cringe before you, And you shall tread upon their high places."

Psalms 18:1 For the choir director. A Psalm of David the servant of the Lord, who spoke to the Lord the words of this song in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul. And he said, "I Love Thee, O LORD, my strength." 2 The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

Psalms 27:9 Do not hide Thy face from me, Do not turn Thy servant away in anger; Thou hast been my **help**; Do not abandon me nor forsake me, O God of my salvation!

Psalms 33:20 Our soul waits for the LORD; He is our **help** and our shield.

Psalms 40:17 Since I am afflicted and needy, Let the Lord be mindful of

me; Thou art my **help** and my deliverer; Do not delay, O my God.

Psalm 54:4 Behold, God is my **helper**; The Lord is the sustainer of my soul.

Psalm 63:7 For Thou hast been my **help**, and in the shadow of Thy wings I sing for joy.

Psalm 94:17 If the LORD had not been my **help**, my soul would soon have dwelt in the abode of silence.

Psalm 115:9 O Israel, trust in the LORD; He is their **help** and their shield. 10 O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD; He is their **help** and their shield. 11 You who fear the LORD, trust in the LORD; He is their **help** and their shield (**Who are those who can call God "their help and their shield"?**).

**Spurgeon comments:** He is their help and their shield. He is the friend of his servants, both actively and passively, giving them both aid in labour and defence in danger. In the use of the pronoun "their," the Psalmist may have spoken to himself, in a sort of soliloquy: he had given the exhortation, "trust in Jehovah," and then he whispers to himself, "They may well do so, for he is at all times the strength and security of his servants."

He does aid and protect all those who worship him in filial fear, to whatever nation they may belong. No doubt these repeated exhortations were rendered necessary by the trying condition in which the children of Israel were found: the sneers of the adversary would assail all the people, they would most bitterly be felt by the priests and ministers, and those who were secret proselytes would groan in secret under the contempt forced upon their religion and their God. All this would be very staggering to faith, and therefore they were bidden again and again and again to trust in Jehovah.

**John Gill:** He is the help of his people; they are helpless in themselves, and vain is the help of man, for there is none in him; there is no help but in the Lord, and he is a present, seasonable, and sufficient help. Jehovah the Father has promised them help, and he is both able and faithful to make it good; he has laid help upon his Son for them; and has set up a throne of grace, where they may come for grace to help them in time of need. Christ has helped them out of the miserable estate they were fallen into by sin; he helps them on in their way to heaven, by his power and grace, and at last brings them thither. The Spirit of God helps them to the things of Christ; to many exceeding great and precious promises; and out of many difficulties, snares and temptations; and he helps them in prayer under all their infirmities, and makes

intercession for them, according to the will of God; and therefore they should trust in the Lord, Father, Son, and Spirit.

**Lord** (2962)(**kurios**) refers to master or the one who exercises absolute control and is the Greek word used to translate the Hebrew word Jehovah (in Ps 118:6).

**Helper** (998) (**boethos** is the noun form of the verb boetheo) describes one (Jehovah in context) who runs on hearing a cry to give assistance. Ponder this picture for a moment! Praise should be the natural outcome of meditation on this awesome truth!

**The Lord is my Helper** - There is no verb "is" in the Greek, so it's almost like its God's name = "**My Helper**"! (see **Jehovah Ezer: The LORD our Helper**) Awesome! Ps 19:14-[note](#) translates David's affirmation of "O LORD, my rock" in the Lxx with "kurie boethe mou" or literally "Lord my Helper", very similar to Heb 13:6.

Practically how would you come to know God as your Helper even as David had come to know Him in such an intimate way? We have to remember to cry out to Him for help in the midst of the testing circumstances (which we do because we trust Him and know He is faithful), when the waters are rising and all we can see is disaster and doom. As we learn to do this as a lifestyle, we will grow (like David did as he learned to depend on God while fleeing from Saul) in our experiential knowledge that God alone is our Rock, our Helper in times of temptation and like Paul we will come to know that Jesus is our ever present Friend Who sticks closer than a brother and Who will come to our cry for help. (see Paul's testimonies in Php 4:11,12-[note](#), Php 4:13-[note](#), 2Co 12:9-[note](#), 2Cor 12:10-[note](#), cp Jesus desire to come when we cry out for His help - Heb 2:18-[note](#)).

The writer is quoting from the Septuagint (LXX) translation of Ps 118:6-[note](#) a Messianic psalm (see below) which is therefore fulfilled in Jesus Christ the One Who sticks closer than a brother. Contented Christians are people with priorities, and material things are not high on their priority list. They have begun to more and more lay aside those things that weigh them down and which impede fruitful, focused ministry (cp He 12:1-[note](#) "encumbrances"; "20/20" spiritual vision in He 12:2-[note](#)).

Hebrew translation = NAS Psalm 118:7 **The LORD is for me** among those who help me; Therefore I shall look with satisfaction on those who hate me. 8 It is better to take refuge in the LORD Than to trust in man. 9 It is better to take refuge in the LORD Than to trust in princes.

Septuagint (LXX) translation = LXE Psalm 118:7 **The Lord is my helper**; and I shall see my desire upon mine enemies. 8 It is better to trust in the Lord than to trust in man. 9 It is better to hope in the Lord, than to hope in princes.

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**HELP** - This is the age of "How To" books. You can find nearly every kind of "How To" imaginable. In fact, a quick search of one online bookstore revealed 32,000 different "How To" titles!



But what happens when you can't find the "How To" you need most? What do you do when you want to know How To Get Your Children To Live Right, or How To Make Your Spouse Cherish You, or How To Survive The Death Of A Loved One, but you simply cannot find an answer?

When the "How To" books of life don't bring you what you are so desperately seeking, here's how to make it when "How To's" don't work.

\* If you are a believer in Christ, remember His promise never to leave you (Hebrews 13:5).

\* Realize the remarkable truth that the Holy Spirit is praying for you. Ro 8:26 says that the Spirit understands your difficulties when you cannot even express them, and He prays to the Father for you.

\* Turn to the Lord in the midst of your difficulty, for He is your refuge and strength. When trouble hits, He's there with you to calm your fears (Psalm 46:1, 2).

With help from God, you can get through even your toughest challenges. — by Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Got any rivers you think are uncrossable?  
Got any mountains you can't tunnel through?  
God specializes in things thought impossible—  
He does the things others cannot do.  
—Eliason Poem (August 20) by Oscar Eliason,  
(c) Renewal 1973 by Singspiration, Inc.

**Our troubles seem smaller  
when we ponder the greatness of God.**

**I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT SHALL MAN DO TO ME?: (kai) ou phobethesomai (1SFPI) ti poiesei (3SFAI) moi anthropos:**

- Ps 56:4,11,12-[note](#); Ps 118:6-[note](#); Daniel 3:16, 17, 18; Matthew 10:28; Luke 12:4,5, Isa 41:10
- [Hebrews 13 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Hebrews 13:5-6 Cultivating Contentment](#) - Steven Cole
- [Hebrews 13:5-6 The Principles of Contentment](#) - John MacArthur

Ps 56:4 In God, whose word I praise, In God I have put my trust; **I shall not be afraid. What can mere man do to me?**

**Spurgeon comments:** In God I will praise his word. Faith brings forth

praise. He who can trust will soon sing. God's promise, when fulfilled, is a noble subject for praise, and even before fulfilment it should be the theme of song. It is in or through God that we are able to praise. We praise as well as pray in the Spirit. Or we may read it -- in extolling the Lord one of the main points for thanksgiving is his revealed will in the Scriptures, and the fidelity with which he keeps his word of promise.

In God I have put my trust. Altogether and alone should we stay ourselves on God. What was a gracious resolve in the former verse, is here asserted as already done.

I will not fear what flesh can do unto me. **Faith** exercised, **fear** is banished, and **holy triumph** ensues, so that the soul asks, "What can flesh do unto me?" What indeed? He can do me no real injury; all his malice shall be overruled for my good. Man is flesh, flesh is grass -- **Lord, in thy name I defy its utmost wrath.** There were two verses of complaint (Ps 56:1,2-note), and here are two of confidence (Ps 56:3,4-note); it is well to weigh out a sufficient quantity of the sweet to counteract the sour.

Hebrew translation = NAS Psalm 56:11 In God I have put my trust, I shall not be afraid. **What can man do to me?**

Septuagint (LXX) translation = Psalm 56:11 I have hoped in God; I will not be afraid of **what man shall do to me.**

**Spurgeon comments:** In God have I put my trust. This and the former verse are evidently the chorus of the Psalm. We cannot be too careful of our faith, or see too sedulously that it is grounded on the Lord alone.

