

# Rise Up And Build

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*"So They said, 'Let us rise up and build,' Then they set their hands to do this good work," Neh. 2:18*

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## Peace of Mind Is Precious

By Everett Hardin

*"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we shall carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content," I Tim. 6:6-7.*

**Godliness** "denotes that piety which, characterized by a Godward attitude, does that which is pleasing to Him" (Vine). This coupled with **contentment** is great gain. It is the value that exceeds all material things of this earth. Contentment denotes an inward peace, satisfaction and fulfillment without regard for outward things. In spite of outward circumstances, contentment can remain.

Possibly the most needed commodity in our generation is that of old fashioned sense of peace and contentment — the frame of mind that calmly accepts the inevitable or makes the best of that which cannot be altered. Our generation has become so engulfed in discontent and frustration that mental illnesses have surpassed physical ailments. One must learn to do all he can lawfully to improve his position, yet leave all the consequences with God.

A strong and abiding faith in God, and a firm reliance on His providence precludes our worrying and fretting ourselves into an untimely grave. It is not rational to suppose that God no longer cares for us when we view the manifold bounties which He has showed upon us. These are but manifestations of His care and mercy. The sunrise and sunset, sunshine and rain, seedtime and harvest — all of these attest to the present and continuing providence of God. Even from of old, God has promised, *"While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease,"* Gen. 8:22. This verse declares that the usual seasons will continue as long as the earth stands.

Jesus pointed out only a meager few of these great examples of God's care and concern in the Sermon on the Mount. *"Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of*

*the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?"* (Matt. 6:25-26). Jesus did not say, "Take no thought," as that expression is generally understood today, for He teaches that people should give great consideration to many things. But as it is, He says, "Be not anxious, do not worry, never trouble" about such matters as material necessities; for there are more important things to which you should give your attention (Matt. 6:33-34), Surely the Lord spoke this that we might develop faith in God and cultivate peace of mind and contentment!

God wants us freed from tormenting anxiety. Peter wrote, "*Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you,*" I Peter 5:6-7. This does not mean that we are to be thoughtless about the stern realities of life. It means that our interests are His interests. We need to continue our earthly journey with abiding faith in Him Who holds the universe in the hollow His hand. It is a comforting thought that we can shelve our cares upon the mighty shoulders of God, knowing that He cares for us.

Even the inanimate things of earth are the recipients of God's care and concern. Jesus said, "*Why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith,*" Matt. 6:28-30. Faith and worry cannot dwell together. Let us never doubt God's ability or willingness to provide for His people. We should never "*be of a doubtful mind*" (Luke 12:29). Christians should be distinctive; but if they worry about the material things of life they lose their distinctiveness and become like the people of the world (Luke 12:30). Plainly, Jesus is telling us that we are not to live in painful suspense. We are not to brood in anxiety and doubt. Rather we are to trust our God, and be content with what He provides.

The writer of Hebrews says, "*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have*" for He hath said, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*" (Heb. 13:5). We can be content with such things as we have only when we recognize God as the Giver Who continually supplies our needs as they arise. "*God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work*" (2 Cor. 9:8. Our human weakness necessitates divine power.

How rich indeed is that man who can feast his eyes in leisure upon the wondrous beauty of each new day, drink deeply of those blessings which surround him, lay hold with eager hands upon tasks which confront him, and then close his eyes in thanksgiving to God for having been allowed to live and enjoy these precious things which God's creatures share!

We will begin to live in happiness and peace of mind only when we follow the instructions of the Lord. "*Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you,*" Matt. 6:31. Paul could say, "*I have learned, in whatever state I am, therewith to be content,*" Phil. 4:11. He was content while striving to better his condition and improve on his labors. Satisfaction will cause one to tolerate an undesirable condition, and stifle any effort to improve it. Contentment will accept present conditions, but seek future betterment.

## Improper Attitudes

The author of Psalm 37 mentions some important attitudes. The qualities he mentions are essential for peace of mind and are worth striving for.

**1. Fret Not.** *“Fret not thyself because of evil doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity,”* Ps. 37:1. It is easy in hours of difficulty to feel the Lord has dealt harshly with us. To see the prosperity of the wicked may kindle a spark of jealousy. We begin to ask: “Is it worth it?” A strong faith in God will eliminate the fretting and worrying. The Christian places value upon heaven.

**2. Trust in the Lord and Do Good.** *“Commit thy ways unto the Lord; trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass,”* Ps. 37:3. Faith enables one to see things as they are and place value on things eternal. Human evaluation causes one to see things as they seem. There is a joy in doing good. Spiritual activity will drive away discontent. There is an inward peace that comes from trusting in the Lord to be with us always *“even to the end of the world.”*

**3. Delight.** *“Delight thyself in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desire of thine heart,”* Ps. 37:4. Trusting in the Lord leads to delight in being a Christian. Whatever he gives up to be a Christian he should delight in it. He should delight in being different from the world (I John 2:15-17).

**4. Commit.** *“Commit thy ways unto the Lord; trust always in Him, and He shall bring it to pass,”* Ps. 37:5. A Christian should strive to commit his will to the Lord’s. He should resign to God’s judgments. If we as Christians submit to His will, we can find contentment here, and a home in heaven when this life has ended.

A peace of mind and trusting faith will do much to improve any conditions that should be altered. But haunting fears and perplexities only magnify our difficulties. The closer we walk with the Lord, the more steady and firm our tread. Let us slow down and meditate upon God’s gracious providence and cultivate a peace of mind. Relief from anxiety can never be obtained by the efforts of our own will.

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“The bread of life never becomes stale.”