

Series: Philippines 2024

Title: Contentment

Text: Php 4: 10-13

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Place: SGBC, NJ

**Philippians 4: 10: But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.**

Paul is in prison as he writes this. The church at Philippi had sent Paul a gift of some sort to care for him. Who did Paul give the glory unto? "*I rejoiced in the Lord greatly.*" Paul knew it is Christ alone who gives his people a willing heart and he believed Christ gave them this heart of love toward him so he rejoiced in the Lord greatly for making them cheerful givers.

This is important to note. Paul will speak of being content. This was Paul's contentment. He knew it is Christ who works in his people. It is Christ who provides exactly what we need when we need it. So Paul was content when his brethren did a good work and sent him a gift because he trusted Christ worked it. But he was also content in the season they did *not* send him a gift because he trusted Christ was keeping his brethren and that Christ was keeping him.

Verse 15 shows us they had sent Paul gifts in the beginning and did so repeatedly.

**Philippians 4: 15: Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. 16: For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.**

Then it seems for a season they did not communicate any gifts to Paul. But now, they had done so again and done so abundantly. He said in verse 10, "*now at the last your care of me hath flourished again.*" But Paul lets them know he understands. He goes on to say in that verse, "*wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.*" Paul lets them know that he believed they desired in their heart to send him a gift. They had the same heart of love toward him but they did not have opportunity, either due to the distance or because they did not have the ability.

Indeed, he rejoiced in the Lord when they did send him a gift--he says in verse 17, "*Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.*" Their giving was the fruit of the Spirit that proved their faith in Christ was the genuine gift of God. That is why Paul rejoiced in the Lord. The Lord worked this in his brethren. But Paul was content that the Lord was keeping them, even in the season when they did not send him a gift.

And Paul was content with whatever the Lord provided for him.

**Philippians 4: 11 Not that I speak in respect of want:**

Paul never asked for a gift. Faithful preachers are not solicitors. Paul never saw himself as "wanting" or lacking anything. Why?

**Philippians 4: 11...for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content. 12: I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.**

Paul was not boasting in his ability. Who taught Paul this? How could Paul be content and do those things? How could he be content when abased or when he abounded? This is contentment:

**Philippians 4: 13: I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.**

**Subject:** Contentment

**Proposition:** Contentment is knowing in spirit, in heart, that Christ is our Strength, providing exactly what we need at all times.

## I HAVE LEARNED

Paul said, "I have learned." Our Master taught Paul this. He teaches us this from his own experience as the GodMan. As Head of his people our Savior walked this earth in perfect contentment. None of God's saints will ever be able to say we have "perfect" contentment. Far too often our sin-nature makes us murmur even about the weather. But our Savior walked this earth in perfect faith with perfect contentment trusting God our Father as our Representative Head.

Psalm 16 is Christ speaking. This is the Psalm where he says to the Father, in Psalm 16: 10, "*For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.*" Peter declared at Pentecost this is Christ speaking. This entire Psalm is the word of our Savior.

Remember, our Lord was "despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Is 53: 3) He had not where to lay his head. Yet, even in the midst of suffering rejection of men, even when facing the cross, this was our Savior's perfect contentment through faith in God the Father, in his promises, in his provision.

Psalm 16: 5: The LORD *is* the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. 6: The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant *places*; yea, I have a goodly heritage. 7: I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons. 8: I have set the LORD always before me: because *he is* at my right hand, I shall not be moved. 9: Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. 10: For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. 11: Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence. In thy presence *is* fulness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore.

Then our Substitute went to the cross and bore all the sins of his people, including all our sins of discontent and murmuring, and Christ made his people the righteousness of God in him.

Brethren, none of us will ever be able to stand before God based on our contentment of heart. We have the sin and unbelief and discontentment of our flesh mixed with the contentment we have in the inner man. But we have a Savior who had perfect holy contentment of heart in whom we are complete.

## CHRIST IS OUR STRENGTH

Christ is our Strength. And Christ knows our need. He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Our Redeemer knows the weakness of our flesh. He knows our every need and he is all our Strength.

Christ learned obedience by the things which he suffered and perfected us by his obedience. So in our new man, he is making us learn contentment by the things we suffer. Paul said, "*I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*"

Our Master is teaching us to trust him and be content in whatsoever state we are in. He is doing so from his own experience as our GodMan, Mediator. Christ is our Strength at all times. We can trust him like he trusted the Father. We can say of Christ what he said of the Father,

Psalm 16: 5: The LORD *is* the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. 6: The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant *places*; yea, I have a goodly heritage.

Christ has made each of God's regenerated elect kings and priests unto God by his blood, laying down his life in our room and stead. This was the Lord's word to his priest, Aaron. This is God's word to us, "And the LORD spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them: I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel" (Nu 18: 20). So in Christ we can say,

Psalm 16: 7: I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons. 8: I have set the LORD always before me: because *he is* at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

The Lord is my strength. He is at my right hand. I shall not be moved. I can do all things by Christ's power. The emphasis is Christ our Strength, not us doing all things. But truly we can do whatever Christ sends our

way by Christ our Strength. Knowing Christ is present with us at all times, knowing he shall raise our bodies from the grave, knowing we shall dwell with him for all eternity by his righteousness alone, we can say,

Psalm 16: 9: Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. 10: For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [the grave]; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. 11: Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence In thy presence *is* fulness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore.

It is having Christ present, keeping us by his power, and knowing it in our heart, that we know, "*both how to be abased, and [we know] how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.*"

## THE FOUR P'S

The key to contentment is to remember these four P's: purpose, power, presence, and promise.

One, remember, the purpose of God. All things that come to pass in this world, all things we face in this life--small and great, pleasing and painful, what appears good and what appears evil--all is worked together by God our Savior according to his eternal purpose.

Two, remember, the power of God. Christ has all power in heaven and in earth. Our Redeemer who loved us and gave his life for his people is ruling all things especially for his people. Christ is risen,

Ephesians 1: 20: 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22 [he] hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, 23: Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

God has purposed us good and Christ is the power to work all things together for our good. He shall not fail. Be content in him.

Three, remember, the presence of God. If you one in whom Christ abides, if you trust him by his grace, then you are never alone. "The Lord is at hand." Look to him. Pour out your heart to him. Cast all your care on him. He promises none shall be ashamed who trust in him. He is an ever-present help in trouble.

Four, remember, the promise of God. God our Father gave Christ to be the covenant unto us. In Christ, all the promises of God are yes and in him amen to the praise of the glory of God. He promises to be our Strength. He promises to give us grace for today. He promises he will bring us through the fiery trial. He promises to keep us by his power. He promises to present us to the Father without spot and blameless. Every promise is yes and amen in Christ.

These are the four P's is what Christ teaches us so that we learn to say in truth and in spirit,

**Philippians 4: 12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. [how] 13: I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.**

**Amen!**