I will not be afraid what man can do unto me. Faith has banished fear. He views his foes in their most forcible character, calling them not flesh, but indicating them as man, yet he dreads them not; though the whole race were his enemies he would not be afraid now that his trust is stayed on God. He is not afraid of what they threaten to do, for much of that they cannot do; and even what is in their power, what they can do, he defies with holy daring. He speaks for the future, "I will not," for he is sure that the security of the present will suffice for days to come.

**Be afraid** (5399) (**phobeo** from **phobos** = fear source of our English "phobia") means to be in an apprehensive state that can range from mild uneasiness to stark terror as when one is frightened, terrified or alarmed. (Mt 10:31). **Phobeo** can be a fear of man (Lk 20:19, Mt 2:22, Mt 21:26, 46) as when Peter feared "the party of the circumcision" (Gal 2:12) which motivated him "to withdraw and hold himself aloof." Pilate experienced fear when he was about to sentence Jesus to death (Jn 19:8). Fear of people kept religious leaders from laying hands on Jesus (Luke 20:19) On the other hand Moses did not fear man (pharaoh - Heb 11:27) Believers were afraid of Paul after his Damascus Road experience, not realizing he had been born again (Lk 9:26).

**Wayne Detzler** on the root word **phobos** - In ancient Greek the word phobos came from the word **phobomai** meaning to flee, or to be startled. Thus phobos meant flight or terror, and was connected with fear of the unknown, fear of the future, and fear of authorities. It also took on the meaning of fear or reverence for God. This was particularly true in the teaching of Aristotle. (New Testament Words in Today's Language)

**John MacArthur** on **phobeo** - the most common use of it in the New Testament represents reverential awe, not cringing fright. It expresses the feeling of a person who is in the presence of someone infinitely superior... (**Commenting on phobos and phobeo**) In the synoptic gospels and Acts the term is never used to speak of anything other than the feeling in a person's heart when he is confronted with divine power, and it is declared to be a part of the Christian's attitude as he seeks to faithfully serve the Lord (Acts 9:31). Reverential awe of God is a part of the truly repentant life (2Cor. 7:10-11), the chaste life (1 Pet. 3:2), the holy life (2 Cor. 7:1), and the godly life (Phil. 2:12). Mutual ministry, love, and respect, as well as powerful evangelism and proper church discipline, are all grounded in reverential awe of the Lord (see 2 Cor. 5:11; Eph. 5:21; 1 Tim. 5:20). It is the substance out of which all right Christian worship, behavior, and service must come. (Matthew Commentary)

**Fear of God** takes two forms, a healthy, reverential awe of the creature before the Creator including the idea of fear of offending (Ro 11:20) or the terror and dread of the unregenerate sinner in the presence of the just and holy God (Lxx of Ge 3:10, cp Lk 12:5).

Puritan **Charles Bridges** defines **fear of God** - It is that affectionate reverence by which the child of God bends himself humbly and carefully to his Father's law. His wrath is so bitter, and His love so sweet; that hence springs an earnest desire to please Him, and—because of the danger of coming short from his own weakness and temptations—a holy watchfulness and fear, 'that he might not sin against Him.

**Webster's English** definitions of **to fear** (Etymology - Old English = "faer" = danger; faeran = frighten) - To experience an unpleasant feeling of distress, apprehension, alarm caused by impending danger, pain, etc. It is to have a painful agitation in the presence or anticipation of danger implying anxiety and usually loss of courage (e.g., "fear of the unknown") To fear is experience an unpleasant often strong emotion, painful emotion or passion excited by an expectation of evil, or the apprehension of impending danger.

**Webster's 1828** adds that " In Scripture, fear is used to express a filial or a slavish passion. In good men, the fear of God is a holy awe or reverence of God and His laws, which springs from a just view and real love of the divine character, leading the subjects of it to hate and shun every thing that can offend such (a holy being, and inclining them to aim at perfect obedience. This is **filial fear**. "I will put My fear in their hearts." (Jer. 32:40) **Slavish fear** is the effect or consequence of guilt; it is the painful apprehension of merited punishment. (Ro 8:15)."

**George Brooks** - The word "fear" (phobeo) means to reverence or stand in awe. It carries the idea of devotion, worship, and adoration. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. Fearing God includes trusting him at all times and in all circumstances. Fearing God is

trusting his wisdom and his works. God can be trusted because we as Christians know that he works all things for our good and his glory. Fearing God is a motivating factor in Christian living. Because of our reverence and respect for God, we want to please him. We do not want to do things that anger God when we reverence and respect him. (George Brooks Sermon Commentary)

**Stephen Renn** - Divine exhortations for people "not to fear" in the face of theophanic revelations include those in Mt 1:20; 28:5, 10; Mk 5:36; Lk 1:13; 2:10; Jn 6:20; Rev. 1:17. See also Mt 10:26 ff.; Jn 12:15; Heb. 11:23. General references to people "being afraid" include Mt 2:22; Lk 19:21; Jn 19:8; Acts 5:26; 2Co. 12:20; Gal. 2:12; 1Jn. 4:18. In particular, Mt 27:54; Mk 4:41; Lk 2: 9; 8:35; 9:34; Jn 6:19 record people's fear at the manifestation of signs and miracles. Lk 1:50; Acts 10:2, 22; Col. 3:22; 1Pe. 2:17; Rev. 14:7 describe the positive phenomenon of expressing "fear" towards God. In contrast, Lk 12:5 contains a warning "to fear" God, who is able to cast one into hell. See also Lk 23:40. An exhortation to "fear" the civil authorities for their power to wield the sword in judicial execution is noted in Ro 13: 4. The meaning "to respect" is indicated in the context of a wife's appropriate attitude to her husband in Eph. 5:33. (Expository Dictionary)

**Nelson's New Illustrated Dictionary on fear** - a feeling of reverence, awe, and respect, or an unpleasant emotion caused by a sense of danger. Fear may be directed toward God or humankind, and it may be either healthy or harmful. **A healthy fear** is reverence or respect. The Bible teaches that children are to respect their parents (Lev. 19:3), wives are to respect their husbands (Eph. 5:33), and slaves are to respect their masters (Eph. 6:5). The Scriptures also declare that "the fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge" (Pr. 1:7) as well as "the beginning of wisdom" (Pr. 9:10). **A harmful fear** is a sense of terror or dread. Believers are instructed not to fear human beings (Matt. 10:28; Phil. 1:28), because they cannot ultimately harm us. Wicked men, however, are constantly fearing other people, especially the righteous (Pr. 28:1; Matt. 14:5; Ro 13:3-4). Such fear causes them to act deceitfully in an attempt to hide their sins (2Sa 11; Matt. 28:4-15). On the other hand, the unbeliever has every reason to be panic-stricken at thoughts of God, for he stands condemned before Him (Mt. 10:28; Jn 3:18). And yet, this kind of fear of God does not often lead to repentance. It normally leads to a feeble attempt to hide from God (Ge 3:8,10; Rev. 6:15-17) or worse, to a denial of God's existence and His claim on a person's life (Ps. 14:1; Ro 1:18-28). (Youngblood, Ronald F.; Bruce, F. F.; Harrison, R. K.; Thomas Nelson Publishers)

See [below for all 85 uses](#) of phobeo.

In the Gospels **phobeo** is frequently a command from Jesus to not fear or to stop fearing. (Mt 10:28, 31)

The human response to supernatural phenomena is often fear (Mt 14:27 - phobos used in Mt 14:26, Mt 17:6 "heard this" = Mt 17:5, Mt 27:54, 28:5, Lk 2:9, Lk 8:35, Lk 1:13 - see context Lk 1:12 which uses phobos; cp phobos in Lk 7:16) but sometimes they were struck with awe (phobeo) (Mt 9:8).

In other contexts **phobeo** has the sense of to reverence, to show awe or to show respect,

and speaks especially of having reverential fear of God (Lk 1:50, 1Pe 2:17, see this sense of the noun phobos in Eph 5:21). This sense describes a wife having respect for her husband (Eph 5:33).

Romans 13:3-4 speaks of fear of authority as a motivation to not commit evil.

While fear can be a strong emotion with negative effect, Jesus describes fear as a powerful motive in Mt 10:28 and Lk 12:4-5. Similarly "fearing the Lord" is a positive motivation in Col 3:22.

To have fear is a desirable attitude in several other contexts - fear of God (Acts 10:2) In Acts 13:16, 26 we see a distinction between Jews and those who fear God, which presumably describe Gentile "God fearers" (cf the Gentile Cornelius in Acts 10:2, 22, 35).

