



3/26/26

Well, this is a big day for Tim and me. 32 years ago today we said, "I do" and I became Tim's wife. Crazy how time flies! I have spent over half my life with him, and I'm very thankful. Every once in a while, I remind him of 2 things. 1. You married me by choice. Hahaha 2. You're stuck with me for the rest of your life. 🥰 I don't make a big deal out of it on social media, but since you and I are in God's word together, I thought I'd share it with you. 💜

I hope you're having a good day today.

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Philippians 4:10-20

This is the end of Paul's letter to the Philippian church that he wrote while he was in prison for the gospel. He LOVED these people. In the beginning of his letter he said, "I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now." And, "It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus." (How cool is it to think of Jesus being affectionate toward us.) Such a sweet relationship with them.

Here, in the end of the letter, I see they had sent Paul a care package. He really appreciated it, but he was more excited because of what it showed him about their faith in Jesus. Paul was always more concerned about the name of Jesus being lifted high than his own comfort by far!!! I want to have that mindset!!!

What can I learn from Paul's words in Philippians 4:10-20?

Vs. 10 ~ I love how the Berean Literal Bible says it, "But I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that now at last you have revived the caring for me, wherein also you were concerned, but you were lacking opportunity." I'm going to see that he's not saying, "Finally, SOMEONE notices ME!"

He's saying that he deeply appreciated their tangible care for him that they sent to him as soon as they were able to. In vs. 17 he said, "Not that I seek the gift, BUT I seek the fruit that increases to your credit." He was celebrating that they were living out Jesus' words in John 15:8, "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be My disciples."

Vs. 11-13 ~ I know this wasn't about Paul's comfort but about his King because of what he says here... "Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned, in whatever situation I am, to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."

Vs. 13 has been used to justify all kinds of things that have nothing to do with the context of this passage. The point is not... ME, MYSELF, and I can do all things. It's that I can only do it as the Lord gives me the strength. But what is He giving me strength to do? Run a marathon? Pass a test? Maybe He will, but that's not what this passage is talking about. He gives me strength to be content regardless of my circumstances. Whoa!

Paul could handle being humbled and he could handle when people were giving him a lot of credit... to not let either situation be what strengthens him. Being a martyr was not his strength and being a leader was not his strength. He learned the SECRET of facing any and every kind of situation and still remaining content... only through the strength that God supplies.

When I'm not content, the answer is never found in changing my circumstances... unless I'm CHOOSING to deny the Lord rather than SELF in those situations. My flesh WANTS it to be all about my circumstances and not about needing my heart to change. But I will never find contentment from any source other than Jesus.

Paul says two really important things in his statement about contentment.

- 1. It's LEARNED...Contentment doesn't just fall from the sky. I wish it did. I have to learn it AS I continue to seek the Lord for my strength and not try to be strong in myself or to try to force contentment through my circumstances.*
- 2. It's a secret... It's a mystery. The Greek word implies that it takes me closing my eyes and mouth to experience the mystery of contentment in Christ. Close my eyes to looking for other answers. Shut my mouth... stop TELLING God what He needs to do for me and start LISTENING to Him as He leads me. In this I will LEARN contentment that is not dependent on my life being perfect. I can be content THROUGH HIM who gives me the strength to do it.*

Vs. 14-18 ~ I can see why Paul appreciated the faith of these believers so much. They continued to put their faith into action. They "shared his trouble." "Shared suffering is

endurable suffering" (Bob Kellemen). There is such a blessing in knowing we're not alone. I love that about the body of Christ.

The Philippian church had made a practice of providing for Paul's needs... after he left Macedonia, when he was in Thessalonica, and now while he was in prison. It was such a blessing to him, but also a clear sign of their faith in Jesus.

What I see in this provision for Paul is that they were generous without ever saying, "What's in it for me?" They saw a need and they met that need with willing, cheerful, generous hearts. This is what pleases the Lord, not just that His people give, but that we give with cheerful, willing, generous hearts. They surely did give this way. Paul said he was "well supplied."

I'm not sure why the ESV translation says, "I have received full payment and more." That makes it sound like they owed him. The Greek transliteration says, "But I have all things, and abound." Paul was content, being strengthened by the Lord, but now with their gift, he had abundant supplies. Let me not forget... he's writing this from PRISON!!! That's contentment... being excited to receive a gift, celebrating their faith, and not being resentful that he's sitting in prison!!! O Lord, please let me have that kind of contentment in You!!! I know that means I will have to LEARN it, and I will learn through testing. That's kinda scary to me, but I trust that You will be there every step of the way strengthening me with Your grace. I want YOU more than I want COMFORT!!!

Paul said their gift to him was "a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God." Yes, when I give cheerfully to His people in need, I please Him. That's my focus... not seeking the approval or respect of man, but honoring the Lord and hearing "Well done, My sweet girl."

Vs. 19-20 ~ How do I know that Paul knew God was pleased? He said, "And my God WILL supply EVERY need of yours according to His riches IN GLORY in Christ Jesus."

What needs do I have? Having my physical needs provided for is thinking very low bar. Those are just my temporary needs. What about my eternal needs? I often ask women who come to me for counseling, "If I could wave a magic wand and fix everything right now, what would be different?" Even though some have financial difficulties or even physical issues, the things they say almost never have anything do with that. They answer, "I want peace... I want joy... I want hope... I want contentment." Those are riches that are found IN GLORY IN CHRIST. My God WILL supply my need for peace because He is the God of peace. HE has ample supply. He is the God of joy, of hope... He is the source of my contentment." He does NOT withhold these from me if I will only close my eyes to looking for other answers and stop telling Him what He needs to do but instead learn from Him. O Lord, make me a willing disciple!

"To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen." May all glory be Yours, O Lord! May I never again seek the glory for myself. There is no contentment, peace, joy, or hope in that. As John Piper famously says, "You are most glorified in me when I am most satisfied (content) in You." O Lord, let me learn this secret. To You be the glory.