

## Contentment

In talking to a friend and I ask him if he was satisfied with his life and where he was going. He said that he was 'satisfied with his dissatisfaction'. This is where most of us are/were, and we think we have manageable dissatisfaction, but God has called us to a life of Contentment.

Psalms 131 - This is a great psalm to and states God's perspective of contentment

- 1 O Lord, my heart is not proud, nor my eyes haughty;  
Nor do I involve myself in great matters,  
Or in things too difficult for me.
- 2 Surely I have composed and quieted my soul;  
Like a weaned child *rests* against his mother,  
My soul is like a weaned child within me.
- 3 O Israel, hope in the Lord  
From this time forth and forever.

Contentment. A word often used to describe the state of one's life after you have "made it". It is not often a word mentioned in conversations regarding our daily lives or an aspiring young person in business or marriage..

Webster defines contentment as:

"feeling or showing satisfaction with one's possessions, status, or situation"

Clearly, this is how the secular world measures contentment.

Solomon had a lot to say about contentment in the book of Ecclesiastes, mostly related to warning man to not spend much of his life beating at the wind!

Ec 9:7-9

- 7 Go *then*, eat your bread in happiness and drink your wine with a cheerful heart;  
for God has already approved your works.
- 8 Let your clothes be white all the time, and let not oil be lacking on your head.
- 9 Enjoy life with the woman whom you love all the days of your fleeting life which He has given to you under the sun; for this is your reward in life and in your toil in which you have labored under the sun..

Solomon violated all these warnings in his life

And yet..

Ec 5:18 Here is what I have seen to be good and fitting: to eat, to drink and enjoy oneself in all one's labor in which he toils under the sun *during* the few years of his life which God has given him; for this is his reward.

Solomon's perspective on contentment in these verses comes after reaching the pinnacle of possessions, status, and empty satisfaction in sex, etc. He came to the

realization we are all called to be satisfied with our God-given state of life. Be thankful for where ever you are.

You are likely saying.. "yeah but wait":, Solomon still had everything he needed to be comfortable. Don't confuse Comfortable with Contentment!

By far, the best author in the bible regarding contentment is Paul. He speaks with authority on this topic when we understand the state of his well-being during a substantial portion of his missionary expeditions.

Php 4:10-13

- 10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned *before*, but you lacked opportunity.
- 11 Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.
- 12 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.
- 13 I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

1 Ti 6:6-8

- 6 But godliness *actually* is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment.
- 7 For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.
- 8 If we have food and covering,, with these we shall be content.

Paul understood his state of contentment had little to do with his physical conditions and everything to do with his position with the almighty God.

Heb 13:5

*Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,"*

How does one attain this level of contentment in our daily lives. I too have spent a good portion of my life beating at the wind, making and spending money on things that had no real value in the eternal. But I have realized most important things and people cost me very little \$\$\$\$. Contentment has really come into focus as certain people and things are the center of my vision and thoughts.

## Applications

1. Give serious consideration to how much of what you seek, temporally, is enough? I have a friend in NH who worked hard at his business and at 66 years old he decided to reap the enjoyment of the millions he had earned... only to develop terminal cancer... he is very bitter and angry that he cannot enjoy (be content with his wealth). Unfortunately he never had a relationship with GOD and is too smart to believe in such things.
2. I am not suggesting you give up your career and become a monk, but surely there are more important things than “beating at the wind”. Remember even the most important people in the world die, most never finding contentment in their existence!
3. Write a short list of the absolutely most important “things” in your life. I suggest that contentment is only found in the top 3 to 5 items and if your boat, car or anything material is in the top three on the list, then you need to go back up to the top of the blog and read this again!
4. I was reminded Joyful is a word that is often added to Contentment. It is true that joy (the state of joy) is a prerequisite of contentment. Find joy, Focus on it.
5. I have found in getting older, that my business, my younger life was only a season. It too will pass. Being a friend of God produces contentment in my relationship with Him. He is the only thing that has lasted.