**Fear of God** in Rev 14:7-[note](#) is associated with the eternal Gospel (Rev 14:6). In Rev 11:18 fear appears to be associated with believers described as "those who **fear** Your Name." Fear of God is a heart attitude of those who know Him in Rev 19:5. Sadly while unbelievers should be afraid of God's wrath and the judgment that awaits, "there is no fear (phobos) of God before their eyes" (Ro 3:18-note).

In 2 Cor 12:20 Paul says "I **am afraid**" expressing an intense, deep-seated anxiety specifically regarding his great concern for the situation at Corinth (cp similar meaning in 2Cor 11:3). As **John MacArthur** says "Nothing is more painful for the faithful pastor than unrepentant sin among his flock."

**Vine - phobeo** - in earlier Greek, "to put to flight", in the NT is **always in the Passive Voice**, with the meanings either (a) "to fear, be afraid," its most frequent use, e.g., Acts 23:10 or (b) "to show reverential fear" (1) of men, Mk 6:20; Eph 5:33-note (2) of God, e.g., Acts 10:2,22; 13:16,26; Col 3:22; 1Pe 2:17; Rev 14:7; 15:4; 19:5; (a) and (b) are combined in Lk 12:4,5 , where Christ warns His followers not to be afraid of men, but to "fear" God. ([Fear, Fearful, Fearfulness - Vine's Expository Dictionary of NT Words](#))

### **Related Resources:**

- [Fear - Trench's Synonyms of the New Testament](#)
- [Bridgeway Bible Dictionary Fear](#)
- [Baker Evangelical Dictionary Fear](#)
- [Easton's Bible Dictionary Fear of the Lord the](#)
- [Holman Bible Dictionary Fear](#)
- [Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible Fear](#)
- [Hastings' Dictionary of the NT Fear Fear](#)
- [Watson's Theological Dictionary Fear](#)
- [International Standard Bible Encyclopedia Fear](#)
- [McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia Fear of God](#)
- [The Jewish Encyclopedia Fear of God Fear of Man](#)
- [What does "perfect love casts out fear" mean?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about fear?](#)

- [How is the fear of the Lord the beginning of wisdom?](#)
- [What does it mean to have the fear of God?](#)
- [How can I overcome the fear of death? How can I stop being scared of dying?](#)
- [What does it mean to work out salvation with fear and trembling \(Philippians 2:12\)?](#)
- [Faith vs. fear - what does the Bible say?](#)
- [How can I overcome my fear of the end of days?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about having a phobia?](#)
- [How can a Christian overcome the fear of witnessing?](#)

It is worth noting that fear (in negative sense) is a response contrary to faith and we all need the Lord's grace to overcome this fear, recalling that overcomers are those who believe (1Jn 5:4-note, 1Jn 5:5-note).

### **See related discussion of Fear and How to Handle It**

**Fear God** (offer service with reverence and awe because God is a consuming fire) not men.

Isaiah 41:10 '**Do not fear**, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'

Isaiah 41:14 "**Do not fear**, you worm Jacob, you men of Israel; I will help you," declares the LORD, "and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel.

Romans 8:31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

Shadrach, et al are a perfect OT illustration of application of this truth...

Daniel 3:16 Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego (faced with certain death at least from a human perspective) answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter. 17 "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. 18 "But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."

This is the mind-set that will ride the waves no matter how high the water rises or how hard the wind blows—just as **Chrysostom** did when he was brought before the Roman emperor and was threatened with banishment: "Thou canst not banish me for this world is my father's house." "But I will slay thee," said the Emperor. "Nay, thou canst not," said the noble champion of the faith, "for my life is hid with Christ in God." "I will take away thy treasures." "Nay, but thou canst not for my treasure is in heaven and my heart is there." "But I will drive thee away from man and thou shalt have no friend left." "Nay, thou canst not, for I have a friend in heaven from whom thou canst not separate me. I defy thee; for

there is nothing that thou canst do to hurt me.”

**Spurgeon** - Do not let fifty places or five hundred people make you swerve from the course that faith dictates and duty demands. Appeal to God, and He will provide for you. Any temporary loss you may sustain will be much more than made up in the prosperity He awards you, or if not in that way, in the peace He gives you and the honor He confers on you in suffering for Christ’s sake.

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**TOMORROW'S TERRORS** - Peter Marshall, whose dynamic preaching attracted crowds of people, died suddenly on the morning of January 25, 1949, at the age of 46. In one of his sermons he had said: “When the clock strikes for me, I shall go, not one minute early, and not one minute late. Until then, there is nothing to fear. I know that the promises of God are true, for they have been fulfilled in my life time and time again. Jesus still teaches and guides and protects and heals and comforts, and still wins our complete trust and our love.”

Do you and I share that same fear-dispelling conviction? Can each of us, like David, say to our Lord, “My times are in Your hand”? (Psalm 31:15). Are we confident that God holds us in His almighty hands? Can we boldly say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?” (Hebrews 13:6).

True, we may have concern about the days ahead. As Scripture reminds us, we “do not know what will happen tomorrow” (James 4:14). But we do know that whatever happens He will always be with us (Hebrews 13:5). That knowledge can lighten any burden of worry about the future.

Some anxiety about the process of dying is normal. Yet, by the grace of God and by the comfort of His Spirit, we can face tomorrow’s terrors with courage. — by Vernon C. Grounds ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

I don't know about tomorrow,  
Nor what coming days will bring;  
But I know my Lord is with me,  
And His praise my heart will sing. —Fitzhugh

**Worry can do a lot of things to you;  
prayer can do a lot of things for you.**

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**HE'S THERE FOR ME** - Because I frequently interview Christian athletes for Sports Spectrum magazine, I notice common themes that run through their lives. One theme is the importance of parents in the lives of stars who find success in life as well as on the field.

Howard Cross, a football player for the New York Giants, typifies that response. “I spent most of my time with my dad. He was always there for me, taking care of me, pointing me

in the right direction.” And basketball player Avery Johnson, point guard for the San Antonio Spurs, says, “My parents were prime-time examples. They were always there for me.”

“Always there”—what a tribute those two words are for parents! The importance of “being there” is indisputable. Children need a shoulder to cry on, a hand to hold, a heart to share.

Let’s take it another step. Parents who demonstrate this “being there” attitude show us on a small scale what God does for us. He literally is always there! And He promises, “I will never leave you nor forsake you” (Heb 13:5).

There’s never a moment you can’t ask your heavenly Father for help. There’s not a trial you go through without His assistance. Once you’ve placed your faith in Christ, you can confidently say, “He’s always there for me!” — by Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Never a burden that He does not carry,  
Never a sorrow that He does not share;  
Whether the days may be sunny or dreary,  
Jesus is always there.  
—Lillenas

**You need not fear where you're going,  
because God is going with you.**

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**WHAT DO YOU FEAR** - One of Grimm’s fairy tales is about a rather dimwitted young man who didn’t understand what it meant to shudder in fear. People attempted to shock him by putting him in all sorts of terrifying situations—but to no avail. He finally did shudder, though not out of fear. He was asleep when someone poured a bucket of cold water and wiggling fish on top of him.

Something is wrong with us if we’re never afraid. Fear is the natural human reaction to any difficult or dangerous undertaking, and God doesn’t condemn it. Neither does He want us to be crippled by fear. Jesus’ words to His disciples on more than one occasion were, “Do not be afraid” (Luke 5:10; 12:4; John 6:20). In each case He used a verb tense that suggests continuance. In other words, He told them, “Don’t keep on fearing.”

We need not be overcome by our fear, nor should we ever say no to doing what we know God wants us to do merely because we are fearful. God can turn our fear into fortitude. We can trust God and “not be afraid” (Psalm 56:11).

Courage is not the absence of fear but the mastery of it. So let’s resist our fear and meet it with faith in our Lord, for He has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5).— by David H. Roper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI.](#)



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Do not fear the darkness that is gathering all around,  
For the Lord is with you, and in Him true peace is found;  
When you're facing trouble, or when tragedy seems near,  
Jesus is the only one to drive away your fear. —Hess

**We can face any fear when we know the Lord is near.**

**(See Related Resource Onsite - Fear, How to Handle It )**

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**LIFETIME GUARANTEE** - Three years ago I bought a suitcase with a lifetime guarantee. “We don’t care who breaks it,” the manufacturer said, “we’ll repair or replace it free—forever.” To its credit, the company repaired it twice, just as promised. But a few weeks ago I learned that the business had filed for bankruptcy and its future was in doubt. If the company goes under, so does the guarantee.

In a world where we can’t always depend on guarantees, there is one promise we can trust. Throughout Scripture we find the Lord’s pledge to be with His people. In Deuteronomy 31 we read Moses’ assuring words to Joshua: “The Lord ... will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed” (Dt 31:8).

