

Contentment – week 2.

Christian contentment is “a disposition or state of mind in which we rest satisfied with or accepting of the will of God respecting our temporal affairs—without hard thoughts or speeches concerning His allotments and without any sinful desire for a change. It submissively accepts what is given. It thankfully enjoys present mercies. It is humility for those who expect nothing because they deserve nothing and are sure to be satisfied with the treatment received.

We face hardships: material things we lose stuff, go thru difficult circumstances, spiritual or mental failures. Worldly men imagine that there is true excellence and true happiness in those things that they are pursuing. When they obtain them and cannot find happiness, they look for happiness in something else and are still upon the pursuit that when they come to see it, they look no further. The mind rests there.

Ecclesiastes 2 Solomon seeks purpose and meaning in pleasure, productivity, possessions and property, political power, even wisdom. Realized it was all meaningless, futility, empty, hopeless, despair. Leads to “murmuring” or complaining, **discontent from within.**

It is best that your will not control your affairs. Of course health, success, wealth, reputation deeply concern us. **Jer. 10:23**, “It is not in man to direct his steps.”

a. *Recognize the temporality of life.*

The temporary nature of the material things needs to be understood. The inadequacy for them to satisfy humans; they cannot satisfy. This is what it means to be independent: Handing on to no created thing for comfort. **Read 1 Timothy 6:6-10.** We really do not need very much. **Job 1:21** “Naked I came from my mother’s womb; and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. “

Contentment comes from realizing what is truly essential for life and how rich we really are. 6:8 Essentials are food and clothing. Shelter. What truly is essential?. To never leave or forsake us.

b. *Finding rest and comfort in God.*

Whether we have much or little our contentment is found in God and in God alone. What stills your heart? **Hebrews 13:5-6**, “Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, “I will never leave nor forsake thee.” And call to be content. It means “desiring no more than what one has. ARKEO which means to be satisfied, with no desire for more; It is the antidote to covetousness and an important Christian virtue. If not satisfied with a little you’ll not be satisfied with abundance.

It is a world of disappointments and failures. Think how great the comfort of finding that which will never leave nor fail. Earthly goods are fleeting, health, property, money, friendship...here today and gone tomorrow. Separation is everywhere.

There is so little contentment because so little good understanding of grace and true religion. So few who have an indepth knowledge and relationship with God. Few know the great holiness of God, their own sinful wretchedness, sin and desert, few are content with what they have because they lack humility and self-knowledge. Contentment found at the feet of Jesus. But never satisfied with a little faith, hope or love or little grace. Seek them more and more. Strive to live a life of dependence.

Only one to satisfy the deepest longings of the soul. We should teach one another to bear all things with steadiness of mind. What to do in the day of adversity. Romans 8, "Who can separate us from the love of God?"

- c. **Being assured of His Providence, trust or have faith in a God of Providence.** We should be troubled by our unbelief, unthankfulness, pride; He is holy and righteous. It is ordered wisely. Rest in what he sees fit. Ps. 104:24, "Lord, how many are your works. In wisdom have you made them all: The earth is full of your creatures." All is ordered graciously. Ps. 25:10, "All the paths of the Lord are lovingkindness and truth to those who keep His covenant and testimonies." Mercy to covenant keepers - cannot fret when God wants our good.

Contentment says a person has a proper sense of God's sovereignty, righteousness, wisdom, goodness. Who orders the state that we find ourselves in? "My times are in thy hands" (Ps. 31:15). Do we really believe: All is in God's hands? Shall man dispute with God? Shall the clay say to the potter, Why hast thou made me thus? Is. 45:9, Rom. 9:30. 1 Sam. 3:18 Eli says to Samuel, "Let the Lord do what seems good to him." All is ordered by God. It is all ordered irresistibly. Is. 43:13, "Even from eternity I am He, and there is none who can deliver out of my hand; I act and who can reverse it?" . It is vain to go against them. Ecclesiastes 8:3, "He does whatsoever pleases him." And he "works all things after the counsel of his own will" (Eph. 1:11). All is ordered righteously; Just and true are His ways. **It may be mysterious but never is unjust or unrighteous.**

Full provision and satisfaction is in Christ alone. It sees God's love which gives the soul abundant contentment. He is the door to happiness and contentment. It is a tranquility of soul – PEACE is being satisfied with what God has apportioned.

Covetousness and discontent proceed from unbelief. Heb. 15:3-5. His love is unchanging. It is almost impossible to reproduce in English the emphasis of the original, in which no less than 5 neagatives are used to increase the strength of the negation according to the Greek idiom. Nearest approximation is to render it, "I will never, no, never leave thee, nor ever forsake thee." So fear no want dread no distress nor any trepidation about the future. God will not forsake his own. Heb. 13:6 "So we say with confidence, **"The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"** No fear of man.

Phillip Parnham tells the story of a rich industrialist who was disturbed to find a fisherman sittling lazily beside his boat. "Why aren't you out there fishing?" he asked. Because I've caught enough fish for today said the fisherman. "Why don't you catch more fish than you need?" the rich man asked. "You could earn more money." He added. "and buy a better boat so you could go deeper and catch more fish. You could purchase nylon nets, catch even more fish, and make more money. Soon you'd have a fleet of boats and be rich like me." The fisherman asked, "Then what would I do?" "You could sit down and enjoy life" added the rich industrialist. "What do you think I'm doing now?" the fisherman replied as he looked out to sea.

Does God know what is best? He knows how much you can bear? Ps. 103:14. His faithfulness is to all generations.

Fanny Crosby: O What a happy soul am I' Although I cannot see, I am resolved that in this world Contented I will be, How many blessings I enjoy That other people don't! To weep and sigh because I'm blind, I cannot, and I won't.

It is to trust in God's providential care. He is the reason for our contentedness. He has promised never to forsake us. He has promised to be our helper 1Jn. 4:4. Told us not to worry Mt. 6:25-32. We are of greater value to God than all else in creation. Only be discontented with what one ought to be discontented with.

CONCLUSION: Secrets of Contentment 1. Nothing on earth lasts or satisfies Ecc. 1:8, 2. Actually having God in one's life 2 Jn. 9. 3. Confidence in a wise loving providence of God Heb. 11:6, Rom. 8:28 3.