

OpenTheo

Living by Faith (2022)



Individual Topics - Steve Gregg

In "Living by Faith (2022)," Steve Gregg discusses the concept of living a life of faith in God. This involves trusting that God has a purpose and actively works in our lives, even during difficult circumstances. Living by faith means trusting God to provide for all needs and finding contentment and rest without worrying about the future. Gregg emphasizes that obedience to God, prayer, and reliance on Him for all needs are essential for living a life of faith, leading to peace, confidence, and fearlessness in all aspects of life.

Transcript

When I was asked if I would come here to Roseville, those who invited me gave me a list of topics they wanted me to do and they wanted this morning for me to speak on, as it was communicated to me, living by faith and prayer. I'm going to just shorten that to living by faith since prayer is part of living by faith. So we'll shorten the title, make it a little easier.

Living by faith. Now living by faith is, as you might imagine, a way of living. Although the expression living by faith actually comes from a passage in the Old Testament, which is Habakkuk 2.4, which Paul thought was a very important passage for understanding justification.

In Habakkuk 2.4 it says the just shall live by faith, or by his faith. Actually in the Hebrew it's by his faithfulness, but the word when it was translated into Greek, the word *emunah*, faithfulness, was translated into the Greek word *pistis*, which is the word for faith and for faithfulness. The word *pistis* in the New Testament and in the Greek Old Testament can be translated faith.

That's its primary meaning, but it also means faithfulness. But Paul uses it in order to show that we are not justified by works or by the law, but by faith in Christ. We know that Paul's great emphasis in some of his epistles, especially Romans and Galatians, and it certainly comes out in others like certainly Ephesians and Titus, that justification is by faith.

It's not by works, and Paul had two favorite Old Testament texts to make this point. One

of those was Habakkuk 2.4, the just shall live by faith, and the other was Genesis 15.6, which said Abraham believed in the Lord and it was counted to him for righteousness. Now from these two verses primarily, and also from what God had revealed to Paul personally, he understood that we are not saved by performance.

We don't earn our salvation. We are accounted righteous in the sight of God because of our faith in Christ. Now, of course, that word faith in the Greek could be translated faithfulness also, but because it says Abraham believed God, it seems to focus more on the believing part of faith as opposed to simply faithfulness.

But both concepts are certainly in that word in the Greek and certainly in the passage that Paul quotes. But when we think about this expression, it's a different thing than what I'm going to be talking about today. I certainly believe in justification by faith.

It's the Reformation doctrine that shook up the whole world over 500 years ago when Martin Luther brought it forward, and that became his slogan, and it's very important one from which he got from Paul. But nowadays when we use the word living by faith, we may be talking of it in a different context. When Paul uses it, he's talking about having eternal life.

He's talking about gaining the life of God imparted to us and passing from death unto life, living as opposed to being dead because of our faith. But living also can speak of what we do while we're breathing. We are living.

It's not just a reference to gaining life. It's a matter of continuing to live, surviving, subsisting day by day. And the expression living by faith has in a certain context come to refer to people who live or subsist or survive by nothing more than their faith in God, as opposed to the way most people in the world live by trusting in their own labors and their own works and earning their living and so forth.

Now, living by faith, I don't know how much you've heard the expression applied to people like, say, George Mueller or some famous like Hudson Taylor, but very, very famous men, especially in the 19th century, England, popularized this idea. These were men in ministry. These are men in full-time ministry.

They wanted to serve God, but they wanted to do so without asking for money from anyone. They didn't want to raise funds. And because they're in full-time ministry, they couldn't go out and do other kinds of work that would generate funds because they were busy with the work of the ministry.

And therefore, they kind of popularized an understanding of living by faith, which meant you're not really generating finances. You're just ministering and trying to produce fruit for the kingdom and trusting God to provide for your needs. And I think I'm pretty sure that that's the idea of living by faith that I was asked to speak about today, because I do

have in one of my new books, a chapter called The Adventure of Living by Faith.

