

JOE THE PLUMBER

Philippians 4:10-13

October 19, 2008 Sunday am.

INTRODUCTION

- A. Did you watch the last of the three presidential debates last Wednesday? Who do you think won? I heard several suggest it was Joe the Plumber.
 - 1. Who is Joe? (Wurzelbacker). He approached Senator Obama last weekend at a political event in Toledo, Ohio and asked him a question about taxes.
 - 2. During this week's closing debate he became a symbol for a certain segment of Americans when his name was mentioned 23 times between McCain and Obama.
 - 3. Without going into the political details, Joe was voicing what most Americans in both parties are feeling. Namely, a dissatisfaction and discontentment with the way things are with our economy.
- B. Contentment is one illusive commodity today.
 - 1. Never have so many wanted so much and found so little with what they already have.
 - 2. Its tragic that while we live in the most prosperous nation in the world we still struggle with contentment.
 - 3. It appears that the more we have the more discontented we become.
- C. The apostle Paul talked about contentment in our text.
 - 1. In fact, in verse 12 he says he knows the secret of contentment.
 - 2. What is it?

I. FIRST, PAUL REVEALS THAT CONTENTMENT DOESN'T COME NATURALLY.

- A. What comes naturally instead is greed and selfishness.
 - 1. Just consider the average baby or child. They are totally self absorbed.
 - 2. I understand that Michael Douglas is considering making a sequel to his movie, "Wallstreet". He immortalized a line from the movie when he said, "Greed is Good!".
- B. Paul, instead says that contentment is good and its something that must be learned. His implication is that it can be learned—**v.11**.

II. SECOND, PAUL TELLS US HOW TO LEARN TO BE CONTENT.

- A. The first step of learning contentment is to realize it does not depend on our circumstances—**v.12**.
 - 1. What circumstances? You fill in the blank, but some things that come to my mind include the stock market, our 401k , what we drive, where we live, and where we work.
 - 2. Paul reminded Timothy, and us, that we came into this world with nothing and we will leave the same way—1 Timothy 6:6-10.
- B. The next step of learning contentment is to depend on God not our circumstances—**v.13**.
 - 1. This phrase is actually one word in the original Greek and Paul wrote it twice!
 - 2. Why? He didn't want us to miss the secret of contentment.
 - 3. What is it? We can endure all things, we can survive all things, we can even thrive in all things by depending on God to take care of us.
 - 4. How?
 - a. First, learn to act better than you feel.
 - i. Stop feeling deprived and cheated because you don't have something.
 - ii. Instead follow the AA motto—"Fake it until you make it!"
 - iii. Someone else put it like this: "Its easier to act your way to a better feeling than to feel your way to a better way of acting."
 - b. Second, stop comparing yourself with others, especially those who have more than you.
 - c. Third, accept things as they are rather than how you want them to be.

CONCLUSION

- A. So what does the Bible say to Joe the Plumber and us about contentment? Voting isn't enough because as Dave Ramsey said this week, Waiting for the government to solve our problems will never do any good.
- B. Instead the Bible says....
 1. Learn to be content because you can learn.
 2. Realize contentment doesn't depend on your circumstances.
 3. Understand you can do anything with Christ.