

Liberty LifeGroups Discussion

ELEPHANT in the Room

(Part 1)

Nov 1, 2020

This Discussion Guide is prepared to help believers apply the truths of Scripture to life. As you prepare, make sure you have read the Scripture text and listened to the Sermon. If you missed the Sermon, go to www.experiencelibrary.org and select the Sermon title listed above.

Verses: Philippians 4:11-13

11 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: 12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

- Where was Paul when he wrote this short letter to the Philippians? Compare where you are right now. Discuss how you would feel in his position.
- How would you define contentment in your life? Is it defined by the *things* you have...is it defined by the *money* you have...is it defined by the *spouse* you have?
- **READ 2 CORINTHIANS 11:22-28.** How can a person go through all Paul went through and still find contentment in life? Is it easier to find contentment in suffering or prosperity? Consider suffering also keeps you humble whereas prosperity leads to pride.

11 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content

- How can you learn to be content? Is it easy to change this mindset?
- Godly contentment is not the same as acceptance of circumstances. Contentment is being satisfied regardless of the circumstance. Circumstances change. We have a moderate amount of control over our surroundings, environment or situation we find ourselves in. Tell of a circumstance that you have had to deal with and how you found contentment in it.

12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

- Anybody know how much storage space is built in the USA? (The United States now has 2.3 billion square feet of self-storage space.) Why do we feel the need to have so much stuff?
- Why does a third world church praise harder, sing louder and pray more diligently than the average American?
- To abound means to be filled to overflowing. I'm not sure which is better for your spiritual life, abased or abounding. What do you think?
- Paul states for every situation he had learned to cope with its purpose. Do you think every situation has a divine plan behind it and a precious spiritual lesson for us to learn? **Explain why/how.**

13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

- There are two kinds of Christians in regard to coping. Paul's way of life is the normal Christian life... *but it is not the life of the normal Christian*. Most Christians live sub-normal lives. They are "I can't Christians." "I can't cope" ... "I can't do..." "I can't deal" ...**which are you?**
- What does it take to live in the strength of Christ?

Pastor Matt referenced the life of Job. Job found himself in a season of loss in his life losing his family, resources, property and health.

- Was Job's circumstance a result of wrong choices?
- Can bad circumstance be a result of bad choices? **Share a time when your own choices resulted in bad results.**
- Read Job 1:20-22 for Job's response to his issues.
- What is the lesson we should learn?

Perhaps you are thinking that Christ will not give you strength for your particular situation, or that He cannot work or will not work in your circumstance to give you contentment.

Look at these verses:

- **Isaiah 41:10** *So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand*
- **Philippians 4:19** *And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.*
- Can you believe that our God is for you and not against you? Will you seek the truth of your life situations to find God in them? Will you be an "I can" Christian?

SERMON POINTS

- 1 CONTENTMENT IS LEARNED. ITS NOT NATURAL
- 2 HAPPINESS DEPENDS ON CIRCUMSTANCE. CONTENTMENT COMES FROM GOD.
- 3 HOW DO WE PRACTICE CONTENTMENT?
 - a) I HAVE EVERYTHING I NEED RIGHT NOW
 - b) IF I'M IN NEED GOD WILL GIVE IT TO ME
 - c) GOD MEETS EVERY NEED

Perhaps these words written by St. Francis of Assisi best states what contentment is: "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change. The courage to change the things I can. And the wisdom to know the difference."