This promise is repeated in the New Testament: “He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’ So we may boldly say: ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?’” (Hebrews 13:5, 6). The promise of God’s unfailing presence with us is the key to living with confidence and contentment.

No matter how many pledges are broken by people, God’s promises will last through all time and eternity. Because He is eternal, He can give us an eternal guarantee. — by David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Sweetest of all life's blessings,  
Communion with Christ above,  
Assurance of His presence,  
His matchless, eternal love.  
—Anon.

**Every promise of God  
comes with an eternal guarantee.**

**Phobeo**

**95x in 92v in the NT** - NAS Usage: afraid(39), am afraid(2), awestruck(1), fear(27), feared(5), fearful(2), fearing(6), fears(2), frightened(7), have... fear(1), respects(1), terrified(1).

Matthew 1:20 But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, **do not be afraid** (**verb subjunctive aorist passive 2nd person functioning as verb imperative aorist passive**) to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 2:22 But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he **was afraid** to go there. Then after being warned by God in a dream, he left for the regions of Galilee,

Matthew 9:8 But when the crowds saw this, they **were awestruck**, and glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

Matthew 10:26 "Therefore **do not fear them** (**verb subjunctive aorist passive 2nd person functioning as verb imperative aorist passive**), for there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known.

28 "**Do not fear** (**present imperative with a negative**) those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather **fear** Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

31 "So **do not fear** (**present imperative with a negative**); you are more valuable than many sparrows.

Matthew 14:5 Although Herod wanted to put him to death, he **feared** the crowd, because they regarded John as a prophet.

27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take courage, it is I; **do not be afraid** (**present imperative with a negative**)."

30 But seeing the wind, he **became frightened**, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!"

Matthew 17:6 When the disciples heard this, they fell face down to the ground and **were terrified**.

7 And Jesus came to them and touched them and said, "Get up, and **do not be afraid** (**present imperative with a negative**)."

Matthew 21:26 "But if we say, 'From men,' we **fear** the people; for they all regard John as a prophet."

46 When they sought to seize Him, they **feared** the people, because they considered Him to be a prophet.

Matthew 25:25 'And I **was afraid**, and went away and hid your talent

in the ground. See, you have what is yours.'

Matthew 27:54 Now the centurion, and those who were with him keeping guard over Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, **became** very **frightened** and said, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

Matthew 28:5 The angel said to the women, "**Do not be afraid** (**present imperative with a negative**); for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified.

10 Then Jesus said to them, "**Do not be afraid** (**present imperative with a negative**); go and take word to My brethren to leave for Galilee, and there they will see Me."

**Zodhiates** - Fear will also grip people when Jesus returns to earth accompanied by heavenly signs and disturbances (Luke 21:25-27). Scripture says that men's hearts [will be] failing [from *apopsúchō* , expiring as if the soul {*psuche*} were departing "from" {*apó*} the body, literally being scared almost to death] them for fear [from *phóbos*], and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. (Luke 21:26) (Exegetical Commentary on Matthew)

Mark 4:41 They **became** very much **afraid** (Mt 8:27 says they were "amazed") and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?"

Mark 5:15 They came to Jesus and observed the man who had been demon-possessed sitting down, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the "legion"; and they **became frightened**.

33 But the woman **fearing** and trembling, aware of what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth.

36 But Jesus, overhearing what was being spoken, said to the synagogue official, "**Do not be afraid** (**present imperative with a negative**) any longer, only believe."

Mark 6:20 for Herod **was afraid** of John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe. And when he heard him, he was very perplexed; but he used to enjoy listening to him.

50 for they all saw Him and were terrified. But immediately He spoke with them and said to them, "Take courage; it is I, **do not be afraid** (**present imperative with a negative**)."

Mark 9:32 But they did not understand this statement, and they were **afraid** to ask Him.

**Zodhiates** - imperfect middle of **phobéō**, to be afraid] to ask Him" (a.t.). The middle voice implies that cause and effect are both internal; that is, they were causing themselves to fear. How so? They subjectively reacted (effect) to the subjective possibility (cause) that Jesus' hope of resurrection was wishful thinking on His part. But this was not objective. Objectively, it was impossible that He not be raised from the dead: "It was not possible [ouk dunatón] for Him to be held [krateísthai] by [Death]" (Acts 2:24; a.t.). Accordingly, the subjective fear that He was wrong and they would never see Him again prevented their talking about His death. (Exegetical Commentary on Matthew)

Mark 10:32 They were on the road going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking on ahead of them; and they were amazed, and those who followed **were fearful**. And again He took the twelve aside and began to tell them what was going to happen to Him,

**Alan Carr** - There was something in our Lord's demeanor that caused His men to be filled with fear. There was something about the resolve in the eyes of Jesus that filled his men with fear. (Sermons)

Mark 11:18 The chief priests and the scribes heard this, and began seeking how to destroy Him; for they **were afraid** of Him, for the whole crowd was astonished at His teaching.

32 "But shall we say, 'From men?'-- they **were afraid** of the people, for everyone considered John to have been a real prophet.

Mark 12:12 And they were seeking to seize Him, and yet they **feared** the people, for they understood that He spoke the parable against them. And so they left Him and went away.

Mark 16:8 They went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had gripped them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they **were afraid**.

**MacArthur** - Overwhelmed by the shocking and wondrous reality of the resurrection, the empty tomb left the women shaking and speechless. It had the same effect on Mark. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary)

Luke 1:13 But the angel said to him, " **Do not be afraid (present imperative with a negative)**, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John.

30 The angel said to her, " **Do not be afraid (present imperative with a negative)**, Mary; for you have found favor with God.

50 "AND HIS MERCY IS UPON GENERATION AFTER GENERATION TOWARD THOSE WHO **FEAR** HIM.

Luke 2:9 And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened.

10 But the angel said to them, "**Do not be afraid (present imperative with a negative)**; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people;

Luke 5:10 and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "**Do not fear (present imperative with a negative)**, from now on you will be catching men."

Luke 8:25 And He said to them, "Where is your faith?" They **were fearful** and amazed, saying to one another, "Who then is this, that He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey Him?"

35 The people went out to see what had happened; and they came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting down at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind; and they **became frightened**.

50 But when Jesus heard this, He answered him, "**Do not be afraid (present imperative with a negative)** any longer; only believe, and she will be made well."

Luke 9:34 While he was saying this, a cloud formed and began to overshadow them; and they **were afraid** as they entered the cloud.

45 But they did not understand this statement, and it was concealed from them so that they would not perceive it; and they **were afraid** to ask Him about this statement.

Luke 12:4 "I say to you, My friends, **do not be afraid (verb subjunctive aorist passive 2nd person plural functioning as verb imperative aorist passive)** of those who kill the body and after that have no more that they can do.

5 "But I will warn you whom to **fear: fear (aorist imperative)** the One who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, **fear (aorist imperative)** Him!

7 "Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. **Do not fear (present imperative with a negative)**; you are more valuable than many sparrows.

32 "**Do not be afraid (present imperative with a negative)**, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom.

Luke 18:2 saying, "In a certain city there was a judge who did not **fear** God and did not respect man.

4 "For a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, 'Even though I do not **fear** God nor respect man,

Luke 19:21 for I was **afraid** of you, because you are an exacting man; you take up what you did not lay down and reap what you did not sow.'

Luke 20:19 The scribes and the chief priests tried to lay hands on Him that very hour, and they **feared** the people; for they understood that He spoke this parable against them.

Luke 22:2 The chief priests and the scribes were seeking how they might put Him to death; for they **were afraid** of the people.

Luke 23:40 But the other answered, and rebuking him said, "Do you not even **fear** God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?"

John 6:19 Then, when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near to the boat; and they **were frightened**. 20 But He said to them, "It is I; **do not be afraid (present imperative with a negative)**."

John 9:22 His parents said this because they **were afraid** of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone confessed Him to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.

John 12:15 **"FEAR NOT (present imperative with a negative), DAUGHTER OF ZION; BEHOLD, YOUR KING IS COMING, SEATED ON A DONKEY'S COLT."**

John 19:8 Therefore when Pilate heard this statement, he was even more **afraid**;

Acts 5:26 Then the captain went along with the officers and proceeded to bring them back without violence (for they **were afraid** of the people, that they might be stoned).

Acts 9:26 When he came to Jerusalem, he was trying to associate with the disciples; but they were all **afraid** of him, not believing that he was a disciple.

Acts 10:2 a devout man and one who **feared** God with all his household, and gave many alms to the Jewish people and prayed to God continually.

