

Contentment...no matter what

By Kate Ward

When I think about contentment in motherhood, I think of Paul's words to the church in Philippi. He writes, "I (Paul) am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him (God) who gives me strength" (Philippians 4:11-13).



As a mom, I must rely on God to help me be content in every stage of motherhood. From lack of sleep with babies, to lack of control with teenagers, God calls us, with His help, to be content no matter what.

I find this a difficult daily goal. A lot of parenting is just trying to get through the hard stuff but being ok in the trials is a whole different thing. How can we be content when our kids are sick or suffering? How can we be joyful when we feel like we can barely make it through the day? How can we have peace when we are struggling financially? The beauty of Paul's words is that the God who was giving him this "strength" is the same God we know and serve today.

When my oldest son was 5 years old, he got an ear infection. Now this was not new to us, he had had several ear infections previously, so we gave him the medicine and waited for it to go away. Three days into the treatment, my husband left for a camping trip in the mountains of Georgia with some guy friends from church. We said goodbye to him, not knowing the eventful weekend that was to come.

Right before bedtime, I noticed my son's face was very swollen. Not thinking much about it, I called our pediatrician to see if he could be having an allergic reaction to the antibiotic. Without pausing, our doctor ordered me to go immediately to the nearest E.R. Not expecting that advice but hearing the seriousness of his voice, I grabbed the boys and jumped in the car.

When we got to the E.R., they hurried us through and we quickly were scheduled for a CAT Scan. The doctors were concerned that the infection had entered Micah's blood stream and was infecting his whole body. Talk about worst-case scenario.

My husband was out of cell phone service range, so I found myself all alone to live through the next couple of hours. My mind instantly landed on God's immense power and love. As I stood there helpless in the hospital room, I prayed desperately for everything to be ok. In that

moment, that prayer and God were ALL that I had. I can't explain it but I felt such PEACE. I believe that I was truly feeling the contentment that Paul talked about.

How could that be? In the midst of chaos and uncertainty how can we be content? I believe we can find this "joy in every circumstance" because we were made to only need one thing, a relationship with God. All the other stuff is nice, but ultimately our contentment is only fulfilled in him.

Remembering that moment 5 years ago helps me through the other "storms" that God has brought me through. Parenting is not for the faint of heart, and when we have God with us, we can truly be okay no matter what. How freeing is that, to know that God will provide in every situation and allow you peace when we "have plenty and when we are in want"? God is bigger than our circumstances and is the only TRUE source of joy and contentment.