

Contentment



"Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, 'I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU.'"

HEBREWS 13:5



PRAY FIRST: Let us be at thy disposal for the duties and events of life, submit our preferences to thy wisdom and will, resign our enjoyments if thou shouldst require it as our absolute Proprietor and best Friend.

Understanding the Truth

Discussion

- **The Apostle Paul said in Philippians 4:11**—"Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am." When do you feel discontentment the most? In other words, what circumstances in your life seem to rob you of joy and inner satisfaction?

A. Defining Contentment—What is contentment?

1. **Contentment is NOT compliance** to *everything* or *everyone* around you. It is not copping out of life or difficult situations. Neither is it settling for the status quo or accepting the fact that nothing is perfect. Contentment is not being satisfied with what is wrong. The word used in the New Testament means “self-sufficient.” It carries with it the idea of having enough and not depending on others.
2. An ancient definition of contentment pictured a nation with sufficient resources within her own land and never needing to import goods from outside countries. That’s the idea. Contentment is finding sufficiency and satisfaction—not in yourself—but in looking to and trusting in Christ.
 - Read 2 Corinthians 3:5, 12:9-10; 1 Timothy 6:6, 8; Hebrews 13:5.

Jeremiah Burroughs (1599-1646), a well-known Puritan preacher, defined contentment as “*that sweet, inward, gracious frame of spirit, which freely submits to and delights in God’s wise and fatherly disposal in every condition.*” (*The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, p.4)

3. **Contentment means we are satisfied with WHO WE ARE IN CHRIST and not dissatisfied with WHAT GOD IS DOING in our lives.** It is being content with what He has given us and what circumstances He has allowed us to be in to work out His purpose to make us more like Christ.

B. Discovering Contentment—How do you find contentment?

- Read Philippians 4:11-13. The Apostle Paul said that he had learned the secret of contentment, which means two things: first, contentment is not automatic with conversion, but it must be learned by growing in the knowledge of God’s sovereignty, His providence, and His wisdom (*Psalm 103:19; Romans 11:33-36*). Second, the secret of contentment is found in reliance upon and a closeness to Christ (*John 16:33*).

C. Developing Contentment—How do you grow in contentment?

Since contentment is learned through life and its secret is connected to a reliance and close relationship with Christ, what can one do to develop it?

1. **Saturate your mind with Scripture.** Jesus said, “*Sanctify them in truth; Your word is truth*” (*John 17:17*).
2. **Simplify your lifestyle.** Jesus told Martha that only a few things matter (*Luke 10:41-42*). What are those things? Your soul, your relationships, and your witness or legacy. Everything else will fade away.

D. Displaying Contentment—How is contentment shown?

1. **Express thankfulness every chance you get.** The slippery slope of spiritual decay starts when we begin to think that God owes us something and we become thankless or ungrateful (*Romans 1:20ff*). There is a simple song that can help us. It goes like this:

*Count your blessings, name them one by one,
Count your blessings, see what God hath done!
Count your blessings, name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.
(Count Your Blessings, Johnson Oatman)*

2. **Say NO to legitimate desires** sometimes like that *slice of pie* or *pair of shoes* or even some personal time that you were planning for yourself.

Embracing the Truth

Knitting the truth of God's Word into our lives



- Take the time to pray about contentment in your heart.

APPLICATION

Being a doer of the Word

1. What did I learn ("teaching")?
2. Where do I fall short ("reproof")?
3. What do I need to do about it ("correction")?
4. How can I make this a consistent part of my life ("training")?



ACCOUNTABILITY

Placing yourself in transparent and accountable relationships

How are you doing in the area of **HEALTH** and **WELLNESS**?

- Assess your eating and exercise this past week:

(Unstable) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Stable)

Obeying the Truth—your mission this week

Engaging the lost through word and deed with the intention of imparting the Gospel



- Give something of value away with the intention of being a blessing to someone.



MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK: Hebrews 13:5

"Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU."



EXTRA RESOURCES FOR THE VAULT

Segal, Marshall. *Killjoys: The Seven Deadly Sins*. Minneapolis: Desiring God. 2015. Print.
Burroughs, Jeremiah. *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*. EEBO. 2010. Print.

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Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references are from the New American Standard Bible: 1960, 1962, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman Foundation.