THE SECRET TO CONTENTMENT

Philippians 4:11-13; 17
6-25-2025

*** We Need To Learn The Secret To Attaining CONTENTMENT!**

How can I have contentment?
By being: 1) satisfied 2) strengthened 3) selfless

Contentment is:

I. BEING SATISFIED WITH YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES (V. 11-12)

A. LEARN TO ACCEPT VARYING CIRCUMSTANCES (V. 11)

B. LEARN TO ADAPT TO CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES (V. 12)

1. Position may change
2. Provision may change
3. Prosperity may change

Contentment is:

II. BEING STRENGTHENED BY CHRIST (V. 13)

A. YOU WON'T BE LIMITED IN PERFORMANCE (V. 13A)
(Your efficiency)
"I can do all things"

B. YOU WON'T BE LIMITED IN POWER (V. 13B)
(Your energy)
"Through Christ which strengtheneth me"

Contentment is:

III. BEING SELFLESS FOR OTHER CHRISTIANS (V. 17)

A. DON'T SEEK GIFTS FOR YOURSELF (V. 17A)

B. DO SEEK FRUIT FOR OTHERS (V. 17B)

THE SECRET TO CONTENTMENT

Philippians 4:11-13; 17
6-25-2025

*** We Need To <u>Learn</u> The <u>Secret To Attaining CONTENTMENT</u>!**

How can I have <u>contentment?</u>
By being: 1) satisfied 2) strengthened 3) selfless

Contentment is:
I. BEING <u>SATISFIED</u> WITH YOUR <u>CIRCUMSTANCES</u> (V. 11-12)

Contentment is:
II. BEING <u>STRENGTHENED</u> BY <u>CHRIST</u> (V. 13)

Contentment is:
III. BEING <u>SELFLESS</u> FOR OTHER <u>CHRISTIANS</u> (V. 17)

THE SECRET TO CONTENTMENT

Philippians 4:11-13; 17
6-25-2025

*** We Need To <u>Learn</u> The <u>Secret To Attaining CONTENTMENT</u>!**

How can I have <u>contentment?</u>
By being: 1) satisfied 2) strengthened 3) selfless

Contentment is:
I. BEING_____ WITH YOUR _____ (V. 11-12)

A. LEARN TO _____ VARYING CIRCUMSTANCES (V. 11)

B. LEARN TO _____ TO CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES (V. 12)

1. _____ may change
2. _____ may change
3. _____ may change

Contentment is:
II. BEING _____ BY _____ (V. 13)

A. YOU WON'T BE LIMITED IN _____ (V. 13A)
(Your efficiency)
"I can do all things"

B. YOU WON'T BE LIMITED IN _____ (V. 13B)
(Your energy)
"Through Christ which strengtheneth me"

Contentment is:
III. BEING _____ FOR OTHER _____ (V. 17)

A. <u>DON'T SEEK GIFTS</u> FOR _____ (V. 17A)

B. <u>DO SEEK FRUIT</u> FOR _____ (V. 17B)

THE SECRET TO CONTENTMENT

Philippians 4:11-13; 17
6-25-2025

*** We Need To <u>Learn</u> The <u>Secret To Attaining CONTENTMENT</u>!**

How can I have <u>contentment?</u>
By being: 1) satisfied 2) strengthened 3) selfless

Contentment is:
I. BEING _____ WITH YOUR _____ (V. 11-12)

Contentment is:
II. BEING _____ BY _____ (V. 13)

Contentment is:
III. BEING _____ FOR OTHER _____ (V. 17)

THE SECRET TO CONTENTMENT

Philippians 4:11-13; 17
6-25-2025

INTRO: Why so many unhappy people? Suicides? Why so many dissatisfied Christians? We have failed to learn to be content.

As children, we are not content in grade school: "Oh, if I could only be in Jr. High" . . . "High school" . . . "College" . . . "Out in the ministry" etc.

People are not content with their job. People are not content with their spouse.

EX: Lucifer was not content in his great position which he held.

ILLUS: of children who want someone else's toy. Rarely content with what they have.

Grass is always greener on the other side of the fence.

ILLUS: Newspaper ads (the <u>abundance</u> of classified or display notices). An incredible amount of "stuff" people do not wish to keep.
What do such advertisements reflect?
Lack of contentment.

"Godliness with contentment is great gain."

John the Baptist said: "Be content with your wages" (Lk. 3:13).

NOTE: Previous context of <u>right thinking</u> (v. 8). Contentment is right thinking.

*** We Need To <u>Learn</u> The <u>Secret To Attaining CONTENTMENT</u>!**

How can I have contentment?

By being: 1) satisfied 2) strengthened 3) selfless

Contentment is:

I. BEING SATISFIED WITH YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES (V. 11-12)

A. LEARN TO ACCEPT VARYING CIRCUMSTANCES (V. 11)

You may say: "Well, you don't know my circumstances." Paul is in chains as he writes this.

"Not that I am saying this because of lack" - Paul did not complain about his situation in life.

Sometimes we don't complain outwardly but inwardly.

"I have learned" - Paul is saying, "I was not born with it." There was a time (no doubt) when Paul was not content under all conditions and circumstances.

"Content" = sufficient - satisfied with what you yourself have

Accept the state (situation) you are in. Be satisfied! Don't make your circumstances your enemy if bad (where you fight it) or your god if good (where you won't let anything alter it).

--Don't rebel or run
--Don't make any changes unless you are 100% sure it is God Who is leading you on (to a new job, new state, etc.)

God placed you in the situation you are in for a purpose!

Basically, to test the genuineness of your faith.

