

Philippians 4:13

The Secret of Contentment II

Living the life ...

I. By Trusting

- A. His Care
- B. His Strength

II. Through Testing

- A. Various Trials
- B. Many Temptations

III. And Triumphs

- A. In the Midst
- B. On the Other Side

... content in Christ.

Children, Listen ...

1. What does it mean to be content?
2. How does belonging to Jesus help us to be content?
3. Are there areas of your life where you are not content? What will help to change that?
4. Where does Paul say he gets strength? Is that where you find strength for life?

What Things?

Without question v. 13 is one of the texts of the Bible most often take out of context. Recognition of dependence upon God's strength is appropriate and acknowledging it is always commendable – all Christians should do that. But the “all things” part is often misapplied. Too often the phrase is used with reference to a skill or talent. The sentiment might be genuine – seeking to give God glory for a gift we have at doing something, but that is not remotely close to what the apostle is referring to. Paul refers to the ability to find satisfaction and endure in faith even in the face of great challenges. This was something he learned by going through times of prosperity, poverty and everything in between. He learned it through many trials, temptations that tested his faith constantly. How did he prevail in distressing times? How did he keep from becoming complacent when things were copesetic? He relied on the help of his ever-present God and followed the example of His Savior Jesus Christ. Have you learned ... are you in the continual process of learning contentment in all circumstances? When challenges come your way, great and small, when life seems good all around – you will need the Lord's strength to stay focused on what matters most and to find contentment in every situation – especially in those circumstances that a clearly beyond your control.

When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
when sorrows like sea billows roll;
whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
"It is well, it is well with my soul."

Horatio Gates Spafford (1873)