

Learning to be Content! Php.4:10-13

Benjamin Franklin once said: *“The discontented man finds no easy chair.”* There are many who struggle with contentment. Some people think that in order to be happy in life, they must accomplish something. If I get this promotion, then I will be happy; if I marry this person or that one I will truly live happily. If my political candidate wins I will be happy. In the last couple of weeks, we have been exposed to lots of unhappy people on social media; they are letting others know how displeased, discontented they are with outcome of the election.

It's interesting to me that the man who can teach us about being content or satisfied in life, lived himself a rough life. He was persecuted, rejected, beaten, and locked in prison unjustly. And yet, he would say things like *“rejoice in the LORD always. Php.4:4* Paul wrote a letter to a church in Philippi and unlike many of his letters, this letter didn't address church issues or theological problems. *This was a letter of gratitude because the partnership this church had with him.* This church was planted by Paul during his 2nd missionary journey around 51-53 AD, then about ten years later, Paul wrote a letter to this church while he was in prison. *Paul was grateful to this church and you can sense this gratitude mood as you read this letter.*

Php.4:10 I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. You have always been concerned about me; you just didn't have the opportunity to show it. This church supported Paul time and time again whenever they had the chance to do. They have a strong bond with the apostle.

Contentment is something to be learned rather than pursued. (v.11) IT'S an attitude, it's a choice to be made. I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.

It's not the situation or circumstance that determines your contentment; you can determine to be content no matter the situation.

Paul's circumstances: in need and with plenty. Hungry, well fed.

2 Cor.6:3-10 tells us more of what Paul had to endure as a follower of Jesus.

Paul learned the secret of being satisfied regardless of the situation he lived. (v.12) whether he was in need or had plenty. Whether living with few resources or having a lot.

This is a choice you have to make in spite of the situation. In other words, **you don't let your situation dictate how you are to respond. You tell the situation how you will respond.** With contentment. This is why even from the dungeon of a prison Paul could say, I rejoice in the Lord. *“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving in your heart, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” V.6*

What was his secret in being content in any situation? (v.13)

“I can do everything through him (Christ) who gives me strength.”

Paul had a Christ-centered perspective in life. His worldview or perspective in life was centered on Jesus. Paul knew that the Lord he served is bigger than any difficulty he could face; *having a Christ's perspective had Paul rejoicing in his suffering because he knew God was controlling the outcome.* We should define **contentment** as *the inner sense of peace that comes from having a relationship with God and knowing that he is in control of my situation.*

I can do all things, everything through Jesus who gives me strength. You too can say like Paul, through Christ you can forgive the one who doesn't deserve forgiveness. Through Christ, you can be at peace when your world seems to be falling down. Through Christ, you can have confidence even in the midst of the storm.

Reuben Morgan said in the song still (*When the oceans rise and thunders roar, I will soar with you above the storm. Father you are king over the flood, I will be still and know you are God.*)

When Jesus is at the center of your life, you will be able to be content in any situation; even in the midst of the storm and chaos you will be able to say. I can do all things through him who gives me strength.

Contentment is something you learn; it's a choice you must make. Christ was the reason Paul can be content in any situation. He saw everything through the eyes of Jesus. **2 Cor.12:10** *That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecution, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.* The secret to being content, satisfied in life is Jesus. **Do you want to live to the fullest, more meaningful?** Get to know Jesus deeply.

Do you want to be content in any situation? *Adopt a Christ-centered perspective.* In order to do that, you must get to know him in a deeper level. ***The more you grow in Christ, the more content you will be in life.*** It's only by truly knowing Jesus and letting him live through you that you could say to anything situation, I can do this through Christ, through the strength he gives me.