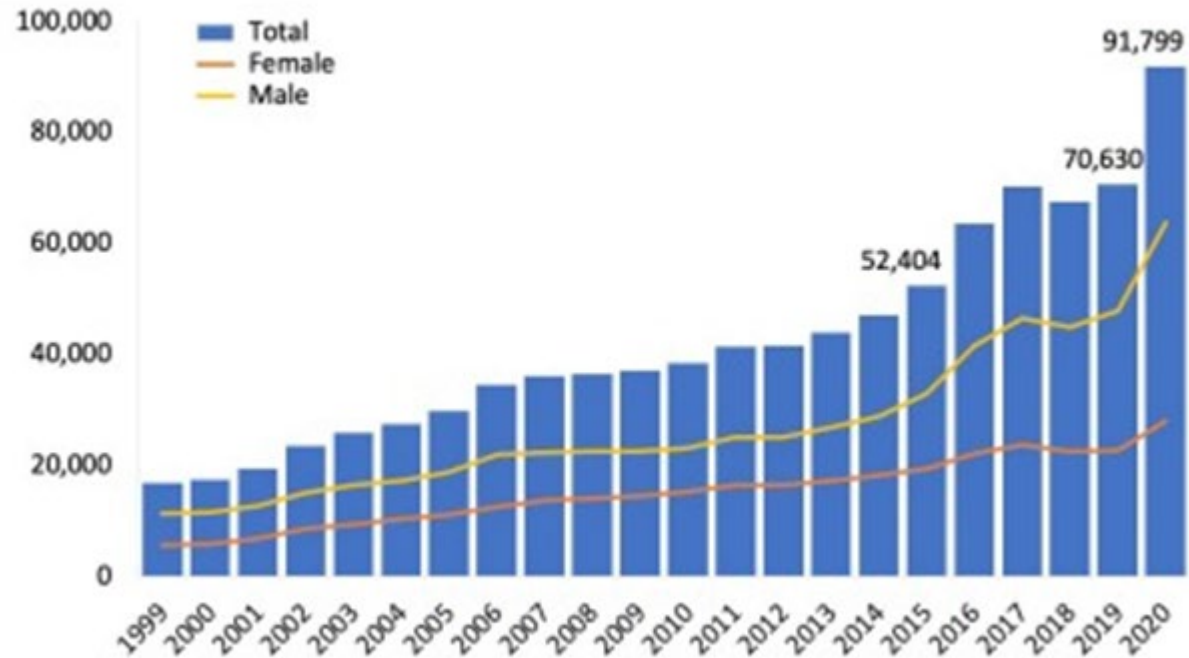


Victory in the Midst of Chaos and Uncertainty

Being content in the middle of the storm

Philippians 4:11-13

Figure 1. National Drug-Involved Overdose Deaths*
Number Among All Ages, by Gender, 1999-2020



*Includes deaths with underlying causes of unintentional drug poisoning (X40-X44), suicide drug poisoning (X60-X64), homicide drug poisoning (X85), or drug poisoning of undetermined intent (Y10-Y14), as coded in the International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision. Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Multiple Cause of Death 1999-2020 on CDC WONDER Online Database, released 12/2021.

Source: National Institutes of Health

<https://nida.nih.gov/research-topics/trends-statistics/overdose-death-rates>



**Suicide through Fentanyl
(opioid) use increasing**

In 2022, 44% increase from 2020

(source: CNN)

<https://www.kktv.com/2022/09/14/us-drug-overdose-deaths-remain-near-record-highs-cdc-says>

Depression, Uncertainty – Increasing loss of will to live

Satisfied
Driven

11Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. 12I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. 13For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.

Contentment is a deep satisfaction
with the will of God.

Satisfied
Driven

24Five different times the Jewish leaders gave me thirty-nine lashes. 25Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. Once I spent a whole night and a day adrift at sea. 26I have traveled on many long journeys. I have faced danger from rivers and from robbers. I have faced danger from my own people, the Jews, as well as from the Gentiles.

