

Living For God  
The discipline of being content  
Loving the Life He Gives

**Philippians 4:10-23**

<sup>10</sup> I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. <sup>11</sup> I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. <sup>12</sup> I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. <sup>13</sup> I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

<sup>14</sup> Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. <sup>15</sup> Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; <sup>16</sup> for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need. <sup>17</sup> Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire is that more be credited to your account. <sup>18</sup> I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. <sup>19</sup> And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

<sup>20</sup> To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

**Finish this sentence.**

***Happiness is....***

Focus affects contentment.

What I focus on will influence the level of contentment I live in.

Reference the previous verses.

**Philippians 4:8-9**

<sup>8</sup> Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is **true**, whatever is **noble**, whatever is **right**, whatever is **pure**, whatever is **lovely**, whatever is **admirable**—if anything is **excellent or praiseworthy**—**think about such things**. <sup>9</sup> Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

Contentment is a state of peaceful happiness. A state of satisfaction.

I am satisfied.

What brings me satisfaction?

## **Contentment is about who I trust not what I have.**

- Contentment is not a matter of what I have, but of who I trust.

### **I. I will focus on God as my source not on what I have.**

#### **Philippians 4:10**

**I rejoiced greatly in the Lord** that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it.

#### A. Unpack Text.

1. Paul is in prison.
2. This is his ***thank you*** to them for their gift.
3. History tells us that he was most likely chained to a Roman guard but he could receive visitors.
4. This was different from the dungeons that some were confined to.
5. He took the time to rejoice in the Lord.

#### B. This section of scripture Paul states that he is content.

1. He has learned how to be content in every situation he finds himself in.
2. He found contentment "In the Lord"
3. He rejoices in the LORD.

#### C. Being arrested and put in prison is not usually a reason to rejoice.

1. Paul rejoices ***in the LORD.***
2. He says the rejoicing in the LORD is sparked by the response of the Philippian church.
3. They gave him some kind of gift.
4. As a roman citizen he would be entitled to a daily allotment of food but Paul depended on his friends and fellow believers to supply his food.

## **How do you rejoice while imprisoned for preaching the Gospel?**

- For Paul his focus was **on the LORD *not*** on what he had.

#### D. To Rejoice in the LORD is to magnify God.

1. It is to make much of God.
2. To make a big deal of Jesus Christ.

Reason to rejoice - **Romans** and **Hebrews**

**Romans 11:36**

For all things were created by him, and all things exist through him and for him. To God be the glory forever! Amen.

- E. The second person of the Trinity, the eternal Son of God, shared fully in the creation of all things, in such a way that Paul says, “All things were created through him and for him.”
1. “For him” does not mean to make up some deficiency in him.
  2. He did not make the universe as a crutch to lean on.

I rejoice IN HIM because I was created by him and I exist through him and for him

**Hebrews 1:3**

The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

- F. Unpack
1. He created all things **not to supplement his power, but to show his power to his creation** — and his wisdom, and every other facet of the diamond of his glory.

**Application**

- So, I gather from these two passages that I exist for Christ. You exist for Christ.
2. Whether you want to or not, every human being exists for the glory of Jesus Christ.
    - a. The Creator.
    - b. The incarnate Redeemer.
    - c. The risen and reigning Victor over Satan and sin and death and hell.
    - d. The coming Emperor over the gloriously restored universe.
    - e. You were **NOT** created by Christ to supply his needs.
    - f. You were **NOT** created by Christ to help him uphold the universe.
    - g. You were created by Christ to **eat** and **drink** and **work** and **rest** in such a way that shows his **absolute greatness**
    - h. His **value** and his **beauty**.

**I don’t exist to magnify my possessions... I exist to magnify Christ.**

- II. I will focus on the fruit he produces in me not on my achievements.**

### **Philippians 4:11-13**

<sup>11</sup> I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. <sup>12</sup> I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.

#### A. Unapack

1. I see this as a teaching about how Paul sees the gift the church in Philippians has sent him.
2. Paul is thankful for the gift they gave to him.
3. He is not saying this because he has some kind of need.
4. In other words, he is not thankful because he has a need and they helped meet the need and if they didn't meet the need he would have no hope.
5. His hope is in the LORD.
6. He has learned to be content whatever circumstance he is in.
7. He is saying this because he is grateful in the LORD knowing that if they did not help him the LORD still had his back.
8. The LORD would still take care of him – no matter what.

#### **Outline**

- He says the same thing in two or three slightly different ways.
- It is a way of emphasizing what he is communicating.

I have learned to be content whatever the circumstance.

I know what it is to be in need / I know what it is to have plenty.

