

# Contentment Is - -

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Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: <sup>12</sup>I 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. <sup>13</sup>I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Philip. 4:11-13 nkjv

Contentment is a state of mind that leads to peacefulness. Freedom. Joy. Undisturbedness. Picture yourself sitting at the beach soaking in the sunset as palm trees wave over your head in the gentle breeze, and no sense of needing to be anywhere else. As Mooch would say, "Yesh!"

The contentment that Paul speaks of is one of the greatest rewards of the Christian life. It influences our spiritual, mental and physical well-being and shapes our relationships, our demeanor and even our sleep. It is one of the most reliable indicators of authentic Christianity.

## Discontentment Is - -

The sin-nature that we are born with gives us an empty soul that begs to be filled. We have an insatiable hunger for meaning and purpose. A painful inner loneliness because of the loss of the fellowship with God that we were created to enjoy. We are driven by a need for wholeness that, in fact, can only be achieved through a relationship with Creator God. He made it so and there are no options, substitutes or shortcuts.

We try to compensate for whatever measure we are lacking that fellowship with God, by making ourselves the center of our world. Life becomes "all about me." Anything that threatens that status fosters discontentment. It might have to do with position, money, "stuff" or other factors that influence social status; our looks; acceptance by others or countless other situations and aspects of life.

Human emotions are easily bound to circumstances. Our emptiness inflames our emotions when things (even trivialities) are different than we want. We expect something that we don't have - - and we won't be contented without it! It's hard for us to admit the real reason why we

become "out of sorts" and grumpy. Why is "Mine!" one of a child's first words?

## God's Word

God has spoken to us about contentment. To start with, we see in our key text (above) that:

1) Contentment is learned. It is not "natural" to humans.

Contentment is a mark of righteousness and a sign of spiritual maturity. To learn it we must pursue righteousness, as in [1 Tim. 6:11](#). And we must determine to *give up* our childish ways and *grow up* spiritually as in [Heb. 5:11-14](#).

2) It is a secret, which is why so few experience it deeply.

What do [Psalm 25:14](#) and [Prov. 3:32](#) say about who God reveals His secrets to? (Our fourth point says more about the secret - - the mystery hidden.)

3) It applies to every situation, including times of plenty or of need in any sphere of life. Our text in the [Amplified Bible](#) says it well.

4) It is ours through Christ!

The "life" of [John 3:16](#) and [10:10](#) is rich and full Life. It is more than mere existence and it is only available through Jesus.

[Col. 1:25-27](#) says, "the mystery hidden – now disclosed to the saints – *which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*" And [Col. 2:2-3](#), "the mystery of God, namely, *Christ, <sup>3</sup>in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*" Christ alone is contentment's foundation and its ongoing source of energy.

If this wonderful provision has been made for us, why are so many born-again Christians still discontented? It's simply because they continue to live childish, self-centered lives, trying to find fulfillment and contentment even while allowing their fleshly instincts to control their response to people, things and circumstances around them.

### Further Instruction

We need more help so let's start with further insight from Philipians:

- 1) The spirit of [2:3-8](#) will change how we experience many relationships.
- 2) The mindset of [3:7-8](#) disempowers various things that otherwise produce restlessness.
- 3) Applying [4:4-7](#) brings a peace that actually guards our hearts and our minds when things aren't the way we want them to be!

When it comes to money and possessions, [Matt. 6:25-34](#) is a good place to start! And Christians who practice [Col. 3:1-3](#) will be freed from the power of many things that now rob them of contentment.

The mindset of [Gal. 2:20](#) and [Romans 12:1-2](#) are important. We no longer live for ourselves, and that has a lot to do with a lot of life!

If we're wise we'll listen to the observations of Solomon in [Eccles. 12:13-14](#). It is true too, that our choices are not only brought to judgment in the end - - they judge us immediately by giving us either contentment or emptiness.

### Contentment then - -

Contentment overrules the fleshly instincts that want to pop into our response to a situation. It releases us to enjoy life as it is.

There is incredible freedom in contentment because it let's God decide what is good and right and wise and "enough." It trusts His total knowledge, perfect love and sovereignty, allowing us to "relax and enjoy the trip."

Contentment opens our eyes to the good in others and to seeing the positive side of things.

It allows us to see what God is doing and to receive instruction on how to cooperate with Him. This profoundly affects our response to "church" and other settings.

Contented people are more fun to be with. They have found their personal identity, security and sense of well-being in Christ and aren't expecting every circumstance and relationship to help fill the emptiness within them. Consequently they are able to be interested in others and to give to them.

### In Conclusion - -

Contentment is itself an act of worship because it is based on God being our source of life. We have surrendered to Him; He is Lord; and He is enough. We are at peace with being the person God made us to be; having what He intends us to have; and doing what He gives us to do. It is so because, as the Amplified says in Philip. 4:13, "I am self-sufficient in Christ's sufficiency." Incredible!

I say confidently that we are approaching a day when only those who unashamedly identify with Christ as in [Luke 9:23-26](#) and [I Cor. 1:18-31](#) will be contented. Only they will be able to identify with Paul's life-giving testimony in [II Cor. 4:7-18](#). They alone will be bearers of hope in the midst of tribulation. Those who walk in such a way have riches that others know nothing of and they would never turn back!

Finally, consider [John 15:4-11](#) on abiding in Christ and the reward of joy that follows. The more we "soak in the Son" the more likely we are to know contentment - - today, and in the day to come!

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