Times of need are a test (to see if you will totally depend on Christ).

Times of financial prosperity are a test (to see how you will handle what God has given)

B. LEARN TO ADAPT TO CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES (V. 12)

We should in one sense be a "chameleon Christian" - adapt to your environment.

"I know" - knowledge as a result of learning in the school of life.

Paul knew what it meant to go from one extreme to the other.

1. Position may change

   "Abased" = made low (humbled). See II Cor. 6:4-5

   "Abound" = overflow. It's harder to be content when you have a lot.

   Heb. 13:5 - "Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

2. Provision may change

   "In <u>all things</u>" - emphatic position.

   We all can tend to be content doing without in <u>some</u> areas, but can we honestly say, "All"?

   He was "instructed" (lit. initiated; he got in on the <u>secret</u>) as to how to be filled, then go hungry.

3. Prosperity may change.

   Paul went form abundance, then to lack (from which we get our Engl. word "hysterectomy")

   Real contentment is **<u>not</u>** <u>ignorance</u> of what is out there in the world to be had (ex. poor in India). It is when you <u>know</u> what you could have, but are content not to have it.

   Prosperity has done more damage to believers than has adversity.

   "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing" (Rev. 3:17)

   "For a little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked" (Ps. 37:16).

   If God's will was determined by how "good" circumstances were going.

   --Our Lord Jesus would have never lived the life He did, nor died the way He did.
   --Paul would never have gone back to Jerusalem, even though trouble awaited him there.

Contentment is:

II. BEING STRENGTHENED BY CHRIST (V. 13)

Contentment is not in things! (When money is your goal in life: each dollar gained seems to lead to a merry chase after another). Contentment is in a relationship.

It's not your possessions or your position that pleases God; it's your disposition (attitude)!

NOTE: Paul's positive attitude.

A. YOU WON'T BE LIMITED IN PERFORMANCE (V. 13A)
(Your efficiency)

"I can do all things"

Circumstances tend to change (alter) our service.

"Fair-weather Christianity" - When things are good, we serve. When things are bad, we split.

"I can do" = lit. "I am strong enough to do" . . . "I have the ability to do"

Present tense - indicates continual ability (strength)

Get your eyes off yourself and realize that in yourself you can do nothing; in Christ you can do all things!

B. YOU WON'T BE LIMITED IN POWER (V. 13B)
(Your energy)

"Through Christ which strengtheneth me"

ILLUS: of getting behind a little boy and helping him hold the baseball bat and hit the ball. When the ball is tossed, WHAM! "We hit it hard" The little fellow would jump up and down, thinking he had knocked a home run.

"Through Christ which strengtheneth me" = lit. "by the one who is infusing me with power" . . . "by the one who is putting strength into me."

He charges us up with power (ILLUS: charging up battery)

Greek -

Eph. 6:10 - "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

I Tim. 1:12 - "And I thank Christ Jesus, our Lord, who hath enabled me, in that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry"

II Tim. 2:1 - "Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus"

It is said in Heb. 11:34 that heroes of the faith in O.T. "out of weakness were made strong!"

Cp. Acts 9:22 - "Paul increased the more in strength"

Psalm 23 teaches about the sufficient power and blessing God provides:

Read each clause and state implication -

I shall not lack provision
" " rest
"" comfort
"" encouragement
"" forgiveness
"" companionship
"" protection
"" food
"" care
"" joy
"" affection
"" anything in this life & eternity

Contentment is:

III. BEING SELFLESS FOR OTHER CHRISTIANS (V. 17)

A. DON'T SEEK GIFTS FOR YOURSELF (V. 17A)

Paul did not compliment (butter up) the Philippians because he was seeking after the gift.

ILLUS. of how we compliment just to get from someone.

(Be sincere when you thank someone) Watch your motives!

There is nothing wrong with receiving gifts; but there is something wrong about seeking them. (ILLUS: beggars in NYC -- wouldn't it be a shocking experience to see people say, "Can I give?")

We should seek to give, not seek to get.

B. DO SEEK FRUIT FOR OTHERS (V. 17B)

Paul knew that when the Philippians gave to him that God's blessings (fruit) would be put into their spiritual bank account!

--They were building up their account in heaven! Mt. 6:20 - "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal;"

**Turn to II Cor. 9:6-8.

CONCLU: It's easy to grumble and mumble.

--We complain about work - when we should thank God we can.

--We grumble about work in rearing children - should thank God for them.

--We fume when car doesn't work - while much of the world doesn't even have food to eat.

--We cry that we need more money - when we live in richest country in the world.

Heb. 13:5 - "Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

This is the secret to be free from worry! - Contentment

This is the secret to be free from covetousness! - Contentment

This is the secret to be free from jealousy! - Contentment

This is the secret to be free from lust! - Contentment

This is the secret to e free from loving the world! - Contentment

You can have the peace of God! - Contentment

You can have calmness in your soul! - Contentment

There is a famous story about John Chrysostom, the Archbishop of Constantinople facing persecution at the hands of Eudoxia and the Emperor Arcadius in the Byzantine Empire in the fifth century. First, Eudoxia threatens Chrysostom with banishment, to which he replies:
“You cannot banish me, for this world is my Father’s house,” said John.
“But I will kill you,” the empress said.
“No, you cannot, for my life is hid with Christ in God.”
“I will take away your treasures,” said Eudoxia.
“No, you cannot, for my treasure is in heaven and my heart is there.”
“But I will drive you away from your friends and you will have no one left,” Eudoxia responded.
“No, you cannot,” said John, “for I have a Friend in heaven from whom you cannot separate me. I defy you. For there is nothing you can do to harm me.”