And I think that's probably what led to my being asked to speak on this subject. So I want to talk about what it means to live by faith, not in the sense of to have eternal life because you believe, which is the way, of course, that term is used in the Bible, but the way it's maybe used more popularly as the way you live your life, being completely by faith in God. Now, not everyone who lives by faith doesn't have a job.

I know that when I was younger, in fact, when I began in the ministry, many young men like myself wanted to do full-time ministry, but frankly, there wasn't demand for it. In the Jesus movement, we'd go out on the streets and we'd evangelize and we'd teach people wherever they want to be taught that there's still when you're 16, 17 years old, there's just not usually a call for you to be doing nothing but that. And so we had jobs, support ourselves in the ministry and ministered on the side, which is what I think many ministers do and probably most ministers have to do or should do.

The way it was understood, most of the guys I knew who wanted to serve God full-time, they talked about they were living by faith, but a lot of times living by faith just meant they didn't have a job and that meant they were just expecting God to pay the bills while they did what they thought was a good use of their time. A lot of them, myself included, found that we didn't really have enough things to do with our time to justify asking God to send a check in the mail for our rent or for our needs. Now, God did provide, but largely through work and that's the normal way that God provides for people in general.

God said in Deuteronomy, when you come into the land and you have houses to dwell in and you have farms and you have prosperity, just remember it's the Lord who gives you the ability to prosper. That is the ability to work. And all Christians, whether they're living like George Mueller, which is a situation I'm going to describe before we're done here, or not, all Christians, even if they have what seems like the most conventional lifestyle, are capable of and expected to be living by faith in the sense that I'm talking about here.

And that is, we trust God for everything, but that doesn't mean we don't do something too. I'm going to just summarize living by faith with this definition. It's doing whatever God tells you to do and leaving the results with him.

You do what he wants you to do and just trust him with outcomes. Now, I'm thinking that the majority of people on the planet, the Bible would seem to indicate God wants them to work. And yet a Christian who goes to work and has a job realizes that there are things that could happen that would prevent them from working, or they might already be experiencing those things that prevent them from working.

They might become disabled or very sick, or they might live in an economy where jobs in their skill set are simply not abundant and they can't find work. Or anything could happen. That's the thing.

Anything can happen. And because we don't know what will happen, we are dependent upon God. Even if on a daily basis, we go to a job, we get a fairly predictable paycheck, we still have to be trusting that God is the one who's taking care of things.

And trusting God means we're not nervous or worried or anxious about things. And I want to read a passage I always think of when I think about this idea of living by faith in a practical, you know, day-by-day way. It's in Matthew 6, and everybody knows it, but usually when we read it again, it's worth hearing again.

In Matthew 6, 25, Jesus was saying in the Sermon on the Mount, Therefore, I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you'll drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you, by worrying, can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.

They neither toil nor spin. And yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now, if God still clothes the grass of the field, which today is and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you? O you of little faith! Therefore, do not worry, saying, What shall we eat? or What shall we drink? or What shall we wear? For after all these things did he then seek the Gentiles.

For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But think first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things.

Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. That last line, sufficient for the day is its own trouble, is a rather convoluted sentence. It basically means every day's own trouble is enough for you to be concerned about.

You don't need to worry about tomorrow's trouble yet. Don't be thinking about that. You've got enough to think about today.

Now, the key verse here, of course, is I think the summary verse in verse 33. Speak first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. And the things he's been talking about that you don't worry about what you're going to eat, what you're going to wear.

Now, I have to say in America, there's a very small percentage of people that ever really have to worry about what they're going to eat or what they're going to wear. They may worry about how they're going to pay the mortgage or how they're going to pay all the different bills that come in. We've got very complicated lifestyles.

We've got smartphones that we pay for on a monthly basis, and they complicate our

lives very much. People have insurance payments. They've got cars to maintain and the expense of that maintenance and so forth if they don't do their own work.

There's a lot of things in a wealthy country that are burdening us with our wealth because stuff requires maintenance, and maintenance is if it takes a lot of work or a lot of our money to pay someone else to do the work. And so we live complicated lives. In ancient times, in biblical times, there were really two kinds of people.