I have faced danger in the cities, in the deserts,
and on the seas. And I have faced danger from
men who claim to be believers but are not. 27 I
have worked hard and long, enduring many
sleepless nights. I have been hungry and thirsty
and have often gone without food. I have
shivered in the cold, without enough clothing to
keep me warm.

Contentment is a deep satisfaction
with the will of God.

Satisfied
Driven

Victory in the Midst of Chaos and Uncertainty

Being content in the middle of the storm

Philippians 4:11-13

Victory in the Midst of Chaos and Uncertainty

Main Text: Philippians 4:11-13 (NLT)

Sang Sur • December 18, 2022

[Ask God to encounter and transform our lives.](#)

[Ask God for healing and victory over spiritual warfare.](#)

11Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. 12I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. 13For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.

Begin with a promise: (separate sheet!)

Connect today with the people:

- The pandemic in 2020 sharply increased the use of drugs to get away from the depression and leading to overdose deaths. By 2022, that high number increased by 56%, and that number does not seem to shrink.
- Today, there is greater depression, and uncertainty than ever. As perhaps seen at our Bible study on Friday, there is chaos because people don't know which truth to align to. With many questions, people go into ways to avoid the pain, whether by drugs, video games, pornography, and isolation.
- We certainly want to welcome such people to our group to find healing and relationships, I want to focus on us today. We need some healing first, so that we can tell others about it.
- Be open to receive today, and may God speak to you where you are.
- What are the chaos and uncertainty you experience today? Let's bring that to center and talk about how you can be victorious in the midst of it!

(Pray!)

Sang's definition of being content – satisfied and driven

When I decided to take on our ministry (just five weeks ago?), I came to a bizarre illusion. We had a good 6-8 people (no one under college!), and I figured that's a great start. Then came next week, where three people showed up, and that was because Marcello brought his wife!

- When things don't work as unexpected, how do you take it (interpret the situation)?
 - o It was not God's will. God said no. You misunderstood God, and you are now in a lot of trouble!
 - o Or, it was God's plan, and He's preparing you for something great?
- At first, I was down, and the people there could probably hear it in my voice. BUT, I realized it is spiritual warfare for something great God is doing.
- I knew God's hand was all over it because I had confirmed with God over many weeks (with my wife, with friends) that this is God's timing for me to take part in Church ministry. So if I "failed" recognizing that God started the work, then it would be on God. And I would know it was for good (my good!).
- So I did not lose strength and courage then. For the Bible study, I heard about the weather and that some people may not be able to come. I did not lose courage. Then, at the last minute, someone personally messaged me that she could not come. I did not lose courage. Why? Because I knew God's hand was all over it. I was content with whatever God was doing.

The Apostle Paul wrote this letter at his time of greatest uncertainty. He was in jail (Philippians 1:7) without any certainty of what would happen to him (he can die!). In his situation, he writes about how he can be content (**Read the verse again**). If you were in his shoes, how would you interpret the events?

How you interpret the moment can make the difference

I know some of you are going through some new things, while some of you feel stuck where you are. You do not know what the future holds for you. Can you be content in the midst of the chaos and the uncertainty?

Can you be courageous and strong when things don't work out as you expected?

- You went to job interviews, prayed for them because you felt God was directing you to it. Then it didn't work out.
- You applied to some schools, trusting God, then it didn't work out
- You thought the person was the right mate for you, but after so many attempts, nothing happened.
- You started a business with full hope of good things, but within days, profits declined.

(You believe God is responsible for the results. It is not about you!).

You can stand strong when you know it was the will of God, for our own good.

How can you know if it was the will of God?

- You recognize God's voice and you followed Him in obedience.
- You are part of a small group who know you and have prayed together with you for this
- You are a Christian, and therefore spiritual warfare is fierce whenever God is ready to do something big

Today, people in our ministry face many spiritual warfare. Know that it is for good! (I can share how I believed my wife would be mine in Sophomore year, but nothing happened until one year after graduation).

