

# CONTENTMENT IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES

## 1 Timothy 6:10, Philippians 4:10-13

*Wisdom In Action*

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Once upon a time, there was a man who lived with his wife, two small children, and his elderly parents in a tiny hut. He tried to be patient and gracious, but the noise and crowded conditions wore him down.

In desperation, he consulted the village wise man about what to do, the elder asked, ***“Do you have a rooster?”*** The man said he did. ***“Keep the rooster in the hut with your family, and come see me again next week,”*** replied the wise man.

The next week, the man returned and told the elder that living conditions were worse than ever, with the rooster crowing and making a mess of the hut.

***“Do you have a cow?”*** asked the elder. The man nodded fearfully. ***“Take your cow into the hut as well, and come see me in a week.”***

Over the next several weeks, the man—on the advice of the elder—made room for a

goat, two dogs, and his brother’s children.

Finally, he could take no more, and in a fit of anger, kicked out all the animals and guests, leaving only his wife, his children, and his parents.

The home now seemed spacious and quiet, and everyone lived happily ever after. Funny, but full of wisdom.

Sometimes we seek for contentment outside of what we have. The world instills in us the attitude that ***“To be happy, I need more.”***

That’s the underlying assumption behind every need and want. We don’t just seem to get enough. The rich wants more than he has. The poor needs that one big break and he will be satisfied. The sick needs just this one healing.

And just like the man in the story, some need a little bit of this and a little less of that. But it is never enough.

We are just never satisfied. We don't seem to come to the end of this pursuit. **Contentment in all circumstances - The fulfillment of a godly man.**

We are going to go through some mind shift to understand this concept.

We will go through the scriptures to find answers to these unending problems. Truly, it is possible to be content, and yes, even in all circumstances. But how?

### **WHAT IS CONTENTMENT?**

The word content in **Philippians 4:11** comes from a Greek word *autarkēs*, which means self-sufficient or independent.

This self sufficiency is not anchored on self as some may claim. In **verse 13**, Paul affirms that his strength is anchored on Christ.

So, by definition: **Contentment is an inner sense of rest or peace that comes from being right with God and knowing that He is in control of all that happens to us.**

This is in line with **1 Timothy 6:6**, that Godliness with contentment is great gain.

**Contentment** means *having our focus on the kingdom of God, not on the love of money and things. 1 Timothy 6:10.*

It means not being battered around by difficult circumstances or people, and not being wrongly seduced by prosperity, because our life is centered on a living relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Contentment** is not momentary happiness or pleasure, but a peaceful state of mind.

True Contentment has nothing to do with our outward circumstances; it is a frame of mind and heart that trusts God and rests in His grace.

This means that contentment is not tied to the amount in our bank account or what kind of car we drive.

It is not determined by where we work or what position we have been promoted to.

It is not set by who we've married or what neighborhood we live in.

**Contentment is knowing, really knowing God!**

In the light of these, we must be guided to understand

what contentment does not mean.

**Contentment does not mean complacency.** Contentment does not mean that we should be complacent about being in a bad circumstance when we can do something about it.

This is not a call to settle for less or become mediocre.

Some have fallen for this deceit to think that it is okay to be small.

Contentment has nothing to do with you dreaming to be bigger than you are.

In fact, it is the will of God that we make great exploits, **Daniel 11:32**.

As Christians we can work to better our circumstances as we have opportunity.

The Bible encourages hard work, discipline and the rewards that come from it, as long as we are free from greed.

## **ACQUIRING CONTENTMENT PHILIPPIANS 4:10-13**

The world goes about the quest for contentment in all the wrong ways.

Paul's words show that contentment is to be learned.

Contentment takes time. It is not just a spontaneous

feeling you get once in a while. It is a level you grow to.

Apostle Paul learned what it meant to be in need. He also learnt what it meant to have plenty. And still, chose to be content.

## **1. WE LEARN CONTENTMENT BY UNDERSTANDING WHERE SUFFICIENCY COMES FROM**

- When you put your trust in man, there will be problems. Many people believe so much in men until they desert them.
- Some trust in themselves. They think they are smart. Some think they are rich. Some feel they have connections. So they think their sufficiency is from those things. They will never be content.
- When you put your trust in things, there will be problem. **1 Timothy 6:7,8**.
- These things are temporary. These things have expiry dates. These things become obsolete so easily.
- Imagine feeling so sufficient and content because you had a

generator 10 years ago. Now, fuel is expensive, and you need solar.

- Men will fail. Things will cease. But Christ is all sufficient.

In *Philippians 4:10*, Paul could have attributed his joy to the gift given to him. But he attributed it to rejoicing in the Lord.

He knew that it was the Lord's doing that they seize the opportunity to do good to Him.

The day you understand that every blessing and situation is moderated by God, then like Paul, you will learn.

We must understand that even the strength we have to work comes from the sufficiency of Christ.

## **2. WE LEARN CONTENTMENT BY SERVICE OF GOD. MATTHEW 6:33**

- Contentment is greatly anchored on service.
- Many people think serving is stressful and time consuming. That is why people run away from commitment in church.
- They would rather breeze in and out, while focusing on the things

that they think would give them contentment. But they end up disappointed.