22 They said, "Cornelius, a centurion, a righteous and God-**fearing** man well spoken of by the entire nation of the Jews, was divinely directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and hear a message from you."

35 but in every nation the man who **fears** Him and does what is right is

welcome to Him.

Acts 13:16 Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said, "Men of Israel, and you who **fear** God, listen:

26 "Brethren, sons of Abraham's family, and those among you who **fear** God, to us the message of this salvation has been sent.

Acts 16:38 The policemen reported these words to the chief magistrates. They **were afraid** when they heard that they were Romans,

Acts 18:9 And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, " **Do not be afraid (present imperative with a negative)** any longer, but go on speaking and do not be silent;

Acts 22:29 Therefore those who were about to examine him immediately let go of him; and the commander also **was afraid** when he found out that he was a Roman, and because he had put him in chains.

Acts 23:10 And as a great dissension was developing, the commander **was afraid** Paul would be torn to pieces by them and ordered the troops to go down and take him away from them by force, and bring him into the barracks.

Acts 27:17 After they had hoisted it up, they used supporting cables in undergirding the ship; and **fearing** that they might run aground on the shallows of Syrtis, they let down the sea anchor and in this way let themselves be driven along.

24 saying, '**Do not be afraid (present imperative with a negative)**, Paul; you must stand before Caesar; and behold, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you.'

29 **Fearing** that we might run aground somewhere on the rocks, they cast four anchors from the stern and wished for daybreak.

Romans 11:20-note Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but **fear**;

Romans 13:3-note For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to **have** no **fear** of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same;

4 for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, **be afraid (present imperative with a negative)**; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.

2 Corinthians 11:3 But I **am afraid** that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and

purity of devotion to Christ.

2 Corinthians 12:20 For I **am afraid** that perhaps when I come I may find you to be not what I wish and may be found by you to be not what you wish; that perhaps there will be strife, jealousy, angry tempers, disputes, slanders, gossip, arrogance, disturbances;

Galatians 2:12 For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, **fearing** the party of the circumcision.

Galatians 4:11 I **fear** for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.

Ephesians 5:33-note Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she **respects** her husband.

Colossians 3:22-note Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, **fearing** the Lord.

Hebrews 4:1-note Therefore, let us **fear** if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.

Hebrews 11:23-note By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they **were** not **afraid** of the king's edict.

Hebrews 11:27-note By faith he left Egypt, not **fearing** the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen.

Hebrews 13:6 so that we confidently say, "THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE **AFRAID**. WHAT WILL MAN DO TO ME?"

1 Peter 2:17-note Honor all people, love the brotherhood, **fear** God, honor the king.

1 Peter 3:6-note just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any **fear**.

1 Peter 3:14-note But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. **AND DO NOT FEAR (verb subjunctive aorist passive 2nd person plural functioning as verb imperative aorist passive)** THEIR INTIMIDATION, AND DO NOT BE TROUBLED,

1 John 4:18-note There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who **fears** is not perfected in love.



Revelation 1:17-[note](#) When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, "**Do not be afraid (present imperative with a negative)**"; I am the first and the last,

Revelation 2:10-[note](#) '**Do not fear (present imperative with a negative)** what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Revelation 11:18-[note](#) "And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who **fear** Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth."

Revelation 14:7-[note](#) (Context = "eternal Gospel" Rev 14:6-[note](#)) and he said with a loud voice, "**Fear** God (**aurist passive imperative**), and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters."

Revelation 15:4-[note](#) "Who will not **fear**, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy; For ALL THE NATIONS WILL COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE YOU, FOR YOUR RIGHTEOUS ACTS HAVE BEEN REVEALED."

Revelation 19:5-[note](#) And a voice came from the throne, saying, "Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who **fear** Him, the small and the great."

### **Phobeo** in the **Septuagint (LXX)** (321 verses)

Ge 3:10; 15:1; 18:15; 19:30; 20:2, 8; 21:17; 22:12; 26:7, 24; 28:13, 17; 32:7, 11; 42:18, 35; 43:23; 46:3; 50:19, 21;

Ex 1:17, 21; 2:14; 9:20, 30; 14:10, 31; 20:18; 34:30;

Lev 19:3, 14, 30, 32; 25:17, 36, 43; 26:2;

Num 12:8; 14:9; 21:34; 22:3;

Deut 1:21, 29; 2:4; 3:2, 22; 4:10; 5:5, 29; 6:2, 13, 24; 7:18f; 8:6; 10:12, 20; 13:4, 11; 14:23; 17:13, 19; 19:20; 20:1, 3, 8; 21:21; 25:18; 28:10, 58, 66f; 31:6, 8, 12f;

Josh 1:9; 4:14; 8:1; 9:24; 10:2, 8, 25; 11:6; 24:14;

Jdg 4:18; 6:10, 23, 27, 34; 7:3, 10; 8:20;

Ruth 3:11;

1Sa 3:15; 4:7, 20; 7:7; 12:14, 18, 20, 24; 14:26; 15:24; 17:11; 18:12;

21:12; 22:23; 23:3, 17; 28:5, 13, 20; 31:4;  
 2Sa 1:14; 3:11; 6:9; 9:7; 10:19; 12:18; 13:28;  
 1Kgs 1:50f; 2:29; 3:28; 8:40, 43; 12:24; 18:3, 12; 19:3;  
 2Kgs 1:15; 4:1; 6:16; 10:4; 17:7, 25, 28, 32ff, 41; 19:6; 25:24, 26;  
 1Chr 10:4; 13:12; 16:30; 22:13; 28:20;  
 2Chr 5:6; 6:31, 33; 20:3, 15, 17; 32:18;  
 Neh 1:11; 2:2; 4:14; 6:13, 16; 7:2;  
 Esther 1:1; 2:20; 9:1;  
 Job 5:21f; 6:21; 9:35; 11:15; 32:6; 37:24;  
 Ps 3:6; 15:4; 22:23, 25; 23:4; 25:12, 14; 27:1, 3; 31:19; 33:8, 18; 34:7,  
 9; 40:3; 46:2; 49:5, 16; 52:6; 53:5; 55:19; 56:3f, 11; 60:4; 61:5; 64:4, 9;  
 65:8; 66:16; 67:7; 76:8; 77:16; 85:9; 86:11; 91:5; 102:15; 103:11, 13,  
 17; 111:5; 112:1, 7f; 115:11, 13; 118:4, 6; 119:63, 74, 79, 120; 128:1,  
 4; 135:20; 145:19; 147:11;  
 Pr 3:7, 25; 7:1; 13:13; 14:2, 16; 24:21; 29:25; 30:1; Eccl 3:14; 5:7;  
 7:18; 8:12f; 9:2; 12:13;  
 Isa 7:4, 16; 8:12; 10:24; 12:2; 13:2; 19:17; 29:23; 33:7; 35:4; 37:6;  
 40:9; 41:5, 10, 13; 43:1, 5; 44:2; 50:10; 51:7, 12f; 54:4, 14; 57:11;  
 59:19; 60:5; 63:17;  
 Jer 1:8, 17; 2:30; 3:8; 5:22, 24; 10:2, 5; 17:8; 23:4; 26:19; 32:39; 33:9;  
 39:17; 40:9; 41:18; 42:11, 16; 46:27f;  
 Lam 3:57  
 Ezek 2:6; 3:9; 11:8; 18:14; 26:16, 18; 27:28;  
 Da 1:10; 3:12, 17; 4:19; 5:19; 6:26; 10:12, 19; 11:12;  
 Hos 10:3; Amos 3:8; Jonah 1:5, 10, 16; Mic 6:9; 7:17; Hab 3:2; Zeph  
 3:7; Hag 1:12; Zech 9:5; Mal 2:5; 3:5, 16; 4:2

Here are some representative uses in the **Septuagint (LXX)**...

Genesis 3:10 And he said, "I heard the sound of Thee in the garden, and I **was afraid** (Heb = yare; Lxx = **phobeo**) because I was naked; so I hid myself."

Genesis 15:1 After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, "**Do not fear** (In Lxx phobeo in **present imperative with a negative**), Abram, (God explains why he need not fear men) I am a shield to you; Your reward shall be very great."

Genesis 22:12 He said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad,

and do nothing to him; for now I know that you **fear** (Heb = yare; Lxx = **phobeo** in **present tense**) God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."

Exodus 1:17 (Ex 1:21) But the midwives **feared** (Heb = yare; Lxx = **phobeo**) God, and did not do as the king of Egypt had commanded them, but let the boys live.

Leviticus 19:3 'Every one of you **shall reverence** (Heb = yare; Lxx = **phobeo**) his mother and his father, and you shall keep My Sabbaths; I am the LORD your God.

