

When Living Means Christ, We Have Contentment - Philippians 4:11-13,19

Like the peace and joy we have been talking about from Philippians 4 in the last two months, contentment is not a product of human achievement, but a gift of God's grace. It is the result of the activity of God whereby He grants us a sense of inner sufficiency no matter what is happening outwardly.

Certainly most of us can experience a sense of mental and emotional contentment when we are adequately, sufficiently supplied - with housing, food, money, friends and family, health - just to mention a few important aspects of life. But Paul (and we) recognize the temporary nature of such things, how fragile and changeable they are. The Bible repeatedly reminds us of the foolishness of being totally invested in what is "passing away." (I Jo 2:17) Hebrews 13:5 says it rather bluntly: "Make sure 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'." Meaning what? "Money" - and the material goods it may buy - can easily leave you. You will certainly leave it someday. Then what?

It's one of God's ways of saying that the contentment, the satisfaction, the sufficiency, the "supply" we are all made for is in God, not the "goods". (See Habakkuk 3:17-19) Jesus puts it this way in John 10:10; "The contented, satisfied - abundant life you are looking for... is in Me!" In Philippians 4:12 Paul points us directly to the secret of contentment. It will not be found in ABASING - practicing a harsh asceticism that denies all the world has to offer. It will not be found in ABOUNDING - indulging in everything the world has to offer. Contentment is known in ABIDING - in receiving and making our home in what the (material) world can never offer - Jesus Christ. Listen to 4:13, "I can make it through anything in the One Who makes me who I am." (The Message)

In other words, contentment is for those who will seek to be filled with God - with or without the goods! You and I cannot buy anything that lasts (Heb 13:5), but we may freely receive and live from that which abides forever. We are, with Paul, learning the 'secret' - to abide in Christ for all we need. And, when we abandon to Him in "whatever circumstances" - we discover that He is enough. The witness of contentment is upon us as we do!



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GREETINGS

In nearly 30 years of writing these little "epistles", I don't believe whatever I've written on one side to feel so "out of joint" with what is said on the other side. Although I thoroughly believe the meditation on contentment to be absolute truth, neither my soul nor my body has validated it for about 6-7 weeks now.

Without going into too many details, I have entered into a "health crisis" of sorts that just cannot seem to be resolved. I've seen endocrinologists, cardiologists, nephrologists. I've done more bio-chemical testing than ever in my life. I've cancelled more events in 30 days than in the last 30 years (no exaggeration!).

I won't bore you with the symptoms, but simply say the fluctuating blood pressure and heart rates, the sleeplessness and fatigue, the weight loss and mood swings have done a pretty good job of "slamming me to the mat" for the last month or so. Such symptoms point toward some endocrine or hormonal problem, but all tests are coming back negative.

Why tell you all this? You are family and have been on this journey with us for years. We value your prayers and encouragement. And, as Ella and I have discussed many times recently, how in the world do people manage this kind of stuff without a deeper place to go? My soul and body are not content with this, at peace about this, rejoicing in it at all. But... but... a great big old holy "BUT"... we have found Him to be enough, our anchor in the time of this particular storm. He is faithful.

No calendar at this point.

We are on a week to week - day to day basis.
All September out of town events are cancelled.

October calendar is currently on hold.

Call if you have any questions
or to confirm local

Bible Study group meetings and
CenterPoint Christian Fellowship events.

We appreciate your understanding.

♥ PRAISE and PRAYER ✝

♥ Christ our Solid Rock

♥ Support and encouragement of friends

✝ Patience, endurance, and healing for Steve
and family

✝ A renewed compassion for those in need

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