

The Confidence of Quietness

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This booklet was created from a message preached by Pastor Stevens.

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

Some men are able to go anywhere and everywhere and disciple people. They plant churches and people come. I think their secret is in knowing that everything is all right in the Father's house. This confidence with quietness comes from knowing that whether we listen to a message from the Word of God or read a book on a Bible theme, every word is for us, personally and individually.

Every word that comes to me from God to speak in the pulpit is first for me. If I don't see it that way, then I am living in hypocrisy. That is, I am pretending. In listening to what God says to me, I must hear carefully what the Spirit is saying. The still, small voice of God is always revealing great principles about me, about God, and about life.

Every one of us is a vessel, and every one of us must be broken in some way. Some of us are very unique and strong vessels. Some of us are great physical specimens of health and happiness and prosperity. All of us will crack some

how, some way. Why? Because God cannot use the proud. Any heart that exalts itself away from the Cross, away from Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, is a proud heart. Its confidence is grossly misplaced.

Humility must come before there can be any honor; otherwise, the honor will go straight to my head. Therefore, God delights to bring details into my life that will break me. Faithful are the wounds of a friend, the Bible tells us in Proverbs 27:6. Those details teach me that real contentment comes from what I have in my heart.

As this booklet will reveal, if my heart seeks the glory of God and His glory only, then I will have His quietness and His contentment controlling my reactions and responses.

Chapter One

WEANED AND MADE MATURE

“LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me.

“Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child” (Psalm 131:1-2).

“And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you” (1 Thessalonians 4:11).

A weaned child is a child who no longer needs to be fed from the breast. He has grown up in a good measure and now lives off more than mother’s milk. Spiritually, we go through a weaning process. As young Christians, God is careful with us. He nurses our capacities with grace and mercy. Surely, our faith will be tested, and sometimes significantly in our early days as believers. But God is with us. He knows our needs and He nourishes our hearts with tenderness as He builds our confidence in Him.

When a mother first starts the weaning process, there is some tension. The child is very comfortable and familiar with the way he has been eating. He is not very interested in changing the program. There are tears and tantrums, and some sentimental mothers give in to the anger. I can remember one story of a woman who was struggling to wean a young boy to get him ready for first grade. That's a long time to be taking in mother's milk.

The spiritual weaning time may find me in confusion. I will have times of being disturbed, envious, jealous, and troubled. Probably I will do a lot of comparing my situation with the situation of someone else. Satan will do his best to keep me in these emotional strongholds, which he sometimes uses to "demonize" a believer, causing us to take on his behavior instead of putting on Christ. With our permission, these strongholds may become internalized. By our choices, outside pressures can be transferred to our souls.

Condescend to Men of Low Estate

"Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits" (Romans 12:16).

"But let every man prove his own work, and

then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another" (Galatians 6:4).

When I am weaned, I possess maturity in my spiritual walk. I have studied, so I am able to rest, to be quiet in the midst of difficulties and circumstances. I do not react to things happening around me on the horizontal plane. My pattern is to maintain my vertical connection. I look up and go before the Throne of Grace, where I can find help in my times of need. My mind is not influenced by the high things of the satanic atmosphere. This is what is going on when someone frets over a little detail because of pride. Mentally and verbally it bothers this person as the demons in the atmosphere are pushing his buttons.

Galatians 6:4 is a beautiful verse. It speaks of looking after yourself. A weaned child knows how to care for his soul and his heart. He guards his heart. He is aware of the things that could become distractions in his life. He avoids the very appearance of evil. He checks out what's going on in his life and compares it with the truth. What isn't true, he casts down as vain or empty. He rejoices because his fellowship is with Christ, and no one can touch that, nor can it be taken away from him. He doesn't need outside approval. Acceptance is not something he must seek. Instead, he knows the One who died for him. He

is approved unto God, and that is enough. He needs no approval from men because he has examined himself, and he is occupied with Christ. His heart is satisfied with Christ and the obedience that this relationship brings out of him.

Chapter Two

QUIETNESS IN THE MIDST OF THE STORM

“If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

“Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

“Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

“Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:1-5).