There was no middle class. There were the very rich people. They were few in number, but they owned all the property and had virtually all the money.

And then there were the peasants. There was the very poor, and there was the very rich. Now, most of Jesus' followers were very poor.

He didn't have a lot of rich people following him. Some inquired into doing so, but often they didn't want to meet the terms, and so they didn't. And so the majority of Jesus' disciples were the kind of people that thought, what am I going to eat tomorrow? Do you know, in biblical times, in the Bible, in the Old and the New Testament, it was assumed that a worker had to be paid at the end of every day, not at the end of the week or the pay period, because they were paid so little that the amount they were paid at the end of the day was what they needed to survive and pay and put food on the table for their family until the next evening.

They got a day's wage that covered approximately a day's sustenance, and it was forbidden in the law, if you were an employer at all, to withhold the laborer's pay overnight because he needed it that day. Now, most of us don't know that kind of dirt. We don't have that little of a cushion, but that's what people did.

So when Jesus says, don't worry about food, don't worry about clothing, they didn't have to worry about any other bills because they didn't have anything else, but they had to eat. And so he's basically saying, don't worry about anything that you need. Now, of course, he assumes they're content to have only food and clothing.

Paul himself said to Timothy in First Timothy, Chapter six, having food and clothing with these will be content. The word content, by the way, in the Greek is the word that means sufficient or enough. It's enough if we have food and clothing.

Now, not many Americans think that that is true, but in the Bible, it says it is true. And living by faith means this. It means a life informed by your faith in God.

And what is it you actually believe about God? Well, for one thing, you believe God can do anything. That's what Christians at least say they believe. And Paul said that in Ephesians three, 20, it says God is able to do abundantly above all that we ask or think.

So you think he could do everything? He could do more than that. He could do more than

everything. There's no limits on what he can do.

A second thing you believe is that he's an attentive father who cares for his children. That certainly is a major emphasis of Christ's teaching and of the Christian faith. You know, Jesus said even in the passage we read in verse 32, your father, your heavenly father, knows that you need these things.

In another place, you said your father knows what you need before you ask. He knows before you know. He's attentive.

In another place, in Matthew 10, Jesus said, the hairs of your head are numbered. That's how attentive he is, because that number changes every day. Check the shower drain.

You don't know how many hairs you have. And if you knew how many you had yesterday, you don't know how many you have today. But God knows how many you have all the time.

That's how attentive he is. Jesus said in one place, are not two sparrows sold for a penny. And yet not one of them falls to the ground, apart from the will of your father.

And you are worth more than many sparrows, he said. So not even such a small detail as the death of a sparrow. Can occur without God's attention and even his will.

Now, one thing is true about that is it says in Matthew that two sparrows are sold for a penny. In Luke's version, it says five sparrows were sold for two pennies. Now, he's not teaching some deep spiritual truth.

He's just talking about the economy. They knew they could go down and buy a sparrow, apparently to eat or to sacrifice or something. And down in the marketplace, you could get a sparrow for two pennies or five for two pennies.

In other words, in the market of the day, if you wanted to buy sparrows, it was a penny for two or two cents for five. You get one thrown in. Now, what's interesting about that is in that other places are not five sparrows sold for two pennies.

And he says the same thing. He says Matthew says, but not one of them. Parishes without the will of your father, even the one that the merchant doesn't count as having any value at all.

The one he just throws in the deal to get you to pay more. You bought four and you get one in the deal free. Even that one, even that one isn't going to die without your father's care.

And aren't you worth a lot more than that? Now you say you believe that I believe that you believe that. Well, do we live like we believe that? That's the question. Living by faith means our life being informed by what we believe.

We do believe there's a God who can do everything. We also believe he's an attentive father who pays attention to our needs. And of course, like any good father, remember how Jesus said, you earthly fathers, you're evil.

You know how to give good gifts to your children, though you're evil. How much more will you have any father could give good gifts to his children who ask him? So we believe that I think I do. I think you do, at least in your in some moments of your day.

