



Contentment

?

**WHEN HAVE
YOU WANTED
SOMETHING
BUT FOUND IT
DIDN'T SATISFY
WHEN YOU
FINALLY GOT IT?**

The POINT >

**Be content in the power and
provision of God.**

> PHILIPPIANS 4:10-20

¹⁰ I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. ¹¹ Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. ¹² I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. ¹³ I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

¹⁴ Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. ¹⁵ And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving,

except you only. ¹⁶ Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. ¹⁷ Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit.

¹⁸ I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. ¹⁹ And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. ²⁰ To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

FACT:

Happiness and contentment are tied in a big way to teens' future success. In fact, overall happiness predicts success better than IQ or education.¹



LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // GOD

God communicates to us through His Word and hears and answers when we pray, and our spiritual maturity depends on practicing these spiritual disciplines.

It seems that no matter what we have, we still have a craving for more. In the 1990s, a man named Sergio Hernandez won three million dollars in the California lottery, and he chose a payout of 120 thousand dollars a year for twenty-five years. Naturally, we might think, "He's got it made. He's set for life." However, in 1993, he was sentenced to a year in prison for receiving stolen property that was looted during the Los Angeles riots.² Apparently, three million dollars isn't enough to satisfy the desires of the human heart. Somehow, Hernandez struggled to be satisfied with what seemed to be more than enough and longed for more.

It might be easy to point a finger at Mr. Hernandez, but what about us? Many times, almost as soon as we've acquired the thing we wanted so desperately, we become discontent and our desires move on to the next and best thing. What's the solution to this discontent? In Paul's letter to the Philippians, Scripture teaches us how to be content. Here's the secret: It's not found in circumstances or possessions but only in the person of Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS 4:10-12a

1 How did Paul find contentment whatever the circumstance?

2 How are you intentionally working to learn contentment, gratitude, and joy?

PHILIPPIANS 4:12b-14

3 Why is a “no matter the circumstances” contentment a secret to the world?

4 What is the difference between learning through instruction versus learning through experience?

5 How are you working to cultivate an “all things through Christ” attitude?

*If we're truly to find contentment in every situation, it comes down to the desires of our hearts.
#BSFLCharacterCounts*



PHILIPPIANS 4:15-20

6 Why is it important for us to pursue Christlikeness with patience and dedication?

7 In your own words, what is the connection between contentment and generosity?

8 Why was Paul confident God would provide for every one of the Philippians' needs?



LIVE IT OUT

LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // GOD

God communicates to us through His Word and hears and answers when we pray, and our spiritual maturity depends on practicing these spiritual disciplines.

God has invited us to come boldly before Him with our prayers and cast our cares on Him, knowing that He cares for us. Prayer is, among other things, an expression of our dependence on God. We can trust that God hears our prayers, that He answers, and that He will provide for our needs. We are then to be content with what God provides.

> CHRIST

In Philippians 4:19, we have the promise that God will supply all our needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

9 Write your thoughts about how our riches in Christ are better than the riches of the world below:

GOD

JESUS

HOLY SPIRIT

BIBLE

SALVATION

CREATION

CHURCH

PEOPLE

FAMILY

COMMUNITY
& WORLD

> COMMUNITY

It can be tempting to compare ourselves with others, which can lead to discontentment. Instead of comparing by focusing on what you might not have, focus on the good things God has given to you.

10 Pause and think about ways you're tempted to compare.



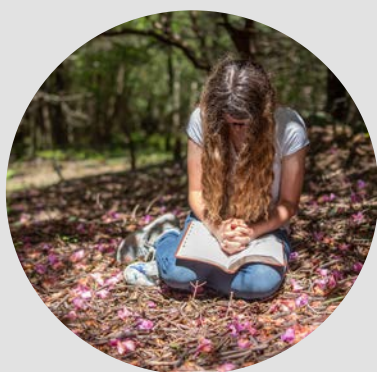
11 Ask God to help you grow in contentment. Write a brief prayer thanking God for His blessings in your life.

> CULTURE

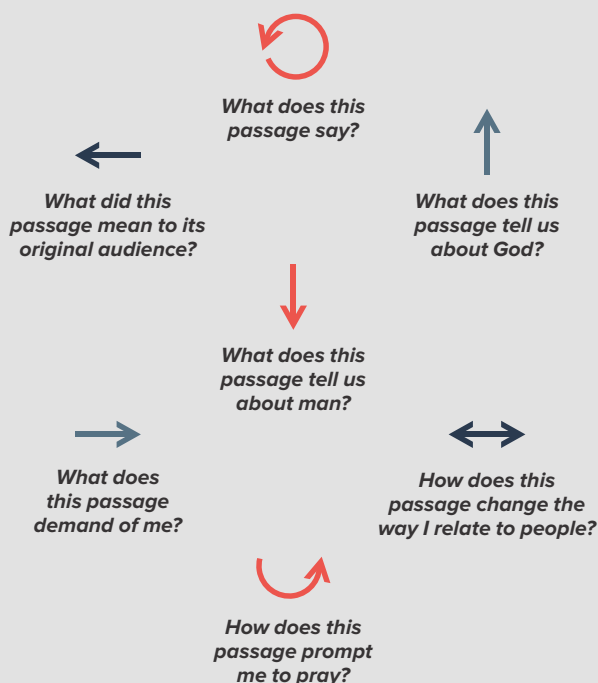
In a culture of discontentment where people almost always want more, we are called to be satisfied and content with what God provides.