Once a man came raging into my office and spent nearly an hour making accusations and angry statements about me. It was quite an exchange that went on and on.

God spoke to me and said, “Be silent. Be still. Don’t interrupt, and don’t react.”

When he finished fifty-five minutes into his tirade, I thanked the man. I said, "I love you and want you to know that you can come to me at any time with any trouble."

Months have gone by and today this man is one of my dearest friends. *God* kept me in that exchange. I made no defense and I offered no reaction. That man needed to be loved unconditionally. He became one of the top students in our Bible college.

What happened in my office that day? *God* gave me strength to look at things from this man's viewpoint. He was struggling. He needed to say some things. Maybe I needed to hear what he had to say.

When a wife cries out, she is going through something. The last thing she needs is a reaction from her husband. She needs the love of *God*. This is the whole purpose of brokenness. *God* breaks us so that we can help others and contribute to their lives. The best thing to contribute to another's life is the love of *God*.

This is the way *Jesus* spoke to the world. He did not cry out. The afflictions and contradictions that came against Him did not bring reactions. They brought out His love and His instruction and the beauty of His holiness.

Staying True in Trials

The writer of Philippians was well acquainted with trouble. In Acts 16, Paul and Silas were cast into prison after having been whipped illegally by the Roman authorities. Beaten with the cat-o'-nine tails, their backs were battered and sore, but God supernaturally delivered them. There they were, chained in that dark prison and singing at midnight when the earth quaked and the walls crumbled. Their shackles broke, and they were set free.

Paul was not whining in his situation. There was no negative reaction. He had confidence in Christ and a quietness in his soul that enabled him to sing out. His faith was in bloom, not in gloom. There was joy, not depression. He felt liberty, even though his feet were in stocks. What did this for Paul? It was the mind of Christ that was in him. He allowed Christ's mind to dwell in him and lead him.

Christ lived on earth with a mind of humility. He made Himself of no reputation, even though He alone deserved the most glorious of reputations. His obedience to the plan and purpose of God carried through to His death on the Cross. Christ's humility resulted in His high exaltation. His name is above all names, and one day every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess

that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father.

Proper Self-Examination

Self-examination is really this: quieting ourselves as we relate to the Word of God. This is the true measure of maturity. I behave myself on the inside. There is the provision of the Lord. Someone may rail on me, but I practice the spirit of grace. My countenance remains sweet and I don't impute anger or accusation to myself or to the person doing the railing.

I prayed as the man who became angry at me kept yelling. I say he was angry "at" me, because his real problem wasn't "with" me. "Lord, let him say anything he wants and needs to say right now," I prayed. "Show me if there is any way to meet his real need."

Before he left my office, I embraced this man. He went to his car, he said, and wept like a baby. He told his wife, "I took twenty-five years of self-hatred and dumped it on the pastor."

Then, he confessed to his wife the real issue. This man had an affair with another woman at some point and had never repented before God. Every time I preached on getting right with God, this man's anger and resentment intensified. It was an anger that had built up against himself and it finally poured out. Now he can say he is

free. His marriage is amazing and his unresolved guilt is gone.

All of that happened because God quieted my heart and my spirit in a difficult moment.

Chapter Three

GOING WITH THE FLOW OF GOD

“I lifted up mine eyes again, and looked, and behold a man with a measuring line in his hand” (Zechariah 2:1).

“Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar.

“Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without unto the utter gate by the way that looketh eastward; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side.

“And when the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ankles.

“Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters; the waters were

to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through; the waters were to the loins.

“Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over.

“And he said unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen this? Then he brought me, and caused me to return to the brink of the river.

“Now when I had returned, behold, at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other.

“Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed.

“And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh.” (Ezekiel 47:1-9).

In the book of Ezekiel, the prophet described how the water flowed from the temple of God. It flowed down from the north and then out from the east side of the altar, which speaks of the res-

urrection life of Christ flowing toward us.

The water at first was at the ankles. Then, he was led out and the water reached to the knees, which speaks of advancement in prayer. Next, the prophet was led out to where the water was up to his loins. In Ephesians 6, the believer is instructed to have his loins girt about with truth. When the believer moves out into this depth, then he has grown in doctrine. Truth in categories has been hidden in his heart.