- The mystery of the things that matter - If only we can understand this.
- We run after wants and needs. Whereas, Christ has given us the formula. He said first, seek the kingdom and its righteousness.
- To seek the kingdom and its righteousness is to abound in the works of the Lord.
- It is to be known for a Christ-like character and true service to God.
- The first purpose of a creation is to satisfy the creator. When that is lacking, discontentment must set in.

Jesus was teaching that if we will put our focus on serving Him and growing in righteousness, God will take care of our basic material needs.

But the point is, if you live for yourself and your own pleasure, you will not know God's contentment.

Part of seeking first God's kingdom means serving Him

with your money and possessions, which are not really yours, but His, entrusted to you as manager.

### **3. AREAS WE NEED TO EXERCISE CONTENTMENT**

#### **I. Money. 1 Timothy 6:10**

- Guard your heart lest you fall into the love for money. This will breed all kinds of evil.
- You will be pierced with many sorrows.
- Poverty is not a death sentence!
- If you are poor or broke right now, it means you can be rich tomorrow.
- Meanwhile, the rich is thinking of what next to be other than rich.
- Many have allowed the pressure for money lead them into debt.
- Be satisfied with what you have, but strive to become better than you are.

#### **II. Location. Psalm 37:23-24**

- Lack of contentment has pushed some into moving where God has not directed.

- We are always on the move, looking for a better house, a better place to live and raise a family, a better place to retire.
- Some of the moves are demanded by the need for decent jobs.
- But some of it is fueled by discontent that we think will be satisfied when we find the right living situation.
- But we never quite get there.
- The grass is not always greener on the other side.

#### **III. Marriage/Spouse. Hebrews 13:4**

- We can't find happiness in our marriages, so we look outside, only to find that the same problems reoccur.
- No wonder the rate of divorce is on the increase
- Though for some, such problems were self inflicted. ***You ignored the red flags,*** now you have to live with it.

- But for others, it is just pure greed and lack of self control.
- You can never have it all. There is no perfect spouse.

#### **IV. Success. Philippians 4:12**

- You have to learn that success is relative.
- It is not what you see on social media.
- We tend to become discontent with our little wins and successes that we count them as failures. This has led many to depression and even suicide.
- For one, success may mean buying a new car. To another, it is building a house.
- For the other person, it is having a child or helping others.
- Understand your vision and purpose in life.
- Be content with how far God has brought you.

#### **V. Congregation**

- Stay where you are!

- Many have left their places of worship because of discontentment.
- Some left because of a quarrel. Others left because of malice.
- Some left because of pride.
- They feel if they go to the other congregation, things will be better. It is hardly better!
- Learn to understand that the congregation is not your source of contentment or peace. It is Christ.
- That is why we advocate that you do not come to church because of any brother or sister.
- You come because of God.
- So if that brother or sister does wrong by you, you know where your sufficiency is anchored on. And that is Jesus Christ.

#### **VI. Health**

- ***Your condition may be bad. But it is not the worst.***
- I know how you must have felt when you received that diagnosis.

- You must have felt broken and asked God why such illness came upon you.
- I know you have prayed and fasted, yet that sickness remains.
- But be reminded that your case is not the worst.
- If your healing hasn't come today, it can come tomorrow.
- Do not anchor your hope that when that sickness is gone you will be totally at peace.
- Because life is full of troubles.
- Anchor your hope on the God that heals and has given you the grace to live with that issue.
- Be contented that you are still alive.
- Be contented, because Christ is sufficient for you.

## **5 GODLY TIPS TO PRACTICE CONTENTMENT**

### **Find joy in simple things**

- Life is simple. Don't complicate it.
- Celebrate birthdays, holidays, visits, family, little wins.

- Focus on the things that matter - God, family, eternity.

### **Be generous**

- Being selfish makes us always want more.
- Generosity can help you overcome these selfish feelings.
- Giving makes your heart feel lighter and warmer. It gives fulfillment.

### **Express gratitude**

- Give thanks for all the small things in your life.
- Give thanks for all the big things in your life.
- We must learn to be thankful for what we have.
- And hopeful for what we don't have.

### **Practice optimism**

- When confronted with a difficult situation, believe that things will work out in your favor.
- See the best in people and don't be quick to assume people have ulterior motives.

- Positivity breeds peace. Negativity is a joy killer.

### **Make yourself useful**

- Find a way to improve and make life better for you and others.
- Find something to do in the church.
- Don't be the idle man!

### **CONCLUSION**

As Jesus said in **Luke 12:15**, our lives do not consist in the abundance of our possessions.

Wealth cannot buy contentment. Money can buy medicine, but not health.

Money can buy a house, but not a home. It can buy companionship, but not friends; Entertainment, but not happiness.

Money can buy a bed, but not sleep. It can buy the good life, but not eternal life.

And like the Roman statesman Seneca said, ***“Money has never yet made anyone rich.”***

Let us make sure that we are not defining our lives by things like bank accounts, houses, cars and clothes. Only one thing ought to define us - Jesus Christ!

Let us count our riches and find our sufficiency in Him.

May God bless these words in our hearts in Jesus name. Amen.

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