

MAINTAINING BIBLICAL CONTENTMENT PART THREE

1. The Scriptures Define Contentment

What does the Bible have to say about CONTENTMENT?

First, the Bible teaches that it is a way of life that must be learned.

- Look at Philippians 4:11-12.
- As Swindoll says, "It's not a gift from heaven".¹

Second, you don't need money to be content.

*"it means to be free from inner turmoil, satisfied with one's material and financial state, and in possession of a sense of peace regardless of one's circumstances or feelings."*²

Thirdly, the Bible says that contentment isn't in the good life, the fast life or even the simple life.. *Contentment lies not in what is yours, but in whose you are.*³

Fourthly, Biblical contentment avoids:

- the desire for things more than God
- the desire for pleasure more than godliness
- the longing for more things than for Him who is to be all in all
- the desire for what others have when they have more or better things or situations than we have
- and the constant thoughts about things over the spiritual world

Each of these is a warning of a spiritual ill health called DISCONTENTMENT.

Finally, the results of living by the Bible's definition of contentment are great:

1. If you are content, you can enjoy the present rather than being anxious about the future. Mt 6:25

¹ Swindoll, p. 99.

² Ibid.

³ Swenson, p.198.

2. If you are content, you can be liberated to truly enjoy the successes of others around you without envy. Ps 37:7
3. If you are content, you will be able to let the Lord build a true sense of thankfulness about everything. I TH5:18

So the Bible defines it...

2. God endorses Contentment

He both commends it in 1 Timothy 6 and commands it in Hebrews 13.

3. Christ Models Contentment

Paul records seven clear steps down that can make a framework for us. Contentment if it can be learned is best learned from the only perfect man who ever lived.

Seven Clear Steps Down That Can Make A Framework For Us

1. Christ UNGRASPED Himself in v. 6.
2. He EMPTIED Himself in v. 7.
3. He SERVED Himself in v. 7.
4. He HUMBLLED Himself in v. 8.
5. He OBEYED the Father in v. 8.
6. He RECEIVED all from the Father in v. 9.
7. He GLORIFIED the Father in v. 12.

This series on Contentment is actually just POINT ONE of our study from Revelation 18 on How TO SURVIVE THE 90's. That first point was: BUILD YOUR LIFE WITH THE FIREPROOF MATERIAL OF CONTENTMENT.

The Conclusion of this first point is a practice lesson. Let's start learning some actions that preserve and promote contentment. Focus on the Secret of Biblical contentment. Someone⁴ has written nine steps we can take to preserve and enhance the growth of Biblical contentment in our lives.

NINE STEPS ON THE PATH TO BIBLICAL CONTENTMENT

1. GET TO WORK.
2. DIVORCE YOUR THINKING FROM SOCIETY'S RELATIVISTIC STANDARDS.
3. TURN OFF THE ADS AND TUNE OUT THE LIES.

⁴ Ibid., p.199-200.

4. DEFER TO GOD'S OPINION CONCERNING YOUR FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS.
5. SET NEW STANDARDS.
6. DEVELOPE COUNTER HABITS.
7. SUBTRACT FROM YOUR NEEDS.
8. ACCEPT FROM GOD'S HAND THAT WHICH HE GIVES.
9. IF YOU STILL DO NOT FEEL THE STIRRINGS OF CONTENTMENT WITHIN, ARGUE WITH YOURSELF AND TELL YOURSELF THE TRUTH.

1. GET TO WORK.

- The Christian life is always described as a struggle in the NT. It is hard so get to work! The New Testament describes the Christian life with 3 metaphors.
 1. A RACE as we look toward our goal of Heaven (Phil. 3:14). This is the metaphor most often used of Christians in the N.T. 1c9, Ph 3, 2Tim4, Acts 20, Heb 12)
 2. Boxing in a match as we fight against the Enemy within us (1 Cor. 9:26-27)
 3. Wrestling as we face the constant onslaught of the powers of darkness around and beneath us. (Eph. 6:12)
- The Apostle Paul called our Christian life:
- 1 Corinthians 9:27 ²⁷ But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. (KJV)
- 2 Timothy 2:2-3 ² And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. ³ Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. (KJV)

2. DIVORCE YOUR THINKING FROM SOCIETY'S RELATIVISTIC STANDARDS.

- "God says be content, not be content if...Never allow the affairs of others to rob you of your contentment."
- Colossians 3:1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. (KJV)

Romans 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is your*

reasonable service. ² And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (KJV)