

Keys for Contentment

Before we look at our verses for this lesson in Ph 4

Jesus told his disciples not to carry purse... why? He set up a circle of beneficence where the minister of the gospel would be provided for by the believers here in Ph 4 this pattern is understood.

¹⁰But 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. ¹¹Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: ¹²I 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. ¹³I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: 1 Ti 6:6- godliness with contentment is great gain. Is contentment the goal? I see in Scripture examples of **godly discontent**.

- Adam in the garden of Eden- not fully feeling the contentment until Eve
- Jacob wrestling with the Angel- I am not content with this encounter alone "I will not let you go unless you bless me"
- The children of Israel were not to rest content while they had not fully conquered the promised land
- Jesus – not content to dwell in His high and holy heaven surrounded by the adoration of the angels while we were lost. Is 62:1 –...for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, Until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, And her salvation as a lamp *that* burns.

-type of discontent inspires, motivates, drives us to pursue, aspire, change, to exert ourselves in an endeavor. Thirst, hunger - inbuilt checks and balances, feedback loop, God-given cues, that signal us to act. Physiologically, those who have lost sense of hunger - not motivated to eat very healthfully. more like humph what do I feel like eating? What sounds good?

Spiritually - Ps 63:1 O God you are my God early will I seek you; my soul thirsts for you my flesh longs for you...

In contrast there is an **ungodly discontent**.

- **The serpent & Eve** – something more and beyond what God had provided
- **Hebrews 13:5 -clarify and differentiate godly from ungodly discontent**

"Let your conduct (tropos- mode style, character, from same as 5157 trope – revolution) be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. (people who seek for social or political change may start with worthy motives but then they end up making bank and you're like what happened)

To be content = to be without covetousness. Real human problem, across the board:

Lesson 7: A Heavenly Citizenship (Thursday)

1. rich or poor “for from the least of them to the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness” Jer 6:13
2. **Quality of Babylon Jer 51:13- describing Babylon** O you who dwell by many waters, Abundant in treasures, Your end has come, The measure of your covetousness.
3. Sadly, it's **in those who follow the Lord** - And they come unto God as the people comes, and they sit before God as His people, and they hear His words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goes after their covetousness. **Ez 33:31**

Jesus said, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the **things** he possesses.” Lk 12:15

Covetousness is our **selfishness in tangible form (things, an object) =idolatry (Col 3:5)**
The path of covetousness is the path of ungodly discontent.

Paul had needs. And as we saw in Php 4 there were times when the believers didn’t or couldn’t come through for him. He said I know how to abound and to suffer need. Tell us how? What did you do when hungry and suffering need? Acts 20:33-35 -“I have coveted no one’s silver or gold or apparel. ³⁴ Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me.” made tents to support himself. Contentment is not slothfulness.

Go back to Hebrews 13 and compare with Philippians 4. How can we experience contentment? The Source of contentment is the same. “Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” Heb 13

“I can be full or hungry, abased or abound. I can do all that through Christ who strengthens me. Php 4

Ps 23 The Lord is my Shepherd I shall not want. **Contentment is a synonym of happiness - found in Christ**

In Christ we experience the peace of this contentment.

Even in the midst of hunger, distress, persecution, peril? Paul says yes!

After thought: Shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword separate us from the love of Christ? No! **Paul learned the secret to handle the tough times when we are brought low, in need, in distress? Tell us Paul how?** I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. ¹⁹ my God shall supply ALL your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.