Leviticus 25:17 'So you shall not wrong one another, but you **shall fear** (Heb = yare; **phobeo**) your God; for I am the LORD your God.

Leviticus 26:2 'You shall keep My Sabbaths and **reverence** (Heb = yare; Lxx = **phobeo**) My sanctuary; I am the LORD.

Deuteronomy 1:21 'See, the LORD your God has placed the land before you; go up, take possession, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has spoken to you. **Do not fear** (In Lxx phobeo in **present imperative with a negative**) or be dismayed.'

Nehemiah 1:11 "O Lord, I beseech You, may Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant and the prayer of Your servants who delight to **revere** (Heb = yare; Lxx = **phobeo**) Your name, and make Your servant successful today and grant him compassion before this man." Now I was the cupbearer to the king

Psalms 15:4 In whose eyes a reprobate is despised, But who honors those who **fear** (Heb = yare; Lxx = **phobeo**) the LORD; He swears to his own hurt and does not change;

Malachi 3:5-note "Then I will draw near to you for judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers and against the adulterers and against those who swear falsely, and against those who oppress the wage earner in his wages, the widow and the orphan, and those who turn aside the alien and do not **fear** (Heb = yare; Lxx = **phobeo**) Me," says the LORD of hosts.

Malachi 3:16-note Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD gave attention and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who **fear** (Heb = yare; Lxx = **phobeo**) the LORD and who esteem His name.

Hebrews 13:7 **Remember** those who **led** you, **who spoke** the **word** of **God** to you; and **considering** the **result** of their **conduct**, **imitate** their **faith** (NASB: Lockman)

**Greek:** [Mnemoneuete](#) (2PPAM) [ton egoumenon](#) (PMPMPG) [humon,](#) [hoitines elalesan](#) (3PAAI) [humin ton logon tou theou,](#) [on anatheourontes](#) (PAPMPN) [ten ekbasin tes anastrophes](#) **[mimeisthe](#)** (2PPMM) [ten piston.](#)

**Amplified:** Remember your leaders and superiors in authority [for it was they] who brought to you the Word of God. Observe attentively and consider their manner of living (the outcome of their well-spent lives) and imitate their faith (their conviction that God exists and is the Creator and Ruler of all things, the Provider and Bestower of eternal salvation through Christ, and their leaning of the entire human personality on God in absolute trust and confidence in His power, wisdom, and goodness) ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**Barclay:** Remember your leaders, the men who spoke the word of God to you. Look back on how they made their exit from this life and imitate their faith. ([Westminster Press](#))

**NLT:** Remember your leaders who taught you the word of God. Think of all the good that has come from their lives, and follow the example of their faith. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** Never forget your leaders, who first spoke to you the Word of God. Remember how they lived, and imitate their faith. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** Be constantly remembering those ruling over you, especially as they are those who spoke to you the word of God, whose faith imitate as you closely observe the outcome of their manner of life.

**Young's Literal:** Be mindful of those leading you, who did speak to you the word of God, whose faith—considering the issue of the behavior—be imitating

**REMEMBER THOSE WHO LED YOU: Mnemoneuete (2PPAM) ton hegoumenon (PMPMPG) humon:**

- Heb 13:17,24; Mt 24:45; Luke 12:42; Acts 14:23; 1Th 5:12,13; 1Ti 3:5) (Lk 8:11; Acts 4:31; 13:46; Ro 10:17; 1Th 2:13; Rev 1:9; 6:9; 20:4
- [Hebrews 13 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Hebrews 13:7-14 The Antidote for False Teaching](#) - Steven Cole
- [Hebrews 13:7-8, 17-19 Submission and Supplication](#) - John MacArthur
- [Hebrews 13:7-14 Steadfastness, Separation, Sacrifice](#) - John MacArthur

**Spurgeon** - God's people are a thoughtful people. If they are what they ought to be, they do a great deal of remembering and considering; that is the gist of this verse. If they are to

remember and to consider their earthly leaders, much more are they to recollect that great Leader, the Lord Jesus, and all those matchless truths that fell from His blessed lips. I wish, in these days, that professing Christians remembered and considered a great deal more; but we live in such a flurry, and hurry, and worry, that we do not get time for thought. Our noble forefathers of the Puritan sort were men with backbone, men of solid tread, independent and self-contained men who could hold their own in the day of conflict. The reason was because they took time to meditate, time to keep a diary of their daily experiences, time to commune with God in secret. Take the hint, and try and do a little more thinking.....It seems that there were special persons, who were leaders in the Church of God, who were to be remembered, and thought upon, and considered. They were set apart for this world: "them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God." They were leaders among the saints, and Paul would have the rank and file imitate them in their confident trust in the Lord Jesus Christ: "whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation:" —

**Remember** (recall, bearing in mind) ([3421](#))(**mnemoneuo** from **mimnesko** = to recall to one's mind) means to exercise memory, call something to mind, recollect, to pay attention to something and so to be warned (eg, Lk 17:32). It means to use the faculty of memory given by God and keep in one's mind people, things, and circumstances because memory is basis of learning and of motivation for future action.

**Remember** is in the **present imperative** which is a command to keep on remembering! Think back into the past, to leaders who have passed on to glory (cp current leaders in He 13:17, 24). Remember those whose conduct you can survey from beginning to end, and consider all of it but consider especially how they ended! By way of application, a fruitful, encouraging practice for modern believers would be to read sound, well written biographies of saints who have finished their race and done so with "gusto". A great "starting point" would be to read (and I also highly recommend listening to) **John Piper's** biographical messages ([click here](#)) which will challenge and encourage your faith.

**The Analytical Lexicon** has an excellent summary of the NT meanings - (1) of recollection recall, remember (Mt 16.9); (2) of solicitous concern be mindful of, think of, remember (Gal 2.10); (3) of self-reflection remember, keep in mind (Eph 2.11); (4) speak (of), (make) mention (of) (He 11.22) ([Friberg, T., Friberg, B., & Miller, N. F. Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament. Baker Academic](#))

**Pastor Cole** agrees exhorting believers to that "Read the biographies of godly Christians. I'm not talking about the biography of some sports hero or movie star who claims to be a Christian. Read about the Reformers or other great preachers, who proclaimed God's truth in previous times. Read about missionaries who braved all sorts of difficult conditions to take the gospel to remote places. I have gained more from reading such biographies than from any other source outside of the Bible. (I have a bibliography, "[Reading Christian Biographies](#)," [click to open Pdf](#)). There is also on the web site an article I wrote on the benefits of reading biographies, "[Mining for Gold](#)." ([Hebrews 13:7-14 The Antidote for False Teaching](#))

**Led** (2233)(**hegeomai**) means first to lead, then to think or regard. Obviously the former meaning describing men in any leading position.

**John Piper** in his message on this section of Hebrews said "Some of you may wonder why for 11 years at our pastors' conference I have given biographical lectures on people in church history - Luther, Calvin, Edwards, Brainerd, Spurgeon, Machen, Lloyd-Jones, etc. It's not just because they're interesting. It's because God said, "Remember those who led you and spoke the word of God to you. ([Read Piper's message "Be Strengthened by Grace"](#))"

## WHO SPOKE THE WORD OF GOD TO YOU: hoitines elalesan (3PAAI) humin ton logon tou theou:

- Heb 2:3; Heb 6:12 "imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."
- [Hebrews 13 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Hebrews 13:7-14 The Antidote for False Teaching](#) - Steven Cole
- [Hebrews 13:7-8, 17-19 Submission and Supplication](#) - John MacArthur
- [Hebrews 13:7-14 Steadfastness, Separation, Sacrifice](#) - John MacArthur

**Spurgeon** - It is for your own benefit to remember in your prayers those who preach the Word of God to you, for what can they do without divine assistance? and how can you be profited by them unless they are first blessed of God? Therefore, remember them.

**Who** (hoitines) whoever they were... no one specific in mind here.

**Spoke** (2980) (**laleo**) (**word study**) which originally referred to the chattering of birds or prattling of children and evolved in use to the highest form of speech, the thrice holy God choosing **language** as His primary medium of communication to fallen, sinful mankind.

**The Word of God** - What a great "legacy". It should be every pastor and teacher and elder and father's goal that this likewise be their "legacy" - that they were those who spoke the Word of God!

