

CONTENTMENT

A woman recently asked, “Pastor, I’ve heard a number of sermons on contentment, and yet I have experienced so little of it. Why is that?” In answer to her question I would like to quote Socrates, “Whoever is not contented with what he/she has, would not be contented with what he/she would like to have.” In other words, if you cannot find contentment where you are right now, you are unlikely to find it if you obtain the things you think will make you content. The apostle Paul put it this way, ***“Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me”*** (Philippians 4:11-13).

“I have learned the secret,” Paul says, “of being content in any and every situation.” Implying that finding contentment in life is not easy. It is something we must discover and then teach ourselves to do. We are probably all seeking a measure of contentment - to be content and to be at rest in any and every circumstance. We are all looking to find this secret, yet few of us ever do. The apostle Paul said, “I’ve found the secret, and I’ve learned it! So now I know what it means to be content.” If you are struggling with being content it is primarily because of your lack of trust in God. You’re not struggling with being content because of your negative circumstances; you are finding it difficult mainly because you fail to trust God enough. That’s why discontentment and unhappiness surfaces in your life in the way it does. The fact is, God knows what is best for you and will do what is best for you!

Notice that Paul learned to be content even when he felt weak? ***“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”*** Your feelings will never establish contentment in your life; rather, it is the knowledge that you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you, which will bring this about. A respected university professor said, “Contentment is the direct fruit of having no higher ambition than to belong to the Lord and be at His disposal anywhere and at any time.” So when we use the word “contentment,” that’s what we should have in mind. When we are truly content it is because we have no higher ambition than to be in the Lord hands waiting for Him to do what is best for us. This is when we can declare, “The aim of my life is for God to do with me whatever He wills. Because He is my Father and I trust Him completely, everything is going to work out together for my good.” And remember this, with God; everything is subject to change for the better!

I am convinced that the Lord is glorified most in us, when we are most contented in Him.