Finally, the water is so deep that the believer has to go with the current, the flow of living waters. This, of course, speaks of the Holy Spirit. There are fish in that river. Jesus told Peter, James, and John (the apostles who left the family fishing business to be disciples of truth) that He would make them fishers of men.

Understanding, prayer, and truth are energized by the work of the Holy Spirit. The result is that people are led to the Lord. We enter into the flow of living waters, and we reach the lost in our Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria. We go into all the world. Missionaries reproduce what they are taught in the way of God, churches are planted, and more people start moving into the flow of God.

The Work of Confidence

What is doing this work? It is the confidence

that comes from quietness and rest in the purpose of God. This will work everywhere, with anyone who will give his life to Christ.

“And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal: and they cried, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon” (Judges 7:20).

Gideon was from a poor family in the tribe of Manasseh. He was the least in his father’s house. But God said to him, “Surely I will be with thee” (Judges 6:16). The Lord promised to use Gideon to bring a victory over the Midianites.

God brought a great victory, using only three hundred men. They won by blowing trumpets and allowing their vessels to be broken. After the vessels were broken, the lamps shined out into the night. The Midianites were driven into confusion and defeat.

These principles work for us as believers. We hear the Word—the trumpet sound—and then we sound out the Word of God. We allow the Word to quiet our hearts in the midst of the battle. First the light shines in our hearts. Then, as we allow our vessels to be broken, it shines out.

The result? Victory.

“After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he

himself would come.

“...And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

“And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

“Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you” (Luke 10:1, 17-19).

“Honour and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary” (Psalm 96:6).

Jesus sent out seventy, and they carried His power with them. What confidence they must have gained from sitting and hearing from the Savior. He spoke powerful words to His disciples, and they had powerful results.

The words of Jesus brought the disciples an understanding of His honor and majesty. His sanctuary brought strength and beauty to their lives. Christians reveal the honor and majesty of Christ as they reverence His presence. Wisdom comes through our humility to hear God. In our weakness, we are made strong. There is power, there is grace, and there is forgiveness.

Humility is brokenness born from our rest in the truth of God. Our hearts are contrite because of the content that He gives us. Our spirits are revived continually. We are given a royal love for

all people. Moment by moment we walk with Him, and He inhabits our praises.

CONCLUSION

Every single believer has great potential to reveal God and all of His characteristics. We are surrounded by a wall of fire. That is, the truth of our permanent position in Christ stands guard around us. Satan cannot break through that wall. It is impenetrable.

Yes, as human beings, we will fail. We will sin. But we have an Advocate with the Father. Jesus Christ stands before the Throne of God and represents us. Jesus stands up to our accuser, Satan, and says to the Father, "Those believers are ours. I bought their redemption with My precious blood, and they received it. Nothing can separate Us from them."

God deals with His family matters. No accusation, no condemnation can stand against those who belong to the Lord. That reality should quiet any anxious thought that might be trying to spring up in our minds. We can stand in the confidence of the Word of God. The Word is settled forever. It cannot be moved. It can never return void. Every word of it is right and real. It feeds

us and leads us and gives us substance to be able to walk in this dark world.

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God Really Cares For You

Jesus loves you deeply. However, the fact that all have sinned separates us from God (*Romans 3:23; 6:23*). Still, God cares for you and He provides a way to share His love with you.

Jesus Christ's love for man was so great that He came and died on the cross for all the sins of mankind. He shed His blood for you so you can be forgiven and have eternal life.

The only thing He requires of you is to come to Him in simple faith trusting His character and love for you, and accepting Him as your Savior. "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (*Acts 2:21*).

Simply pray, "*Dear Jesus, I know I am a sinner. I receive you as my personal Savior. Thank you for loving me so much that you died for me so I can have eternal life with you. Amen.*"

He promises that He will never stop loving you and that He will never leave nor forsake you (*Hebrews 13:5*). Develop your relationship with Him by reading the Bible, praying, and attending a good Bible-believing church.

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