**Pastor Cole** comments that "God's Word is the only source for sound teaching. Yet we live in a day when very few pastors devote themselves to teaching God's Word in a systematic way. Many evangelical churches, in an attempt to reach the unchurched ("seekers"), have abandoned teaching through the Bible verse by verse, for fear that some of the difficult doctrines may offend people (**Ed**: Church should be a place where the pastor preaches to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable!). They aim the church service at giving the "customers" what they want: topical messages on how to have a happy life. They avoid talking about sin or judgment or anything controversial. In many cases, their messages could have come out of Reader's Digest rather than the Bible! You should evaluate any teaching by the criteria, "Does it explain the text of Scripture in its context and apply it to

my life?" ([Hebrews 13:7-14 The Antidote for False Teaching](#))

**AND CONSIDERING THE RESULT OF THEIR CONDUCT: *anatheorountes* (PAPMPN) *ten ekbasin tes anastrophes*:**

- Acts 7:55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60
- [Hebrews 13 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Hebrews 13:7-14 The Antidote for False Teaching](#) - Steven Cole
- [Hebrews 13:7-8, 17-19 Submission and Supplication](#) - John MacArthur
- [Hebrews 13:7-14 Steadfastness, Separation, Sacrifice](#) - John MacArthur

**Spurgeon** - These holy men ended their lives with Christ; their exit was to go to Jesus, and to reign with him.

**Considering** ([333](#)) (**anatheoreo** from **a n a** = emphatic + **theoreo** = to view, observe) means to look again and again (and the use of the present tense even further emphasizes the importance of this "looking!"). The idea is to view or behold attentively (Acts 17:23+). **Anatheōreō** in classical Greek refers to earnest contemplation and close examination, implying a keen interest in what is observed. There are no uses in the Septuagint.

**Thayer** says the idea is "to survey a series of things from the lowest to the highest". Clearly the meaning is to look attentively making certain that one observes accurately and considers carefully. There is only one other NT use...

Acts 17:23+ (Paul in Athens where his spirit within was provoked as he saw a city full of idols Acts 17:16) "For while I was passing through and **examining (anatheoreo)** the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' What therefore you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you.

**Result** ([1545](#)) (**ekbasis**) speaks of the endpoint of an event, the outcome, and here in the context of the result of one's way of life (with the implication of it being spiritually "successful").

**Thayer** comments that **ekbasis** refers "not merely the end of their physical life, but the manner in which they closed a well-spent life as exhibited by their spirit in dying.

**The result of their conduct** - Its not just what they say but how they live (lips and live must match!). Look closely at the outcome, literally, the "exit" of their way of life.

**Pastor John Piper** feels that the idea is to look at the whole course of their life, especially the end of it. How did they run? Did they hold fast until the end? Did they finish well? (cp Heb 3:6,14, 4:14, 10:23, 12:1) Did they do what this whole letter of Hebrews is written to help us do - To persevere to the end and be saved

**Note:** perseverance does not earn salvation, but is a "marker" of genuine salvation, for the only one who would persevere to the end would be the person who has the supernatural power to do so, i.e., one who is born again and has the enabling, indwelling power of the Holy Spirit of God.

In a sense, one might then consider that dead heroes are more important even than living heroes. The latter are important to be sure, but we have yet to see the end of their race. What if they cease to be "heroes" before they die? When this occurs (as is all too common in modern day Christendom!), we are disappointed, disillusioned, let down, even discouraged.

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## **Newspaper Honesty**

Read: Hebrews 13:7-21

We have a good conscience, in all things desiring to live honorably. —Hebrews 13:18

As a schoolboy, I worked with my father during the summer months. Each morning we stopped to pick up the early edition of the newspaper at a small grocery store.

One morning when we got to work, my father found that by mistake he had taken two newspapers instead of one. He first thought of paying the man the extra price the next morning, but then after a moment's consideration he said, "I had better go back with this paper. I don't want the man at the store to think I'm dishonest." He got in his car, drove back to the store, and returned the paper.

About a week later, someone stole money from the grocery store. When police pinpointed the time it occurred, the grocer remembered only two people being in the store at the time—and one was my father. The grocer immediately dismissed my father as a suspect, saying, "That man is really honest. He came all the way back here just to return a newspaper he took by mistake." The police then focused their investigation on the other man, who soon made a full confession. My father's honesty made a big impression on that non-Christian storeowner, and on me.

Does your Christian walk square with your Christian talk? Is your honesty above question?  
By Henry G. Bosch ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

When others view our lives today,  
Our honesty is on display;  
Lord, help us point the way to You  
By doing what is right and true.  
—Branon

Your life is like a newspaper; do people read honesty in you?

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**THE LIFE THAT MATTERS** - Isaac Hann was a little-known pastor who served a small church in Loughwood, England, in the mid-18th century. At the close of his ministry, the membership of the church numbered 26 women and 7 men. And only 4 of the men attended with any regularity.

In this age of mass media and mega-churches, who would consider this a successful work? In our world today, Isaac Hann would be considered one of those pastors who never quite “made it.” He certainly wouldn’t have been invited to speak at pastors’ conferences, nor would he have written articles on church growth.

Yet, when he died at 88 his parishioners placed a plaque on the wall of their meeting house that remains to this day. It reads in part:

Few ministers so humble were, yet few so much admired: Ripened for heaven by grace divine, like autumn fruit he fell;

Reader think not to live so long, but seek to live as well.

First Peter 5:5-6 comes to mind: “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.” Reverend Isaac Hann “made it big” in a way that matters—humility before God and a reward in heaven. We can too.— by David H. Roper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

True greatness does not come to those  
Who strive for worldly fame,  
It lies instead with those who choose  
To serve in Jesus’ name.  
—D. De Haan

**Humility is the recipe for success.**

**IMITATE THEIR FAITH: mimeisthe (2PPMM) ten pistin:**

- Heb 6:12; Song 1:8; 1Co 4:16; 11:1; Php 3:17; 1Th 1:6; 2Th 3:7,9
- [Hebrews 13 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- [Hebrews 13:7-14 The Antidote for False Teaching](#) - Steven Cole
- [Hebrews 13:7-8, 17-19 Submission and Supplication](#) - John MacArthur
- [Hebrews 13:7-14 Steadfastness, Separation, Sacrifice](#) - John MacArthur

**Spurgeon** - There is an itching, nowadays, after originality, striking out a path for yourself. When sheep do that, they are bad sheep. Sheep follow the shepherd, and, in a measure, they follow one another when they are all together following the shepherd. Our Great Master never aimed at originality; He said that He did not even speak His own words, but the words that He had heard from His Father. He was docile and teachable. As the Son of

God, and the servant of God, His ear was open to hear the instructions of the Father, and He could say, "I always do the things that are pleasing to him" (John 8:29). Now, that is the true path for a Christian to take: to follow Jesus, and, in consequence, to follow all such true saints as may be worthy of being followed, imitating the godly so far as they imitate Christ.

See discussion of **importance of imitation** in discussion of the life of Barnabas, a man **full of the Spirit and faith** - click note on Acts 11:24.

**Imitate** (3401) (**mimēomai** from **mimos** = imitator, "mimic") means to imitate, to use a model, to emulate, to follow (someone's actions or way of life), especially to follow an example (good example - 2Th 3:7, 9, Hebrews 13:7) and not to follow a bad example (3 Jn 1:11).

**Mimēomai** is found only here and in...

2Th 3:7 For you yourselves know how you ought to **follow our example**, because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you,

2Th 3:9 not because we do not have the right to this, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you, that you might **follow our example**.

3Jn 1:11 Beloved, **do not imitate** (**present imperative** with negative = stop doing this! Don't let this happen!) what is evil, but (always be alert to **contrasts**) what is good. The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God.

**Imitate** is in the **present imperative** which means "**Keep on imitating** the faith of the leaders." Make it your habit to imitate their faith. They were not perfect and yet God calls them faithful and calls the readers to follow their examples of faithfulness. Beloved, faithfulness is not manifest by one's perfection but by one's general direction (toward heaven, not hell!)

Considering how well these leaders lived, **imitate** their faith, where faith of course speaks to both their faith and their conduct. The author emphasizes **their faith** because he wants us to see that faith in Christ is the firm foundation for Christian conduct. In other words our behavior is not to be an outward conformity to rules or rituals. Paul has a similar thought in his letter to the Galatians...

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love. (Gal. 5:6)

Not those who have an external "form of godliness". If you try to imitate these men's conduct, you become a religious fake, deceived just as they are. This is a frightening reality when you see it - people who have learned the form of godliness and know nothing of the power that comes from genuine faith (2Ti3:5). Instead the author says: look at the whole course of their conduct and how they finished their course, and get the same motor

that made them what they were: their faith.

The memorial marker to **John Wesley** in Westminster Abbey bears the inscription:

**God buries his workmen,  
but he carries on his work.**

Memories of godly lives help best when they turn us to the One Who never needs to be replaced and Who is permanently available to his people.

