

IT IS WELL

LEARNING TO BE CONTENT

*"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned,
in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."*

~ Philippians 4:11

1. Contentment

- a. Americans see it as a restriction on going shopping... after all, 1 Tim 6:8
- b. Contentment is not a perpetual smile, nor is it "thou shalt not desire", nor stoicism
- c. It is not be happy with what you've got/where you are at (don't ask for a raise?)
 - i. Do you think Paul was happy he was in jail, naked, and beaten? Jesus?
- d. Contentment ~*def.* a satisfaction of the mind, to please or gratify so that the mind is at rest and at peace. Content literally, to hold, to be contained, not disturbed.

2. In Whatsoever State

- a. Phil 4:9 – "*those things... do*" – cross reference 2 Cor 11:24, really? 2 Ti 3:12
- b. ...but he just received a gift! Paul had wealthy disciples, spiritual gifts and Gal 1:14
- c. He provided for himself and those with him, with money—Acts 20:34, 21:39, 24:26
- d. Phil 4:11-13 – Paul had to learn some things, how to abound, how to suffer need.
- e. How does he do it? How does he contain? In Christ he is content – Phil 4:13

3. How to Be Content

- a. Contentment is learning to be strengthened in the inner man – Eph 3:16-18
 - i. It is stability that results from knowing something; it must be learned.
 - ii. Contentment requires *godliness* to be great gain - 1 Tim 6:6
- b. People love Phil 4:6 (rightly), but there are things that precede it – Phil 4:1-5
- c. 4:1 - "*stand fast in the Lord*" – Phil 1:27, Gal 5:1, 2 Thess 2:15, 2 Ti 1:13
- d. 4:2-5 – "*same mind*", "*rejoice in the Lord*", be moderate, and don't worry.
- e. When your situation disrupts your peace with God you are not content.

4. Lessons that Need Learned

- a. Don't bypass learning by feeding the complaint, need, desire.
- b. Learning to be rich – your riches have a purpose - 1 Tim 6:17-18, 2 Cor 9:6-7
- c. Learning to be poor – be poor, learn to suffer loss – Phil 3:8-10
- d. Learning to suffer – be weak and let God be strong - 2 Cor 12:7-11, 1:5-7
- e. Learning to be strong – don't be weak, bear the weak – Rom 15:1, Eph 6:10, 6:19
- f. Learning to be busy – the time needs redeemed – Eph 5:16
- g. Learning to do nothing – be still, think, pray, look – Phil 4:7,8; Eph 1:17-18, 6:18

5. It Is Well

- a. Horatio Spafford learned to lose what he had gained: his son, fortune, family
- b. He learned whatever his lot – "it is well, with my soul" – this is contentment
- c. I'm sure he cried, I'm sure he tried to rebuild – but his soul was at peace.
- d. His peace of mind came from the knowledge God's provision in Christ and his cross
- e. He was not happy, nor thrown off the boat; he had learned to be content in Christ.