And I think we also believe and we should believe that God who can do all things and who is an attentive father has a purpose for our lives, that we were not just here by accident. God, you know, God orchestrated the things that caused you to exist because he had something to be accomplished through you. Now, what do you say? What about a baby who just dies at birth? Did God have a purpose for it? Apparently, God can impact a great number of people by a baby who dies.

By the way, it tests the parents faith a great deal. It might even be a way of, you know, stirring up of the community in compassion, things like that. And you don't know what God intends to get through someone being born, but no one is born for nothing.

And it says, as we know, and everyone knows this verse in Romans 8, 28, that all things work together for good to those who love God and who are called according to his purpose. He has called you according to his purpose for you, for your life. And so he has a purpose.

He's going to work everything in your life to conspire favorably for your good toward fulfilling that purpose. That's that's the idea. Now, we believe those things, and that means if we live by those truths, if we believe those things and live by that faith, then it'll it'll look different.

At least our inner life will look different. We might in our daily life do all the same things other people do. We might be mowing our lawn on Saturday morning.

We might be going to work and, you know, sitting in a cubicle Monday through Friday. We might be whatever, working in a factory just like other people there. But we're there for a different reason, because we have, we're fulfilling God's purpose.

He wants an agent in that place, in that neighborhood, in that office, in that factory, in that store. God, the Christian, is there on purpose. Now, it may be that you say, well, actually, this took the job because it's the only one available.

Well, but God worked it. The reason it was the one available is because that's the one where God wanted an agent named you to be there to accomplish whatever it is he has in mind. Now, if we believe that God is a purposeful God, and he can do everything, and he's attentive to us and a caring father, then what in the world is there that anyone could possibly worry about? I remember a time, and there's been many times like this,

and I have worried.

I know we're not supposed to worry, but that doesn't mean I've never been worried. And I remember once when there was some kind of a need. I don't remember now what it was.

I remember the day, and I remember where I was. I was actually standing in the shower. I know I remember the place, but I was thinking about how is this bill going to be paid? I have absolutely no predictable way of knowing how this bill is going to pay.

It's coming up due tomorrow. And I was just sinfully anxious about it. I was worried about it.

And I remember this verse that we read a moment ago. It just came to mind. Your father knows you have needed these things.

And I needed to know nothing else than that. That was enough. My father knows.

I'm a child. I'm truly helpless. I mean, I'm an adult human being like you.

That means I'm responsible. If I can do things, there's things I should do. As a person, I can go out.

I can work. I can fix. I can do things.

But there's times that I can't do anything toward a certain end. We're powerless. We don't control the universe and or the circumstances of the world.

And so there's times we have to be like a little child and say, you know, I can't do anything, but my father knows what I need. And that's all I need to know. That's if I live with that knowledge all the time and really believe it, I'm living by faith.

And living by faith simply means that you're simply living as if the God you say you believe in really is real. It means you really are saying you take seriously the things that you say you believe. Now, when it comes to finances, as I said, God wants most people to work at ordinary jobs and most people do.

But even if you work at a job and if you have each week or however often it happens, a paycheck that's become rather predictable, you know very well you can be downsized, you could be laid off, you could become in an accident, paralyzed, you know, anything could happen before the end of this day that makes it impossible for you to generate that income. Now, people worry in bad financial times. They say we're in a recession and we know very well there's incredible inflation.

My wife and I were staying in a hotel here this weekend that we stayed in a year ago. It's twice as expensive. It costs twice as much as it did a year ago.

I mean, that's kind of big inflation. And this during a recession. These are the kinds of times when people are going to say, you know, I don't know if I'm really going to be able to make it.

I don't know if I'm really going to be able to put food on the table or not. I mean, so far so good, but tomorrow, who knows? Well, God knows. That's who knows.

You know, that's the good thing. Your father knows you have need of these things, and he provides. He might even allow you to lose your job just to show you that while it's you, you think you're supporting yourself.

Well, let's see what happens when you can't. Well, you still eat. You still have all that you need.