12 This week, share with a non-believing friend the reasons you are satisfied in Jesus.

DAILY DEVOTIONS



The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



Day One

1 TIMOTHY 6:3-5

Paul wrote the letter we call 1 Timothy to his young student, Timothy. The purpose of this letter was to encourage Timothy in his responsibility of leading the Ephesian church. Like other first-century churches, Ephesus faced false teachers who were making claims that weren't in line with the truths Jesus taught. Rather than promoting unity, these false teachers were creating division and provoking the congregation to engage in debates about things that mattered very little. The reality was that these false teachers simply didn't understand the truth of Jesus; therefore, they weren't in the position to lead the church. On top of this, they pursued their positions in the church not because they were motivated by the gospel but because they wanted power and money. Let's not misunderstand—it's good for churches to pay their pastors (1 Tim. 5:17-18; Gal. 6:6; 1 Cor. 9:14). However, material blessing should never be the motivation to follow Jesus, for ministers or anyone else. We follow Jesus not for material blessings but because we love Him.

➤ **Why is unity so important in the church?**

➤ **How should we see material blessings as related to following Jesus?**

Day Two

1 TIMOTHY 6:6



The false teachers in the Ephesian church lived as if material gain was the goal of their godliness. However, this wasn't godly living at all. Godliness is living in ways that reflect the nature and character of God. Scripture teaches that Jesus is the express image of God in human form. The way Jesus lived while on the earth was the perfect example of godliness, and it's pretty clear that Jesus didn't pursue His ministry for the money. The true gain associated with following Jesus isn't material wealth or earthly pleasures but a spirit of contentment, no matter our circumstances. This kind of satisfaction in life is true gain. And we find it not when we follow Jesus as a way to get what we want but when we pursue godliness as an expression of our love for Jesus.

- **What should be our motivation for godly living?**
- **In your own words, how is contentment greater than money or possessions?**

Day Three

1 TIMOTHY 6:7

Our culture often acts as if worldly things are of highest value. We're constantly bombarded with ads that promise happiness and satisfaction if we'll simply buy the next and better product, whether it's chocolate, shoes, or a new car. However, almost as soon as we've bought the thing, the new wears off and we find there was no lasting satisfaction. And then there's another new round of products and their associated promises. Here's the point: There's no meaning or fulfillment to be found in the things of this world. Material possessions have no lasting significance, and when this life is over, we'll leave behind all the stuff that might have seemed so important. We must be careful to value those things that are truly valuable and to see material things for what they are.

- **Why are people inclined to see possessions as more important than they actually are?**
- **When have you been tempted to seek satisfaction in material things?**

Day Four

1 TIMOTHY 6:8

It can be tough to distinguish between real needs and simply wants. In our culture, there are things that we see as belonging to the basic needs category which might not be so basic after all, like air conditioning, high-speed internet, smart phones, nice vehicles, four-bedroom homes, and much more. This stands in stark contrast to the standard Paul established. He said that if we simply have food and clothes, that is enough. And, by the way, he wasn't even talking about a fridge full of food or an overflowing closet. He was speaking essentially of food for today and one outfit to keep warm. This is not to say that owning possessions is wrong or bad. God does often bless people in a material sense and then calls the blessed to be generous. However, satisfaction is never found in riches. Instead, if God's provided enough for today, we are to be content, whether we have much or little.

- **How does your own personal view of "needs" align with the principles of this verse?**
- **How are you using the material blessings God has given you to reflect the generous nature of God and bless others?**

Day Five

1 TIMOTHY 6:9-10



Verse 10 is commonly misquoted to say money itself is the root of all evil. Notice, this isn't the language of Scripture. Instead, it's the *love* of money that leads to sin. Money is, in a sense, neutral in nature. It can certainly be abused and used for selfish and sinful purposes. However, material resources can also be used to advance God's kingdom on earth, and when used rightly, temporary things can make an eternal difference. The context here is that false teachers had pursued ministry and a life of supposed godliness as a way to material gain. Further, the people of the church may have been tempted to do these same things—to follow Jesus in pursuit of earthly blessings. This mindset is a trap that has led many people to buy into a false gospel, leading ultimately to their eternal judgment. To pursue Jesus for the earthly blessings is not a path that leads to God. Let's make sure we love Jesus for Jesus. Then, we'll be content with whatever much or little He provides for us.

- **Why is it dangerous to pursue Jesus for the earthly blessings?**
- **How can we find true contentment in this life?**