

Christian Contentment

Scripture Reading: Philippians 4:4-19

The Book of Philippians is called, among other things, the “Epistle of Joy.” Joy (vs. 4) is vitally connected to other qualities like gentleness (vs. 5), calmness, thankfulness (vs. 6), peace (vs. 7), and contentment (vs. 11). Our focus, in this lesson, is on **Christian contentment**.

When Paul told the Philippian church to rejoice in the Lord, he demonstrated that this could come in the form of seeing the work of God in other people’s lives (Philippians 4:4 cp. 10). The Philippians had shown concern and compassion to Paul and sent financial help (Philippians 4:14-16). Paul assured them that God would bless their faithful offering and provide for them in the future also (Philippians 4:17-19 cp. II Corinthians 8:1 – 9:15). In the midst of his discussion on the grace of giving, He took the opportunity to discuss the important subject of **Christian contentment** (Philippians 10-13).

We should notice that **Christian contentment** is different than just natural contentment. It is possible to reason with ourselves and say, *“It’s no use complaining. We have gone through hard times before. Somehow, we’ll get through it again.”* Sometimes, through discipline and training, we are taught to keep our problems to ourselves; to just *“grin and bear it.”* But **Christian contentment** is focused on a very good reason to be content. Our gracious Lord is attentive to our need, and He is managing things for us. We are to seek Him, with faith and gratitude (Philippians 4:6-7 cp. Matthew 6:9-11,25-34). In His time, our Heavenly Father will supply all that we need (Philippians 4:19). In Genesis 22:1-18, Abraham’s faith was tested in a very great way. God provided for him in a very great way. Abraham named the place *“Jehovah- Jireh”* (YHWH – Yireh) which means *“The Lord will provide” / “The Lord will see it”* (Genesis 22:14).

God sometimes does not supply our needs as quickly as we wish, or in the way that we expect. But we must trust God’s wisdom, power, and love. He is working all things together for our good and His glory (Romans 8:28; Psalm 23:1-6). We must faithfully, patiently, thankfully continue to seek the Lord and ask for His help (Luke 18:1-8; Colossians 4:2). We must trust in God’s wise master plan (Ecclesiastes 3:1-11,14; Romans 11:33-36).

It is good to note that learning the grace of **Christian Contentment** is a process. We learn, not only by principle, but by experience (Psalm 34:4-11; Proverbs 3:5-6; Romans 5:3-5; James 1:2-8,12; Hebrews 4:14-16). Paul says, *“I have learned” / “I am instructed”* (Philippians 4:11-12). He didn’t get this all in a flash. He had the guidance and leadership of Christ to give him strength through each lesson (Philippians 4:13 cp. II Corinthians 12:7-10; II Timothy 2:1).

We will focus on three aspects of **Christian Contentment**:

- **Contentment with the Lord – who He is** (Philippians 4:5,7,9,19)
 - He is the Lord who is at hand / who is near (Philippians 4:5).
 - He is the God of peace (Philippians 4:7,9).
 - He is **my** God; The God who supplies for me and all of us (Philippians 4:19).
- **Contentment with who I am in Christ** (Philippians 4:6-7,13,19)
 - I am allowed to ask the Father for all things in Jesus' name (Philippians 4:6-7).
 - I am supplied with strength by Christ (Philippians 4:13).
 - I have access to all of God's riches in glory through Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19).
- **Contentment with the Lord's provision** (Philippians 4:13,19)
 - *Note: The word "providence" contains the word "provide".*
 - Through Christ, I can do "**All** things" (Philippians 4:13).
 - God shall supply "**All** your need / every need" (Philippians 4:19).