Now, I'll tell you, in my own case, when I went into the ministry at age 17, when I left home and had graduated from high school, went into ministry, I was not able to be in full time ministry. I literally was teaching nine different times a week, but that wasn't full time ministry. That's only an hour or two or three, you know, a day or so.

And I never thought that I could just work for God, you know, a 10 hour week and say, provide for a full time support, please. I felt like if I'm going to expect God to support me full time, I need to be putting in a full day just like I would for anyone else who would pay my bills. But I didn't have full time busyness in the ministry.

I had plenty to do, but I had plenty of time too. So I always worked usually at a part time job. It was always a minimum wage job, but it provided for me.

And I've only worked, sometimes I worked self-employed as a window washer. I liked being self-employed because I could work one hour a day or six hours a day or whatever I needed. And I never took more work than I needed to pay my bills because I wanted all the time I could have free to study and teach and do the things in ministry.

But I wanted to cover my own bills so I didn't become a burden to anyone. And so my ministry was a combination of a lot of teaching, a lot of places, sometimes traveling across countries, sometimes traveling to Europe and teaching three or four times a day sometimes while I was traveling. And then when I was home, I'd get a part time job, hold it for a few months or so, then I'd go on another trip and give up the job.

And, you know, part time jobs at that time were not hard to gain or to give up. And so I worked and ministered. Now I found that when I did travel, when I wasn't working, God did provide.

In fact, the first time I traveled across country, some of you might know the name Phil Wickham. I mentioned him earlier. He wrote one of the worship songs.

His dad and I were friends in high school and we're in a band together, but his dad had an old Barracuda that could hardly run. And I was called to go to Germany and to preach there. Someone had invited me to come preach there, set up an itinerary, which was a very busy one when I got there.

But I decided I'd drive across the country first and then fly to Germany and then do that. And I didn't know if I'd come back because the rapture was going to come so soon. This was 1972.

And I thought maybe I'll just stay in Germany till the rapture. Who knows? But I didn't have any money. I didn't have a car, but I was going to drive across country and buy tickets on the East Coast I had no money for, fly to Germany, you know, spend however long I was there until Jesus came back or until it was time for me to come home.

So I needed a car and my friend John Wickham, Phil Wickham's dad, was selling this old Barracuda. It could hardly drive in a traffic lane because it had some kind of horrible problem with its automatic transmission was slipping like crazy. But he sold me the car for 50 bucks.

I didn't have any more. I had \$50 for gas to get across country, but I bought a car for 50 bucks and I had \$50 and on that I left California to go to Germany with nothing prepaid, no guarantees of money for anything. I think God's calling me to do this.

So I did. And it turns out I could, you know, there was some kind of leak in the transmission fluid. So that got fixed as a little tube, cost 19 bucks or something.

So it didn't take much more money. Now the car ran like a dream. So I drove across country.

I was speaking in places that I knew people who had said, if you ever come through, come speak at our place. I was 19 at the time. And though I left home with only \$50 and I figured I'd need that for gas.

You could buy gas for \$0.25 a gallon then. I thought I can get, let's see, 3000 miles with this, you know, get 20 miles per gallon maybe. So I could probably get there on 50 bucks, but I don't know what I'll eat or where I'll sleep or I could sleep in the car.

Of course, I just knew that I was, had a few invitations to speak and I was going to go there. And what I found, and this is when I was 19 and this kind of set the pace for my thinking about this for the rest of my life, was that I never ran out of money. Though I did often get down to my last dollar.

It was very typical and there were unexpected things. We got a blow up. And so I had to replace a tire.

I actually got burned by, it was summertime and my car overheated, that nice car. And I waited for it to cool down. Then I opened the radio and I hadn't waited long enough.

So it sprayed the whole half my body, had these whole blisters, lost several layers of skin, couldn't drive, couldn't move, had to stay in a hotel. I didn't have, you know, I hadn't, if I'd had known that, I wouldn't have been able to pay for that out of the 50 bucks. But the thing is that I was delayed for that and it cost money.