I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation

Whether well fed / or hungry

Whether living in plenty / or in want.

#### B. Paul had done absolutely incredible things for God.

1. Transformed by God from a persecutor of Christians to a preacher for Christ
2. Preached for Christ throughout the Roman empire on three missionary journeys spanning years.
3. Started numerous churches.
4. Wrote letters to various churches, which became part of the New Testament
5. Was never afraid to face an issue head-on and deal with it
6. Was sensitive to God's leading and, despite his strong personality, always did as God directed.
7. Is often called the apostle to the Gentiles.

**His focus was not on his accomplishments but on the fruit God was bearing in him.**

**Illustration**

What drives me is a call to preach.

I don't know why he chose me to do this... I really don't.

I don't think it's because I'm super smart, or some incredible talent.

I'm not the best speaker or have the greatest relational skills.

I don't know why he has called me to do this but I know he has called me.

I can identify with Jacob in Genesis 32

- I have wrestled with God and he has touched my hip. Now I walk with a limp.

I have been blessed to be here for a total of 22 years.

6 years as a youth pastor

16 years as the lead pastor

There are some days that I am absolutely in awe...

There are some days that I want to crawl in the corner and get into the fetal position and drink a milkshake.

I might not be good at a lot of things but I am pretty good at not giving up.

With that comes the opportunity to see some things accomplished.

For every soul I'm grateful

For every water baptism I'm grateful

For every healing I am grateful.

For every time this church impacts a life with the comfort of Christ, the conviction of the Holy Spirit or the encouragement in the LORD.

It absolutely astonishes me when I think about it...

**Revelation 4:10-11**

<sup>10</sup> the twenty-four elders fall down before the one who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives forever and ever. They throw their crowns down in front of the throne and say,

<sup>11</sup> "Our Lord and God! You are worthy

to receive glory, honor, and power.

For you created all things,

and by your will they were given existence and life."

**Illustration**

**Question**

- I wonder about you and about me.

- I wonder if it will be minutes or seconds.
- How long do you think you will be in his presence before you THROW your crown at the feet of Jesus?

### **Application**

1. Focus on the fruit he produces in you not on your achievements.
2. The achievements will come and go but the fruit will remain.
3. Don't let your main focus be on what you can achieve.
4. Let your main focus be on the fruit that God produces in you.
5. Fruit brings way for satisfaction than accomplishment.

### **III. I will focus on how I worship God, not on how I can use God.**

#### **Philippians 4:13**

I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

- A. I LOVE THIS VERSE -- LOVE LOVE LOVE IT!!!
  1. But Philippians 4:13 may be the most taken out of context scripture in the Bible.
  2. When Paul says "I can do all this through Christ who gives me strength" he is talking about being content.
  3. He has learned how to be content in the little and in a lot.
  4. He has learned how to be content when there was not enough food and when he had extra food.
- B. His focus was on worshipping God in both extremes.

The amount of stuff you have does not determine your level of contentment.

How you worship God when you have a little determines whether you will be content.

How you worship God when you have a lot determines whether you will be content.

- C. If we are not careful we will take this out of context to mean that whatever I want to accomplish God has promised me that I will be able to do it because he will give me the strength to do it.
  1. God provides where God directs.
  2. The power of God manifest itself where the people of God walk in obedience to God.
- D. Our role in being content is to worship God no matter what season we are in.
  1. If you are in a season right now and you are struggling to make ends meet – worship God in your season.

- a. Worship God for who he is not for what he can do for you.
  - b. Worship God in your need knowing that ultimately in Christ you are wealthy beyond calculation.
2. If you are in a season of abundance worship God in your season.
    - a. Worship God for who he is not for what you have.
    - b. Worship God knowing that all you have is HIS and he has let you hold it for a while.
    - c. Worship God knowing that you are a manager of his resources and your job is not to accumulate – your job is to be a faithful manager of HIS resources.

### **Illustration**

- We live in a culture where nothing is ever enough.
- We are beat over the head with the idea that in order to be happy we have to have MORE!!
- If having MORE is the goal then surely God is there to help me get everything I can.
- If we are not careful we treat God like a Geaney in a Bottle or Santa Clause.

### **Application**

Focus on how you worship God with the three “T’s”

1. Time
2. Talent
3. Treasure

### **IV. I will focus on enjoying God’s presence, not on how I get God’s provision.**

#### **Philippians 4:14-20**

<sup>14</sup> Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. <sup>15</sup> Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; <sup>16</sup> for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need. <sup>17</sup> Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire is that more be credited to your account. <sup>18</sup> I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent

They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. <sup>19</sup> And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

<sup>20</sup> To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.