

(Philippians 4:11-13, NIV84)

I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. 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. I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

My oldest grandson is quickly approaching his third birthday, as evidenced by a new word he has started using: "Why?" Three-year-olds question everything with that word. But those of us who have been around much longer know full well that the "Why" question tends to linger on in our lives way beyond the age of three. "Why is this happening to me?" "Why don't my circumstances change?" "Why doesn't God answer my prayer?"

Instead of asking "Why", perhaps we should be asking "Who". As in: "Who gives me strength?" When we understand the "Who", the "Why" becomes less important. The "Who", of course, is our Lord Jesus. In infinite wisdom He knows all the whys and wherefores, and He loves us with an everlasting love. Which means that He is always looking out for our best interests. He also knows the "whens", as in: when the appropriate time will come that He will answer our prayers and bring any difficult circumstances to an end. Until then, rest in the confidence that with Jesus you (and I) can do EVERYTHING through Him.

Content with you in Christ,
Pastor Golm

P.S. Just a reminder: we will resume in-person services at Messiah on Sunday, June 21st at 9:30 a.m. Ladies, get out your Easter bonnets! We will be having a celebration of the resurrection of our Lord. I hope to see you there!

June 17

The Contented Life

I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.
Philippians 4:11

All of us are tempted, at times, to become dissatisfied with our lot in life. We find it difficult to be happy because someone, perhaps "less worthy" than we, has been elevated to a position of prominence, while we have been left to struggle on unnoticed and "unappreciated".

The eminent John Newton once said: "If two angels came down from heaven to execute a divine command, and one was appointed to sweep the streets, they would feel no inclination to change employments." And why not? Because each would have the sure conviction that he was doing what his Lord had asked him to do, and that by his service, great or humble, he was glorifying God.

No matter what pathway of life God has chosen for us, we may find joy in his choice, for it is the path along which he has chosen to lead us to glory. The writer of the 84th Psalm had learned to evaluate the various pathways of life when he said: "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

The secret of real, Christian contentment is to be in the place where God wants us to be and to be doing the things he bids us do. Paul knew that he was leading his life on pathways of God's own choosing. And knowing that, he could say: "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Have we learned to say the same? Can we say with the poet:

Thy way, not mine, O Lord,
However dark it be.
Lead me by Thine own hand;
Choose out the path for me.

I dare not choose my lot;
I would not if I might.
Choose THOU for me, my God;
So shall I walk aright.

He who can pray that prayer from his heart will know the secret of true contentment. He will be able to say with Paul: "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."

(Devotion from: Daily Walk With God - Meditations for Every Day, by Herman W. Gockel)