I had to see a doctor and stuff. And I mean, things unexpected happen. But even though unexpected things happened, by the time I got to Denver, I had a thousand dollars in my pocket.

That's what my dad, who's a middle class, you know, ordinary guy, he was making a thousand bucks a month. I had that left over from gifts that were given. I had brand new guitars someone took and bought me.

And I thought, this is amazing. But actually the thousand dollars I had was before the burn. That's why I was able to pay for the burn problems.

By the time I got to New Jersey, I had one dollar, literally one dollar. And I rolled into the town, Cape May, New Jersey, where my mom had formerly dated a guy and he's now a pastor there. And he had said I could preach there if I brought my mom.

No, I didn't. He didn't. No, my mom was not with me.

So I preached at his church and I got some money there. And he said, oh, there's another guy I know who'd love to have you come preach. So he wanted to get rid of me, actually.

I mean, I didn't look like a preacher. I look like I do now. But he knew someone up in a little town who was having a kind of Jesus movement thing going on in their church.

So I went there and I stayed a whole week with these people. And they ended up buying my airline ticket, which I did not ask for. And I mean, everything I need.

I went to Germany, spoke five, six times a day in different places in many cases for five weeks and came home and then came home and got a part time job, minimum wage and worked again while I did part time ministry. And this kind of thing happened. But I made trips like this from time to time.

And I found that though I could not work and did not have the money in advance to go on these trips, God always provided and he always did it just right. I literally there's at least two times I went across. I remember I get to each destination where I could speak literally on the last dollar.

I didn't even have a dollar. I got once I got to Worcester, Massachusetts, and I was driving down in Connecticut or something on the way there. My last tank of gas had zero

money in my pocket.

Nothing went nothing. I started with another guy at this time, and he and I were ministering and we pulled up to this house of the people were staying with in Worcester, Massachusetts, pulled up in front of the house, turned off the car, went in, talked to him, came back out. The car wouldn't start.

There's no gas in it. We didn't have a penny. But before we went out to check the car, someone there had handed us a little money or something.

So I was able to go out and get gas and put in. But that's how tight we pulled it. And but what I learned then is that.

If this is really what God wants me to do, he'll pay the bills. I'm not going to get rich off this, but I've never had a goal to get rich. I can't even measure why be desirable to be rich.

I like living like this. And I and I always have. Now, after I started the Great Commission School in Oregon, which was a Bible school I led for 16 years, I couldn't work another job.

But I also had a determination I'd never charge for anything, including running a school or anything else I did. So so I live by faith without a job, without a part time job. And that's when I found God was always providing.

I'm not going to give too many stories of that right now because we're almost out of time. I just want to say that I found that when I could work, God wanted me to work when I couldn't work. He wanted me not to worry about it.

What he wanted me to do is whatever he wants me to be doing. And then and not and leave the results with him, let him worry about it. Now, I just want to say very quickly, there's several elements of living by faith, and this doesn't mean living without a job.

It just means living as a Christian in the world, in an uncertain world where things can come upon you. For example, health. I never had health insurance until Obamacare made it mandatory.

And I raised five kids, never had a family doctor, didn't need them. I mean, it's not that we didn't get sick. I'm not one of those guys who say, oh, I don't need a doctor because we don't believe in sickness.

No, we got sick, but we just never sick enough to have to go see a doctor. We raised healthy enough kids and anyway, never had health insurance. But and some people say that was irresponsible that you do what you can do.

I didn't have enough money to pay for health insurance and I thought health insurance doesn't guarantee your health. It guarantees health care. Now, health care is just

another expense, isn't it? I mean, I go to the store to buy food.

I go to a doctor to pay for health care. I go to a dealer to buy a car. Health insurance doesn't make you healthy.

It just pays the bills for health care, just like any other bill. So I saw we did pay health. We did see doctors on rare occasions.

We just never went to the same one twice because we got sick so seldom. But we just pay out of pocket. We just thought, what do we need insurance for this for? We just paid out of pocket.

