

Contentment

Philippians 4:10-13

I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. ¹¹I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.
Philippians 4:10, 11 (New International Version)

What is contentment?

- “Contentment” is the Greek word *autarkes*, which means “to be satisfied,” or “to have enough.”
- Contentment is an attitude that expresses satisfaction with what is available, with what God has supplied.
- Contentment is a deep inner sense of joy that is present, regardless of the circumstances.
- A person who is content is independent of external circumstances.

Philippians 4 supplies **three key truths** about contentment.

- **Truth #1: CONTENTMENT IS LEARNED.**

. . . I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. Philippians 4:11b (NIV)

But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. ⁸But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. 1 Timothy 6:6-8 (NIV)

Two Primary Ways We Compare Ourselves

- We compare what we have with others.

Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them . . . ²¹When Peter saw him, he asked, “Lord, what about him?” ²²Jesus answered, “If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me.”
John 21:20-22 (NIV)

- We compare who we are with others.

For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.
Ephesians 2:10 (New Living Translation)

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:38-39 (NIV)

- **Truth #2: ADJUSTING TO LIFE’S UP’S AND DOWN’S IS A KEY PART OF CONTENTMENT.**

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. Philippians 4:12 (NIV)

I have been very thoroughly initiated into the human lot with all of its ups and downs. Philippians 4:12a (New English Bible)

Believers adjust to change by developing and keeping an eternal perspective.

That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day. ¹⁷For our present troubles are quite small and won’t last very long. Yet they produce for us an immeasurably great glory that will last forever! ¹⁸So we don’t look at the troubles we can see right now; rather, we look forward to what we have not yet seen. For the troubles we see will soon be over, but the joys to come will last forever. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (NLT)

I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall. ²⁰I will remember them, and my soul is downcast within me. ²¹Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: ²²Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. ²³They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. ²⁴I say to myself, “The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him.” Lamentations 3:19-24 (NIV)

- **Truth #3: I MUST DRAW ON CHRIST’S POWER TO FIND CONTENTMENT.**

I can do all things through him who strengthens me.
Philippians 4:13 (English Standard Version)

Each time he [God] said, “My gracious favor is all you need. My power works best in your weakness.” 2 Corinthians 12:9a (NLT)

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, . . . Ephesians 3:16 (NIV)

. . . [I am ready for anything and equal to anything through Him who infuses inner strength in me; I am self-sufficient in Christ’s sufficiency].
Philippians 4:13b (Amplified Bible)