

GOING DEEPER STUDY NOTES (FOR JULY 25, 2021) For Community Groups or Personal Study

On this fourth Sunday in July, we conclude our study of Paul's letter to the church in Philippi. Previously we learned about being Confident in Christ, Living in Christ, One in Christ, Obedient in Christ, Righteousness in Christ, Transformed in Christ, Rejoicing in Christ. Today's message is, "**Content** in Christ." With all of those ways of being "in Christ" how can one not be **content** in Christ?.

The book of Philippians conveys a powerful message about the secret of contentment. Although Paul had faced severe hardships, poverty, beatings, illness, and even his current imprisonment, in every circumstance he had learned to be content. God's peace comes from the realization that he loves us, is in control, never leaves our side, and has settled our destiny.

PHILIPPIANS - IN CHRIST SERMON PASSAGE: PHILIPPIANS 4:10-30

¹⁰I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were 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. ¹²I 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. ¹³I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

¹⁴Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. ¹⁵Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; ¹⁶for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need. ¹⁷Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire is that more be credited to your account. ¹⁸I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. ¹⁹And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

²⁰To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Final Greetings

²¹Greet all God's people in Christ Jesus. The brothers and sisters who are with me send greetings. ²²All God's people here send you greetings, especially those who belong to Caesar's household.

²³The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

WHAT DOES IT SAY?

1. What is Paul's secret to contentment?
2. How do you think Paul discovered the secret to contentment?
By reading devotional books? By going to church? Graduating from the school of hard knocks? By wanting what he gets when he doesn't get what he wants?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

3. How does Paul's view of contentment compare with the modern world's view of contentment?
4. If Paul has learned to get along without, why does he commend the church in Philippi for sending a gift?

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU?

5. What outside force is likely to upset your contentment?
6. Can you be unhappy and still be content without passive resignation that your situation "is what it is"?
7. Since God does not always change negative outside forces, what can He change *in you* so that contentment is possible?
8. What is the closest you have come to experiencing what Paul talks about here: Rebounding from loss of freedom? Loss of some vocational opportunity? Loss of some physical skill? Loss of a partner in life?

Notes: _____

Spend time in silence, praying (even if just for a moment or two). Prayer is simply a conversation with God. Be honest. If you don't know how or what to pray admit that and ask God to help you pray. Ask God to give you confidence that He loves you and He will never leave you. Give thanks to God for answering your prayers.