It was very rare. And everyone said, well, what if something catastrophic happens? Well, I guess God will know about it. He pays our current bills.

If there's a catastrophic thing, then God will have to, I guess, cover that. And my philosophy about this, I'm not against people having health care, and I have it now because we have to by law. I'm not happy about that.

But my philosophy is this, when it comes to my health and my family's health, which I was responsible for when my kids were growing up. My idea was, well, God can keep me healthy or not. If he doesn't keep me healthy and I get sick, he can heal me or not.

If he doesn't heal me, he can give me the money to go to a doctor or not. If he doesn't give me money to go to the doctor, I can die. And that's okay.

It's like, what's to worry about here? God can keep me healthy, which is frankly what he normally did. I've never had any catastrophic health issues, and nor did my family. But I just figured when we have little health issues, God can provide the money and we'll pay for it.

If we can't pay for it, we live with those consequences. We'll just make sure we're not neglecting anything God wants us to do. And we're very conscientious about that.

And then just say, well, whatever the consequences are, that's God's, that's his worry. And that's what it means casting all your cares upon him. Let him worry for you.

The word cares means worries. Cast all your worries on him, for he worries for you. That's really what the passage says.

Let him worry for you. Wouldn't you love to have somebody take on all your worries? So you didn't have to, I heard a story, it was a joke, but it's a story about this guy who's a big worrier and all his friends knew he was a huge worrier. In fact, he annoyed them all the time with all his negativity and his worrying about the future.

And one day he was different. He was just different. They saw him with a spring in his

step, walked down the street happy.

They had conversations, nothing came up that would come up. And one guy says, John, it seems like you used to always be worried about things and you seem so different now. What's changed? He said, well, I found somebody who worries for me.

And you think this is a Christian story, but it's not. Thank you very much. And his friend said, well, what do you mean? He says, well, I just take all my worries to this guy and he has a worrying story.

He worries for me. I don't have to worry. And his friend said, wow, how much does, how much does that cost? He said it costs a thousand dollars a day.

And his friend said, well, how are you going to pay for that? He said, well, that's his worry. But that's really what casting all your cares on him, because he cares for you means. He'll worry for you.

You just do his will for your life day by day, moment by moment. And don't worry about it. He'll worry about that.

And I find that that's true. I did have one time I had to go to a hospital, not for me, but for my youngest son. I raised five children to adulthood without having a family doctor or ever seen a hospital.

My youngest son was the only one still a dependent, 16 and a half years old. He went skateboarding with a friend, broke his arm real bad. This part bone was like this.

His friend, fortunately, was smart enough to pull the bone out and take him to the ER and gave me a call. So I went to the ER to meet him. We had to sit there a long time because there were a lot of people there who were probably undocumented who were ahead of us.

And I don't begrudge it. If I were them, I'd want to do what they did, too. But it made it inconvenient.

We had to wait a couple hours. And finally, when we got in, it had been two hours and the bone had began to heal wrong. And the doctor had to break it again and put it in cast.

Anyway, because they found out I didn't have any health insurance. So they charged me \$2,000. Now, that was good because it would have cost me a lot more if I had insurance or it would have cost somebody a lot more.

All the all the policyholders would have paid for that. Instead, I paid for myself. And the hospitals like that, they don't like to do the paperwork for the insurance.

So they give you a break. Cost \$2,000. I don't normally have \$2,000 playing around for that kind of thing.

That was on a Sunday. But the day before, which was a Saturday, obviously, I had gone to my mailbox and pulled a letter out from somebody I did not know. Turns out he's a lawyer in Texas.

I have met him since then. He's actually I've actually spoken to him since then. But at that time, he was a complete stranger to me.

And he had a note in there. He said, I've been using your lectures. They've been a great benefit to me.

I just want to give you get he's written me a check to me personally, because if they write the narrow path, I don't get it. I don't take anything from the narrow path. But he's written me a personal check for \$2,000.

At that time of my life, no one had ever given me at least no stranger had ever given me a check that large. And and yet that was the day before my son broke his arm. So when they charged me \$2,000, I had the money ready at hand because God had provided.

