

WORSHIP

SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

Count Your Blessings, Your Grace Is Enough, Not For A Moment (After All), Christ is Enough

WELCOME

What is something that you just can't seem to get enough of? What are you fond of having (collection) or doing (hobby)? Share to the group.

WORD

PHILIPPIANS 4:10-13

¹⁰But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned before, but you lacked opportunity. ¹¹Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. ¹²I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. ¹³I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

As we end the series JOY IN THE CRISIS, we study the last chapter of Philippians where we learn the importance of CONTENTMENT. It is said that the key to finding joy is to learn about contentment – but what does contentment really mean?

The word **CONTENT** as used by Paul in **v.11 of Philippians chapter 4** is a word that appears only once in Scripture. It is the Greek word **AUTARKES** which is a union of two different words—**AUTO** meaning self and **ARKEO** meaning sufficient. It therefore means **a state of being at peace**. You are rested and satisfied in whatever circumstance you are in because you know God is sovereign and He has your best interest at hand. He is in control and He cares for you.

Contentment is also being appreciative of what you have. You are more focused on what is in your hands now and not on what you do not have. But it does not mean being complacent or lazy. It is not being complacent in your growth, and therefore not about you focusing on judging others because you think you are more mature than they are.

We've seen the Apostle Paul's confidence and desire to continue growing (**Phil. 3:8-9**). In **Philippians 4:12** he tells the Philippians that he is okay in both humble and prosperous times, because he has learned the secret to being content. Contentment has nothing to do with just sitting back but has everything to do with doing your best in whatever circumstances you are in and trusting God for the outcome.

The question we should ask ourselves is, how are we doing in the area of contentment? The evidence of lack of contentment is all over the place. Credit card problems and debt crisis, marital conflicts, and even bouts of envy and jealousy – these all find their roots to lack of contentment.

Let us **LEARN CONTENTMENT** from the Apostle Paul:

We can see Paul's example, that his contentment was not based on circumstances. He can rejoice greatly in the Lord despite being in

prison. In fact, he showed in **vv.10-12 of Phil. 4** that we can actually be content in EVERY circumstance we face. Paul learned through his experiences. **Proverbs 30:8-9** is a good reminder of a prayer to be taught contentment. Even at this time of lockdown or quarantine, we can learn about contentment by appreciating even the small things. **Socrates** once said, **"He who is not content with what he has, would not be content with what he would like to have."**

That is why Paul wrote to Timothy in **1 Timothy 6:6-10** that this is something you learn in the process of being a mature Christian. If we read this passage, we learn that if you don't learn contentment, it will eventually destroy you. Take note, Paul did not say money is evil – **money is neutral, but the love of money is the problem!** Examples of people who don't learn and value contentment are Demas (**2 Timothy 4:10**) and the Korahites (**Numbers 16:8-10**). Their jealousy, envy, wanting to be in power, and not being contented with what God has assigned them to do have led them to their judgment. Jennifer Booth said, **"Contentment is an attitude that says, "I will be satisfied with what God has given me".**

As we learn from the Bible, we see three things about CONTENTMENT. To practice contentment, we have to realize that:

1. It is CENTERED on CHRIST

Philippians 4:13 points us to the central figure in the concept of contentment: Jesus Christ Himself. At the time of this writing, Paul was in prison and his life was in danger. It is supernatural strength coming from knowing Jesus and being empowered by Him.

We can be reminded of this psalm from Asaph in **Psalms 73** where he talked about the wicked people who seemed to be blessed despite what they've done. As he sought sanctuary in the presence of God, he was made to realize a new perspective. In **vv.**

WORD (cont'd)

25-26, the psalmist asks, “whom have I in heaven but You?”. This is a comparative statement. When comparing GOD to any other thing, there is no comparison. Nothing on earth can really satisfy you. No amount of material things or earthly relationship can sustain you through and through. The only thing that can satisfy the emptiness and longing of your heart is JESUS CHRIST. When you have Christ, He is the infinite source of JOY!

2. It is COUNTING your BLESSINGS

Paul confidently says in **Philippians 4:13**, *I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.*

Paul learned about it the hard way. In **2 Corinthians 12:8-10**, we read about Paul having a physical ailment which he prayed for God to remove, but God said no. Paul learned to be content with his situation and that actually taught him to gain this perspective and hold on to it, especially with the future missionary troubles he was to face.

In **Philippians 4:14-17**, Paul talks about how he was supported by the believers in Philippi when he was in need. These Philippian believers are new Christians, but they helped him financially more than once. Paul is always appreciative, not because he wants their money, but he said their giving is actually going to bless them.

There are so many things to be thankful to God for: your 5 senses, the air you breathe, and the other blessings you receive in life. **Jerry Falwell** said, *“If God never did another thing for me after He saved me, I would still be eternally in debt to Him”*. Eternity is a blessing we will forever be grateful for.

3. It is CONFIDENCE IN GOD’S PROMISES

In **Philippians 4:19-20**, Paul shows that God is all-sufficient. To say that God will supply “**all your needs**” is a beautiful set of words. He will supply **all**, not just **some**, of your needs. Take note, it is not “**wants**” but your **needs**. He promised these will be supplied, not **FROM** but **ACCORDING** to His riches. What does this mean? It means proportionate – God is going to give us proportionate to and not just from His riches. The truth is God owns everything. We can be sure that our needs will be provided for. There may be times of lack, but God’s hands are never short. An example of this perspective is **George Muller** who has experienced God’s miraculous provisions in times of great need. Another promise we can hold on to is in **Psalm 34:8-10** – we can take refuge in Him and we can trust that we will not be in want of any good thing if we remain in His presence and are fixed on His promises.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Have you counted blessings recently? Give at least 3 blessings you would want to thank the Lord for.
2. Which promises of God found in the Bible are you holding onto today? Why?
3. How are you practicing contentment in your current situation? How are you encouraging others to be content?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray that the Holy Spirit will convict the hearts of people to turn to Jesus Christ, who alone can satisfy the longings of their heart. Share to these people the gospel and your personal testimony on how you found contentment in Christ. Extend help to those in need at this time.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Wisdom and hearts of compassion for our leaders as they decide on how to address the pandemic
- Repentance and salvation

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends