

Contentment

Philippians 4:10-13 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity.

¹¹ Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: ¹² I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. ¹³ I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

We face discontentment on a daily basis.

- Envy of others possessions.
- Envy of others successes.
- Our culture. – Gen Z not understanding that they don't have as much at the beginning of their careers as their grandparents do at the end of their careers.

Paul understood the need for contentment

- **1 Timothy 6:6-8** Now godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷ For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is* certain we can carry nothing out. ⁸ And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.
- **Philippians 4:11-12** Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: ¹² I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.
- Covetousness, Envy and Contentment cannot co-exist. Envy destroys our happiness. Contentment will allow happiness and joy where envy pushes it out of reach.

Envy causes us to hate people we don't know.

- We often imagine others lives to be something they are not

- Social media makes us think we know what someone's life is like, when in fact, we do not.
- All talents and gifts are given by God. To be envious of a talent or gift is to question God's design for you.
- Lack of contentment in who I am, what I am, and what I have is what drives envy.

Paul says he found the secret of contentment

- **2 Corinthians 12:10** For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.
- **Philippians 4:11** Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:

Paul is not saying that he is content right now because he just got a gift from a church.

Philippians 4:10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity.

- At last – not a tone of “ugh, finally.” Rather more like it has been a while and Paul is amazed they are still thinking of him. He is happy that they are doing well enough to send support again.
- Paul stresses that he is not in this for the money.
- **Philippians 4:11** Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:
 - This verse shows that he is not in need. The reason he is not in need is because he has learned contentment without provisions.
- He is content rather his needs are met or not.
- **Philippians 4:17** Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account.
 - He is not seeking the gift, but he receives the gift. Receiving it allows others to be blessed by God.

- **Acts 20:35** I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "
- The body of Christ is that one who has shares with one who does not have.

The Secret to Contentment

- **Philippians 4:12** I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.
- Paul knew what it's like to be in all situations. Lydia's house was nice. Homelessness was not. Wonderful things can overwhelm that you feel you can't live without it. Lack of things can make you feel angry that you don't have it. Both lead to inability to serve God.
- The challenge is to feel content in any situation.
- Content – autarkes – self-sufficient, self-complacent

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

- This is the antithesis of the definition. Christ-sufficient.
- Contentment is a result of bowing my heart and mind to the will of God no matter the conditions I face. No matter the situations this will lead to contentment.
- Neither overwhelmed by poverty nor intoxicated by prosperity.
- Paul is not saying he can do anything to which he puts his mind. We take Phil 4:13 out of context. It is not about accomplishing anything, but about being content in any situation.
- By Christ's strength I can be calm in adversity and humble in prosperity. This is what is truly needed.

Contentment is learned. It is not something that just comes automatically when we get saved. Vs. 11 - "I have learned..."

How did Paul learn this?

Because His discontentedness of knowing Christ from Chapter 3 leads to the contentment in circumstances of Chapter 4

- **Philippians 3:10-14** that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,¹¹ if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.¹² Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.¹³ Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,¹⁴ I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
- Contentment is grounded in our union with Jesus. 3:10 preceded 4:13

Christian contentment is independent of my circumstances.

- The knowing of Christ makes this possible.
- Is what we do on Sunday simply behavioral modification or are we getting to know Christ and allowing Him to change us? Same for disciplines.
- Knowing principles and knowing the right things is not the same as knowing Christ.
- The more I know Christ the more content I become. It is a result of an ever-deepening relationship with Christ.

Christian contentment is the fruit of having no higher ambition than to belong to the Lord and to be entirely at His disposal

Contentment is a hallmark of a mature Christian. It is seldom valued, but is a grace.

Isaiah 26:3 You will keep *him* in perfect peace, *Whose mind is stayed on You*, Because he trusts in You.