And as we're driving home from the hospital, my son said, well, Dad, don't you wish now that you had health insurance? I said, you've got to be kidding me. I've been raising kids for 35 years. If I'd had health insurance all the time, this broken arm would have cost me \$10,000.

As it is, it cost me \$2,000. And God sent the check in the mail yesterday for it. So this is the this is the way, frankly, I've lived for.

Well, I like I did work part time for the first 12 years, but for at least 38 years of my ministry, I've just lived that way. And God has provided now. To do that, you have to have a number of things.

First, you need to pray. The Bible says you have not because you ask not. You've also got to make sure you're being obedient because God's not obligated to enable you in a disobedient lifestyle.

You need to make sure that what you're doing is serving God and you're doing specifically what you think he truly wants you to do. Then you can just trust him with the rest. You also have to be content with what he provides.

You can't say, well, God, I'm going to live by faith and here's what my lifestyle bills are here and this is what you have to provide. He'll say, well, we'll see. You'll see.

If you live by faith, you're probably not going to get rich and it won't work out for people who do want to get rich. If you don't want to get rich, you just want to serve God and you

want to make sure the bills are paid. God knows how to pay the bills.

And Paul said, I've learned to be content with whatever state I'm in, whether I'm abounding or whether I'm a base, it's okay. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. If you're contented, if you're praying, if you're obedient, and then you have to be resigned to outcomes, you might die.

In fact, let me inform you, you will die. You're going to die. Now, I don't know when I hope it's not too soon for any of you, but if it is, it won't be a mistake.

If you're doing the will of God, if a sparrow can't fall to the ground and die without it being the will of God, you certainly can't. The Bible says the angel of the Lord encamps around about those who fear him and delivers them. That's psalm 34, seven.

And also in Psalm 91 verse 11 and 12, it says he has given his angels charge of you to keep you in all your ways. And in their hands, they will bury you up, let you dash your foot against the stone. The angels of God are dispatched to protect, to deliver those who fear him, those who follow him, those who continue in the way he's made for them.

They keep you in all your ways and they deliver the righteous. I believe that. I've never seen an angel, but I believe it because it's because God said it.

And that means I cannot die. I cannot even become injured unless God tells the angels, okay, step aside. Let this, let this damage come through this guy.

Cause I'm going to test him like Job or whatever. Remember Satan couldn't hurt Job. He complained, God, I can't touch that.

You put a hedge around everything he has. I can't teach him to touch his stuff. Can't touch his family.

Can't touch him. This is not really fair. How can I ever test him? And God said, okay, I'll let you, I'll let you test him.

So God opened the hedge up and let and Job's though he had very little, had no Bible and very little theological savvy. He said the Lord gives and the Lord takes away. And that was true.

He said, God, the implications, if God gave it in the first place, he had the right to take it. It's his, not mine. Let him take it if he wants it.

But the important thing is he saw it was in fact, God who took it away. Now you might say, no, he didn't know the devil took it away. Right.

But God let him and the devil couldn't until God let him because the angel of the Lord encamps are of those who fear him and delivers them. There's nothing. No harm can

come to a trusting God fearing saint.

Unless God wants it to. That means you can't die until he wants you to. You can't get sick until he wants you to, you can't get injured.

This is not some kind of word of faith thing. You can get sick. You can die.

You can die prematurely, but not before God wants you to. If you're trusting him, the idea is you don't belong to you. You belong to him.

You trust him. He's your father and he'll take care of everything. If you seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, everything else that he thinks you need will be added to you.

And that's the way of peace. That's the way of confidence. That's the way of fearlessness.

That's the way of no anxiety. And that's living according to what you say, you believe that's living. That's what I'm calling living by faith.

And so that's what I was asked to talk about. And I've gotten probably a little bit longer than I should. So thank you very much.

I'm going to have somebody come on up here and end this thing. Because if you leave that up to me, it'll never end. So all right.

Great. Thank you very much. God bless you brother.