Define: **Contentment is a deep satisfaction with the will of God.**

Consider this passage about the Apostle Paul (about 6 years before his letter to the Philippians)

2Corinthians 11:24-27 (NLT)

*24Five different times the Jewish leaders gave me **thirty-nine lashes**. 25Three times I was **beaten with rods**. Once I was **stoned**. Three times I was **shipwrecked**. Once I **spent a whole night and a day adrift at sea**. 26I have traveled on many long journeys. I have **faced danger from rivers and from robbers**. I have **faced danger from my own people**, the Jews, as well as from the Gentiles. I have **faced danger in the cities, in the deserts, and on the seas**. And I have **faced danger from men who claim to be believers but are not**. 27I have **worked hard and long, enduring many sleepless nights**. I have been **hungry and thirsty** and have often gone without food. I have **shivered in the cold**, without enough clothing to keep me warm. **(But it was fine!)***

Yet, he talks about contentment. He believed the pains he was suffering was part of God's purposes.

So then, how do you see you uncertainties, suffering, and confusion?

If you asked Paul, he would say, in his crazy circumstances, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (v. 13). (Imagine someone who had been successful in the corporate world seemingly unsuccessful!)

What would you say in your circumstances?

Drivenness – it may seem like the opposite, but if you follow my definition, it is not.

How can you find the strength to carry out the impossible? The uncertain future that lies ahead of you?

You remain close with God, and listen to Him. When you know God is directing you to something, you do it, and believe whatever He directs you to is good and for His purposes. **(Example of Prayer Tents since 2015, my studies).**

Again, how can you know?

- You recognize God's voice and you followed Him in obedience.
- You are part of a small group who know you and have prayed together with you for this

Jesus at Gethsemane. He prayed that he would NOT be tortured and die, but after confirming with God about His destiny, He sought to die. (He asked his disciples to put their swords away, remained silent at hearings, he gladly carried the cross).

When you feel you ought to try for that job, do it. Trust God for the results.

When you feel you need to ask someone out, do it. Trust God for the results.

When you feel you need to apply for a difficult school/major, do it. Trust God for the results.

When you feel you need to start a business where things don't make sense yet, do it. Trust God for the results.

When you feel you need to request forgiveness, even if you have not done wrong, do it. Trust God for the results.

When you feel God telling you to go approach someone and tell them the Gospel, do it. Trust God for the results.

Even if you fail, you should be ok because it was God driving it, not you.

Yet, you are driven.

Abraham did not know where He was going, but he blindly went just because God said so.

The people of Israel did not know where they were going. They suffered in the wilderness of the desert, living in temporary houses, moving at random times. They believed in God and that it was good.

Where do you feel you need to be driven today?

Let's go to God together. (Ministry time – ask the Holy Spirit to come)

1. Are you content with what God has given you? Whether turmoils, chaos, uncertainties – are you grateful that you experience them today?
2. Are you driven to the things of God? Do you hear God and follow Him when He directs you? Or are you walking alone? Ask God to help you!
3. Do you know people who are having difficult time accepting their circumstances today? How does God direct your heart toward them?

Protection from Spiritual Warfare

Psalms 91:1-16 (NLT)

1Those who live in the shelter of the Most High will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty. 2This I declare about the Lord. He alone is my refuge, my place of safety; he is my God, and I trust him. 3For he will rescue you from every trap and protect you from deadly disease. 4He will cover you with his feathers. He will shelter you with his wings. His faithful promises are your armor and protection. 5Do not be afraid of the terrors of the night, nor the arrow that flies in the day. 6Do not dread the disease that stalks in darkness, nor the disaster that strikes at midday. 7Though a thousand fall at your side, though ten thousand are dying around you, these evils will not touch you. 8Just open your eyes, and see how the wicked are punished. 9If you make the Lord your refuge, if you make the Most High your shelter, 10no evil will conquer you; no plague will come near your home. 11For he will order his angels to protect you wherever you go. 12They will hold you up with their hands so you won't even hurt your foot on a stone. 13You will trample upon lions and cobras; you will crush fierce lions and serpents under your feet! 14The Lord says, "I will rescue those who love me. I will protect those who trust in my name. 15When they call on me, I will answer; I will be with them in trouble. I will rescue and honor them. 16I will reward them with a long life and give them my salvation."

ptents.com/s/Psa91.1-16

Don't fear. All troubles around you will be ok because God protects you.