**Oswald Chambers** gives us another perspective on memories writing that "At the end of the year we turn with eagerness to all that God has for the future, and yet anxiety is apt to arise from remembering the yesterdays. Our present enjoyment of God's grace is apt to be checked by the memory of yesterday's sins and blunders. But God is the God of our yesterdays, and He allows the memory of them in order to turn the past into a ministry of spiritual culture for the future. God reminds us of the past lest we get into a shallow security in the present... Let the past sleep, but let it sleep on the bosom of Christ. Leave the irreparable past in His hands, and step out into the irresistible future with Him.

**Faith** ([4102](#))(**pistis**) is synonymous with trust or belief and is the conviction of the truth of anything, but in Scripture usually speaks of belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervor born of faith and joined with it.

It is notable that only the book of Romans surpasses the book of Hebrews ( [click uses of pistis in Hebrews](#)) in the number of uses of **pistis** (Romans = 35, Hebrews = 31, out of 243 NT uses) **Pistis** (NAS) which is translated: faith, 238; faithfulness, 3; pledge, 1; proof, 1.

As **pistis** relates to God, it is the conviction that God exists and is the Creator and Ruler of all things well as the Provider and Bestower of eternal salvation through Christ. As faith relates to Christ it represents a strong and welcome conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through Whom we obtain eternal salvation and entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven. Stated another way, eternal salvation comes **only** through belief in Jesus Christ and no other way.

**See related studies on** the specific phrases (1) "**the faith**" and (2) the "**obedience of faith**". See also study on **pistos**

**True faith that saves one's soul** includes at least three main elements

(1) firm persuasion or firm conviction,

(2) a surrender to that truth and

(3) a conduct emanating from that surrender. In sum, faith shows itself genuine by a changed life. ([Click here](#) for **W E Vine's** similar definition of **faith**)

Respected theologian **Louis Berkhof** defines genuine faith in essentially the same way

noting that it includes an intellectual element (notitia), which is

a positive recognition of the truth"; an emotional element (assensus), which includes "a deep conviction of the truth"; and a volitional element (fiducia), which involves "a personal trust in Christ as Savior and Lord, including a surrender ... to Christ." ([Louis Berkhof, Systematic Theology. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1939](#))

**Faith** is relying on what God has done rather than on one's own efforts. In the Old Testament, faith is rarely mentioned. The word **trust** is used frequently, and verbs like **believe** and **rely** are used to express the right attitude to God. The classic example is Abraham, whose **faith** was reckoned as righteousness (Ge 15:6). At the heart of the Christian message is the story of the cross: Christ's dying to bring salvation. **Faith** is an attitude of trust in which a believer receives God's good gift of salvation (Acts 16:30,31) and lives in that awareness thereafter (Gal 2:20; cf. Heb 11:1).

### **Pistis in Hebrews -**

Heb. 4:2; Heb. 6:1; Heb. 6:12; Heb. 10:22; Heb. 10:38; Heb. 10:39; Heb. 11:1; Heb. 11:3; Heb. 11:4; Heb. 11:5; Heb. 11:6; Heb. 11:7; Heb. 11:8; Heb. 11:9; Heb. 11:11; Heb. 11:13; Heb. 11:17; Heb. 11:20; Heb. 11:21; Heb. 11:22; Heb. 11:23; Heb. 11:24; Heb. 11:27; Heb. 11:28; Heb. 11:29; Heb. 11:30; Heb. 11:31; Heb. 11:33; Heb. 11:39; Heb. 12:2; Heb. 13:7

**J. B. Lightfoot** discusses the concept of faith in his commentary on Galatians. He notes that in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, the definition of the word for **faith** "hovers between two meanings: trustfulness, the frame of mind which relies on another; and trustworthiness, the frame of mind which can be relied upon... the senses will at times be so blended together that they can only be separated by some arbitrary distinction. The loss in grammatical precision is often more than compensated by the gain in theological depth... They who have faith in God are steadfast and immovable in the path of duty."

**Faith**, like grace, is not static. Saving faith is more than just understanding the facts and mentally acquiescing. It is inseparable from repentance, surrender, and a supernatural longing to obey. None of those responses can be classified exclusively as a human work, any more than believing itself is solely a human effort.

**Faith** is manifest by not believing in spite of evidence but obeying in spite of consequence. John uses the related verb **pisteuo** to demonstrate the relationship between genuine faith and obedience writing "He who **believes** (present tense = continuous) in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." (John 3:36)

**Charles Swindoll** commenting on faith and obedience in **John 3:36** concludes that "In 3:36 the one who "believes in the Son has eternal life" as a present possession. But the one who "does not obey the Son shall not see life." To **disbelieve** Christ is to **disobey** Him. And logically, to **believe** in Christ is to **obey** Him. As I have noted elsewhere, "This

verse clearly indicates that **belief** is not a matter of passive opinion, but decisive and obedient action." (quoting J. Carl Laney)... Tragically many people are convinced that it doesn't really matter what you believe, so long as you are sincere. This reminds me of a Peanuts cartoon in which Charlie Brown is returning from a disastrous baseball game. The caption read, "174 to nothing! How could we lose when we were so sincere?" The reality is, Charlie Brown, that it takes more than sincerity to win the game of life. Many people are sincere about their beliefs, but they are sincerely wrong!" ([Swindoll, C. R., & Zuck, R. B. Understanding Christian Theology.: Thomas Nelson Publishers](#)) (This book is recommended if you are looking for a very readable, non-compromising work on "systematic theology". Wayne Grudem's work noted above is comparable.)

**Subjectively faith** is firm persuasion, conviction, belief in the truth, veracity, reality or faithfulness (though rare). **Objectively faith** is that which is believed (usually designated as "the faith"), doctrine, the received articles of faith. Click separate study of "the faith (pistis)"

**True faith** is not based on empirical evidence but on divine assurance.

**Spurgeon** wrote that "Faith is the foot of the soul by which it can march along the road of the commandments.

When missionary [John Paton](#) was translating the Scripture for the South Sea islanders, he was unable to find a word in their vocabulary for the concept of believing, trusting, or having faith. He had no idea how he would convey that to them. One day while he was in his hut translating, a native came running up the stairs into Paton's study and flopped in a chair, exhausted. He said to Paton,

"It's so good to rest my whole weight in this chair."

John Paton had his word: **Faith** is resting your whole weight on God. That word went into the translation of their New Testament and helped bring that civilization of natives to Christ. Believing is putting your whole weight on God. If God said it, then it's true, and we're to believe it.

Nothing before, nothing behind,  
The steps of faith  
Fall on the seeming void, and find  
The rock beneath  
-- Whittier

Without "confidence" in God - in his fidelity, his truth, his wisdom, his promises. The essence of faith consists in believing and receiving what God has revealed, and may be defined as that trust in the God of the Scriptures and in Jesus Christ whom He has sent, which receives Him as Lord and Savior and impels to loving obedience and good works (Jn 1:12; Ja 2:14 - 26).

Clearly **faith** is a key word in Hebrews. Study the 31 uses of **pistis** in Hebrews in context  
...

**Hebrews 4:2** - For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

**Hebrews 6:1** - Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,

**Hebrews 6:12** -so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

**Hebrews 10:22** - let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

**Hebrews 10:38** - BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN

**Hebrews 10:39** - But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.

**Hebrews 11:1** - Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

**Hebrews 11:3** - By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.

**Hebrews 11:4** - By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.

**Hebrews 11:5** - By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; AND HE WAS NOT FOUND BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM UP; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God.

**Hebrews 11:6** - And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

**Hebrews 11:7** - By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

**Hebrews 11:8** - By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.

**Hebrews 11:9** - By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise;

**Hebrews 11:11** - By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised.

**Hebrews 11:13** - All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

**Hebrews 11:17** - By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son;

**Hebrews 11:20** - By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, even regarding things to come.

**Hebrews 11:21** - By faith Jacob, as he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.

**Hebrews 11:22** - By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the exodus of the sons of Israel, and gave orders concerning his bones.

**Hebrews 11:23** - By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's edict.

**Hebrews 11:24** - By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,

**Hebrews 11:27** - By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen.

**Hebrews 11:28** - By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that he who destroyed the firstborn would not touch them.

**Hebrews 11:29** -By faith they passed through the Red Sea as though they were passing through dry land; and the Egyptians, when they attempted it, were drowned.

**Hebrews 11:30** - By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days.

**Hebrews 11:31** - By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace.

**Hebrews 11:33** -who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions,

**Hebrews 11:39** - And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised,

**Hebrews 12:2** - fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

**Hebrews 13:7** - Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.