

Contentment

Philippians 4:4-19

Contentment is foundational to having a joyful and productive life (Philippians 4:4,13). Paul considers it an essential ingredient which must accompany godliness (I Timothy 6:6-11 cp. Exodus 20:17). The absence of contentment leads to ungodliness (Romans 1:21; II Timothy 3:1-2).

Contentment is not to be confused with complacency. There is a need for the believer to strive diligently for goals that God puts before us (Philippians 3:12-15; II Peter 1:2-12; 3:18 cp. I Peter 2:1-3). Scripture abounds with information that gives us reason to always be thankful and content (Genesis 1:1 – Revelation 22:21).

Let's start here, in Philippians. This book is one of the "prison epistles." Yet, it is also called "The Epistle of Joy." That immediately tells us that contentment is not based on earthly, physical comfort and status in this life. Contentment has to do with knowing and understanding God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Jeremiah 9:23-24; I Corinthians 1:26-31; Matthew 16:24-26; John 14:27; 16:33; I Thessalonians 5:15-18). Tremendous themes run throughout the book of Philippians (i.e. Philippians 1:20-21; 2:5-11; 3:10). For this study we will focus on chapter four.

- Personal Satisfaction with the Lord – Philippians 4:4,10

See also Philippians 2:1-4; 3:1-3; Psalm 23:1; Nehemiah 8:10; Hebrews 13:5-6.

- Preparing for the Lord's Return – Philippians 4:5

See also Matthew 4:17; Revelation 1:3; I John 2:15-17; James 5:7-11.

- Praying with Thanksgiving – Philippians 4:6-7,19

Prayer is to be stress-free. See also Hebrews 2:17-18; 4:14-16; 10:19-23

- Paying Attention to God's Reality – Philippians 4:8-9,11-13

See also I Timothy 6:3-19; II Corinthians 12:7-10; Romans 7:18 cp. Philemon 6.

"I have learned" – Philippians 4:11

"I know / I am instructed" – Philippians 4:12

"I can do" – Philippians 4:13